Public Document Pack

To: Councillor McRae, Chairperson; and Councillors Blake, Boulton, Cooke, Copland and Thomson.

Town House,
ABERDEEN 8 September 2025

LOCAL REVIEW BODY OF ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

The Members of the **LOCAL REVIEW BODY OF ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL** are requested to meet remotely **on MONDAY, 15 SEPTEMBER 2025 at 11.00 am.**

JENNI LAWSON
CHIEF OFFICER – GOVERNANCE

Members of the Public can observe the meeting via Microsoft Teams here.

B U S I N E S S

1.1 Procedure Notice (Pages 5 - 10)

COPIES OF THE RELEVANT PLANS / DRAWINGS ARE AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING AND WILL BE DISPLAYED AT THE MEETING

Link to the Local Development Plan

TO REVIEW THE DECISION OF THE APPOINTED OFFICER TO REFUSE THE FOLLOWING APPLICATIONS

PLANNING ADVISER - LUCY GREENE

REVIEW ONE

2.1 Change of use of from Class 4 (Business) to form 24no. affordable flats, including formation/replacement of doors, formation of windows: installation of cladding, and alterations to the car park and garden ground with associated works including boundary treatments, bin store and landscaping - Loirston House, 102 Wellington Road, Aberdeen

Members, please note that all plans and supporting documents relevant to the review can be viewed online here and by entering the application reference number 250202.

2.2 Delegated Report, Original Application Form, Decision Notice and Letters of Representation (if there are any) (Pages 11 - 94)

2.3 Planning Policies Referred to in Documents Submitted (Pages 95 - 96)

2.4 Notice of Review with Supporting Information Submitted by Applicant / Agent (Pages 97 - 1000)

2.5 Determination - Reasons for Decision

Members, please note that reasons should be based against Development Plan policies and any other material considerations.

2.6 Consideration of Conditions to be Attached to the Application - if Members are Minded to Over-Turn the Decision of the Case Officer

REVIEW TWO

3.1 Change of use from agricultural land to domestic garden ground and erection of 1.5 and single storey extensions to side - Borrowstone Bothy, Borrowstone Road, Kingswells, Aberdeen

Members, please note that all plans and supporting documents relevant to the review can be viewed online here and by entering the application reference number 250377.

3.2 Delegated Report, Original Application Form, Decision Notice and Letters of Representation (if there are any) (Pages 1001 - 1022)

3.3 Planning Policies Referred to in Documents Submitted (Pages 1023 - 1024)

3.4 Notice of Review with Supporting Information Submitted by Applicant / Agent (Pages 1025 - 1074)

3.5 Determination - Reasons for Decision

Members, please note that reasons should be based against Development Plan policies and any other material considerations.

3.6 Consideration of Conditions to be Attached to the Application - if Members are Minded to Over-Turn the Decision of the Case Officer

Website Address: aberdeencity.gov.uk

Should you require any further information about this agenda, please contact Lynsey McBain on lymcbain@aberdeencity.gov.uk / tel 01224 067344

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LOCAL REVIEW BODY OF ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

PROCEDURE NOTE

GENERAL

1. The Local Review Body of Aberdeen City Council (the LRB) must at all times comply with (one) the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Schemes of Delegation and Local Review Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 (the regulations), and (two) Aberdeen City Council's Standing Orders.

2. Local members are not permitted to sit on cases that fall within their ward.

3. In dealing with a request for the review of a decision made by an appointed officer under the Scheme of Delegation adopted by the Council for the determination of "local" planning applications, the LRB acknowledge that the review process as set out in the regulations shall be carried out in stages.

4. As the first stage and having considered the applicant's stated preference (if any) for the procedure to be followed, the LRB must decide how the case under review is to be determined.

5. Once a notice of review has been submitted interested parties (defined as statutory consultees or other parties who have made, and have not withdrawn, representations in connection with the application) will be consulted on the Notice and will have the right to make further representations within 14 days.
   Any representations:
   - made by any party other than the interested parties as defined above (including those objectors or Community Councils that did not make timeous representation on the application before its delegated determination by the appointed officer) or
   - made outwith the 14 day period representation period referred to above

   cannot and will not be considered by the Local Review Body in determining the Review.

6. Where the LRB consider that the review documents (as defined within the regulations) provide sufficient information to enable them to determine the review, they may (as the next stage in the process) proceed to do so without further procedure.

7. Should the LRB, however, consider that they are <u>not</u> in a position to determine the review without further procedure, they must then decide which one of (or combination of) the further procedures available to them in terms of the regulations should be pursued. The further procedures available are:-
   (a) written submissions;
   (b) the holding of one or more hearing sessions;

(c) an inspection of the site.

8. If the LRB do decide to seek further information or representations prior to the determination of the review, they will require, in addition to deciding the manner in which that further information/representations should be provided, to be specific about the nature of the information/ representations sought and by whom it should be provided.

9. In adjourning a meeting to such date and time as it may then or later decide, the LRB shall take into account the procedures outlined within Part 4 of the regulations, which will require to be fully observed.

DETERMINATION OF REVIEW

10. Once in possession of all information and/or representations considered necessary to the case before them, the LRB will proceed to determine the review.

11. The starting point for the determination of the review by the LRB will be Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, which provides that:-

> "where, in making any determination under the planning Acts, regard is to be had to the Development Plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

12. In coming to a decision on the review before them, the LRB will require:-
    (a) to consider the Development Plan position relating to the application proposal and reach a view as to whether the proposal accords with the Development Plan;
    (b) to identify all other material considerations arising (if any) which may be relevant to the proposal;
    (c) to weigh the Development Plan position against the other material considerations arising before deciding whether the Development Plan should or should not prevail in the circumstances.

13. In determining the review, the LRB will:-
    (a) uphold the appointed officers determination, with or without amendments or additions to the reason for refusal; or
    (b) overturn the appointed officer's decision and approve the application **with or without appropriate conditions.**

14. The LRB will give clear reasons for its decision.

Planning Development Management Committee and Local Review Body Site Visit Protocol

1. Introduction

1.1 The Planning Development Management Committee (PDMC) or the Local Review Body sometimes decides to inspect a site to gain a greater understanding of its location, physical characteristics and relationship to neighbouring properties or land uses. These can help Members reach an informed decision on a planning application.

1.2 This protocol sets out the procedure to be followed for the conduct of such formal site visits by Members. To ensure fairness, this guidance should be observed during these visits.

1.3 Site visits should only be necessary where:

- the application can't be assessed fully without a site visit (eg. the proposal raises issues that need to be experienced eg. noisy or smelly processes near the site),
- where the required information hasn't been provided by way of the plans, images or any supporting information, or
- where the proposal is particularly contentious and where the benefit of a site visit is clear and substantial.

2. Interested Parties and Neighbouring Properties

2.1 There may also be a possibility that Members will visit neighbouring properties as part of the site visit. The Committee Clerk will contact all interested parties who submitted a timely representation in regards to an application ("interested parties") to let them know the application is on the agenda and, in the case of PDMC, advising that they may make a verbal representation at the Committee. Any interested parties who are neighbouring proprietors to the site, may request that their properties are visited as part of any site visit that may take place. To do so, they will be obliged to respond in writing to the Committee Clerk by the deadline of 12pm on the Tuesday before PDMC requesting that the committee visit their property during any site visit. In relation to the Local Review Body, any interested parties who are neighbouring proprietors to the site should indicate their wish for the Local Review Body to visit their property should a site visit be undertaken. Indication should be given in response to the notification given to the interested party advising them that the notice of review has been received.

2.2 If the PDMC or Local Review Body determine that a site visit is required for a particular application then the Committee or Local Review Body will also, at the same meeting, decide by agreement (or by way of a Procedural Motion if no agreement can be reached) whether they wish to visit the properties of any interested parties who have requested that they do so, as above. The decision of the PDMC or Local Review Body is final as to whether a site visit is conducted.

2.3 The applicants and/or their agent, as well as any interested parties whom PDMC or the Local Review Body have decided to visit their property as part of the site visit, as above, will also be advised of the site visit.

2.4 A copy of this protocol will be provided to the applicants and/or their agents and any interested parties whom PDMC or the Local Review Body have decided to visit their property as part of the site visit, as above. It will also form part of the agenda for the relevant site visit meeting.

2.5 It is important to emphasise that permission to enter any land will require to be given by the landowner. Landowners are legally entitled to refuse entry to their land.

3. Conduct of Site Visits

3.1 The Councillors' Code of Conduct applies to site visits; therefore interests should be declared. Members should not attend the site visit or take part in the determination of the application if, having considered the objective test in the Code of Conduct, they consider that they have a prejudicial interest.

3.2 Site visits are a fact finding exercise and not part of the formal consideration of the application and, therefore, Members require to remain impartial. Members must not appear to favour one or other party and must avoid reaching a final decision until all views have been presented at the Committee or Local Review Body meeting to take place following the site visit.

4. Procedure on Site

4.1 The Planning Development Management Committee or Local Review Body Convenor will call the site visit to order, ask the Committee Clerk to outline the site visit protocol, and invite the Planning Officer to summarise:

1. the application;
2. any relevant site history;
3. the features of the site;
4. any other matters the Planning Officer considers should be pointed out.

4.2 The Planning Officer will then show Members around the site, showing relevant plans, describing the development proposed and pointing out significant features, and will also advise whether interested parties have requested that the PDMC Committee or Local Review Body view the site from other locations and how that is to be dealt with. Members may ask the Planning Officer factual questions (eg. distances to adjoining or interested parties' properties or the location of the planned development) but must not otherwise discuss the application. All questions should be objective, relevant and material. Members are not permitted to hear or express opinions on the merits of the application during the site visit. Members should not address anybody other than each other, the Planning Officer, other Council Officers and the Committee Clerk. Any questions from Members to the applicant, agents and interested parties should be directed through the Convenor. The applicant, agent and local ward members, community council representatives may join the site visit group but only to observe and listen and will not be permitted to address Members other than specifically when requested by the Convenor or the Planning Officer to confirm factual information such as the location of physical features and access points. Members of the public may attend and listen to the proceedings where these are conducted in public areas, but they have no right to enter private land or buildings. If the site visit gives rise to excessive lobbying or demonstrations, Members may cancel the visit and arrange another in private.

4.3 Hospitality will not be accepted during the site visit by Members from applicants or other parties given that this could be seen to show favour.

4.4 In order to assist in ensuring that all Members receive the same information to inform the decision making process, they should keep together in one group with the

Convenor and the Planning Officer during the entirety of the accompanied site visit. They should not break-off to discuss the proposal separately in small groups with other members, with residents or with the applicant.

5 What happens after a Site Visit

5.1 After a site visit has taken place, the PDMC will then reconvene and determine the application in the usual manner. Local Review Body meetings are held remotely and therefore following the site visit, Members will reconvene remotely. Any Member wishing to vote on an application or review following a Site Visit must have been in attendance at the Site Visit.

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL	**Strategic Place Planning**
	Report of Handling by Development Management Manager

Site Address:	Loirston House, 102 Wellington Road, Aberdeen AB12 3BH
Application Description:	Change of use of from Class 4 (Business) to form 24no. affordable flats, including formation/replacement of doors, formation of windows: installation of cladding, and alterations to the car park and garden ground with associated works including boundary treatments, bin store and landscaping
Application Ref:	250202/DPP
Application Type:	Detailed Planning Permission
Application Date:	4 March 2025
Applicant:	CTL Estates
Ward:	Kincorth/Nigg/Cove
Community Council:	Cove and Altens

DECISION

Refuse

APPLICATION BACKGROUND

Site Description

The application site comprises the building and curtilage of Loirston House, a two-storey late 20th century, pitch-roofed office building with an approximately 'T'-shaped footprint, situated within a c. 3,200sqm plot of land c. 50 m to the south of the junction between Wellington Road and Hareness Road. The building has largely lain vacant since its previous long-term occupier, Total, vacated it in 2016, although it was used by a local charity, Somebody Cares, between approximately 2021 and 2023. The building has been actively marketed for both office use and alternative uses since 2016. The site lies at the western edge of the Altens Industrial Estate, adjacent to its main vehicular entry point on Hareness Road. It is bound to the north by an area of scrubland, to the east by a vacant, hard-landscaped plot of business and industrial land (formerly in use as a car storage area and as a motel prior to that), to the south-east by Altens Lorry Park, and to the south by the curtilage of a detached residential dwelling. The Loirston House building sits towards the back (east) of its curtilage, with the front curtilage predominantly comprising a tarmacked car park area, including under-croft parking beneath the front wing of the building. The site is accessed by car via a left-in, left-out junction onto Wellington Road on its western boundary. Established tree belts run along, but just outwith, the site's southern and eastern boundaries.

Relevant Planning History

- P101502 – Planning permission was approved in 2010 for the erection of a perimeter fence and gate, the installation of CCTV cameras, a smoking shelter and cycle stands.

APPLICATION DESCRIPTION

Description of Proposal

Detailed planning permission is sought to change the use of the former office building to form 24 residential flats, with associated alterations to the external appearance of the building, car parking, bin store, boundary treatments and landscaping.

The physical works to the existing building and its curtilage would involve the following:

- Recladding of the existing building's external walls and the installation of new windows and doors;
- Infilling of the ground floor level of the front wing (currently under-croft car parking) with three flats;
- Reduction and alteration of the existing car parking area in the front curtilage to provide a total of 26 parking spaces, including two disabled bays;
- Installation of new boundary treatments, including timber fencing to delineate private garden areas and a 2m high close-boarded timber fence along the southern boundary;
- Removal of two trees and the planting of fifteen new trees, alongside other soft and hard landscaping, including private and communal garden areas; and
- Formation of a bin store.

Proposed tenure of flats

Permission is sought for 24 affordable flats, to be operated by a Registered Social Landlord. Although reference is made in the applicant's supporting statements and floor plans to the proposed use of the nine ground floor level flats as specialist 'bariatric care' accommodation, such accommodation, where a significant element of care is provided, along with the potential provision of specialist internal equipment, would fall into Class 8 (Residential Institutions) of The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Scotland) Order 1997, rather than as mainstream affordable flats (sui generis). The applicant's Planning Statement advises that any element of care would be *'relatively ad-hoc, as opposed to being round-the-clock provision'* and that the care element would thus be ancillary to the primary use as affordable flats, the ground floor units of which would be wheelchair accessible and capable of accommodating bariatric patients who would generally live independently. On this basis, bariatric care is not specifically referenced in the development description.

Amendments

In agreement with the applicant, the following amendments were made to the application –

- Additional information submitted including changes to layout, boundary treatments and landscaping.

Supporting Documents

All drawings and supporting documents listed below can be viewed on the Council's website at –

https://publicaccess.aberdeencity.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=SSE9GWBZGJZ00

- Supporting Planning Statement
- Design & Access Statement
- Marketing Statement
- Noise Impact Assessment
- Tree Survey
- Travel Plan Framework

CONSULTATIONS

Aberdeen City Council (ACC) Internal Consultees

- **ACC - Contaminated Land Team** – No objection. The current use is commercial rather than industrial, therefore there is unlikely to be any significant contamination of the land, although some contamination may be possible from adjacent industrial uses. As such, an advisory note is recommended, advising the applicant that should any ground contamination be discovered during the development, the Planning Authority should be notified immediately and a suitable scheme for mitigating any risks from the contamination should be agreed with the Planning Authority and thereafter implemented.

- **ACC - Developer Obligations** – Financial contributions are required to mitigate against the impact the development would have on the following local infrastructure and facilities:

  - Core Path Network - £9,505
  - Healthcare Facilities - £13,041
  - Open Space – £3,241
  - Community Facilities – £27,401

  Given the development comprises predominantly one-bedroom flats it is not expected that these would accommodate school children, therefore no contributions are sought for either primary or secondary education. In line with Policy H5 (Affordable Housing) of the ALDP, a minimum of 25% of the development requires to be provided as affordable housing. That equates to 6 units, although it is proposed to provide 100% affordable housing in this instance. A legal agreement is required to secure the financial contributions and potentially to also secure the 25% affordable housing in perpetuity.

- **ACC - Environmental Health** – No objection. The applicant's noise impact assessment (NIA) proposes a closed windows approach with alternative means of ventilation (trickle vents) to address road traffic noise impacts and ensure acceptable noise levels inside habitable rooms. The Environmental Health Service are satisfied that a suitable internal living environment can be achieved with this approach, provided the windows and trickle vents meet the specifications detailed in Sections 6.1.1 and 6.1.2 of the NIA.

  Daytime noise levels within external amenity areas were found to range from 51.1 to 58.5 dB (L_{Aeq}). The World Health Organisation Guidelines for Community Noise (1999) states that outdoor sound levels should not generally exceed 50 dB (L_{Aeq}), to protect the majority of people from being moderately annoyed during the daytime. To address this, the applicant's NIA recommend that acoustic barriers are provided around garden areas (Section 5.11).

- **ACC - Housing Strategy** – The application description refers to conversion to 24

affordable flats, however the drawings refer to 'specialist provision social housing'. The provision of specialist provision accommodation, including bariatric accommodation, is needed in the city, as evidenced in the latest housing need and demand assessment and the Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership's specialist provision market position statements.

At the moment, there is not a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) who can proceed with the development, unless planning permission is granted for general needs housing, as RSLs need certainty that the development will be "future proofed", should there no longer be a requirement for specialist provision homes in the future. From an RSL perspective, unless planning permission is granted for general needs housing, this development will not be able to proceed as affordable housing.

- **ACC - Roads Development Management Team** – No objection. The comments made are summarised as follows:

  - The site has existing pedestrian access which connects to the adopted footway, and can also be accessed by bicycle on the adopted, shared-use paths which link to several core paths and other cycle infrastructure;
  - There are several well-served public transport (bus) stops nearby on Wellington Road;
  - ACC parking guidelines for affordable housing in the outer city boundary is 0.8 spaces per unit. One space per unit is proposed, plus two further accessible bays, which is acceptable;
  - A minimum of 24 long-stay (secure and covered) cycle parking spaces are required and can be conditioned;
  - The existing left-in, left-out vehicular access to the site is acceptable given the dual carriageway and cars travelling northbound can turn at the Souter Head roundabout;
  - The swept path analysis (SPA) provided is acceptable, although it shows that a modification will be required to the splitter island. This will require roads construction consent;
  - The SPA shows that refuse lorries would be able to enter and exit the site in a forward gear;
  - The site proposes a reduced level of car parking than exists at present, which would ensure no adverse impact on the running of the road network;
  - The draft travel plan is acceptable but a final copy should be agreed with the Roads Development Management team before occupation, and should contain site-specific information; and
  - As it is a brownfield site, it is assumed the existing drainage measures would be utilised.

- **ACC - Schools Estates Team** – No objection. Given that the proposed development is made up of predominantly one-bedroom flats, it would not be expected that these would accommodate children, therefore the development is unlikely to have any discernible impact on pupil numbers within local schools.

- **ACC - Waste and Recycling** – No objection. The development will be provided with 5 x 1280l general waste bins, 5 x 1280l mixed recycling bins and one food waste container. The costs of the bins and their delivery will be charged to the developer. The Council's Waste & Recycling team will monitor the collections and any problems raised by the crews. Should any issues occur and persist, collections may be suspended until such time as they are resolved.

External Consultees

- **Cove and Altens Community Council** – No comments received.

- **Police Scotland** – Police Scotland recommend that the architects and design team liaise with the Police Scotland Architectural Liaison service at each stage of the development, for more detailed advice and for the purposes of designing out crime using the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design. Due consideration should also be given to crime reduction measures during the construction phase. The area is a medium crime area, affected by theft and vandalism.

- **Scottish Water** – No objection. The proposed development is within the Invercannie Water Treatment Works catchment. To allow Scottish Water to fully appraise the proposals, the applicant should complete a Pre-Development Enquiry (PDE) form and submit it to Scottish Water. There is currently sufficient capacity for a foul only connection in the Nigg Waste Water Treatment works to service the development.

REPRESENTATIONS

Seven representations have been received, all objecting to the application. The matters raised can be summarised as follows –

1. There is too much housing in Aberdeen. The site should remain in commercial use;
2. The development could negatively impact on local road traffic;
3. The site is located in a commercial area, adjacent to a major roundabout. It does not have sufficient amenity compared with other housing nearby and is not suitable for residential development because of a lack of infrastructure and safety concerns which can affect vulnerable people;
4. The access to the site is not suitable, and could have road safety implications; and
5. There are other sites elsewhere that are more suited to affordable housing.

MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Legislative Requirements

Sections 25 and 37(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 require that where making any determination under the planning acts, regard is to be had to the provisions of the Development Plan; and, that any determination shall be made in accordance with the plan, so far as material to the application, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Development Plan

National Planning Framework 4

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) is the long-term spatial strategy for Scotland and contains a comprehensive set of national planning policies that form part of the statutory development plan.

- Policy 1 (Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises)
- Policy 2 (Climate Mitigation and Adaptation)
- Policy 3 (Biodiversity)

- Policy 6 (Forestry, Woodland and Trees)
- Policy 9 (Brownfield, Vacant and Derelict Land and Empty Buildings)
- Policy 12 (Zero Waste)
- Policy 13 (Sustainable Transport)
- Policy 14 (Design, Quality and Place)
- Policy 15 (Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods)
- Policy 16 (Quality Homes)
- Policy 18 (Infrastructure First)
- Policy 22 (Flood Risk and Water Management)
- Policy 23 (Health and Safety)
- Policy 26 (Business and Industry)

Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023

- Policy B1 (Business and Industrial Land)
- Policy CI1 (Digital Infrastructure)
- Policy D1 (Quality Placemaking)
- Policy D2 (Amenity)
- Policy D5 (Landscape Design)
- Policy H3 (Density)
- Policy H4 (Housing Mix and Need)
- Policy H5 (Affordable Housing)
- Policy I1 (Infrastructure Delivery and Planning Obligations)
- Policy NE2 (Green and Blue Infrastructure)
- Policy NE4 (Our Water Environment)
- Policy NE5 (Trees and Woodland)
- Policy R2 (Degraded and Contaminated Land)
- Policy R5 (Waste Management Requirements for New Developments)
- Policy R6 (Low and Zero Carbon Buildings and Water Efficiency)
- Policy R8 (Heat Networks)
- Policy T2 (Sustainable Transport)
- Policy T3 (Parking)
- Policy WB1 (Healthy Developments)
- Policy WB2 (Air Quality)
- Policy WB3 (Noise)

Aberdeen Planning Guidance

- Affordable & Specialist Housing
- Amenity & Space Standards
- Harmony of Uses
- Health and Wellbeing
- Landscape
- Noise
- Open Space & Green Infrastructure
- Planning Obligations
- Resources for New Development
- Transport & Accessibility
- Trees & Woodlands

National guidance

- Planning Advice Note 1/2011 (Planning and Noise)

EVALUATION

Key determining factors

The key determining factors in the assessment of this application are whether the proposed development would:

- Result in the loss of valuable business and industrial land, or adversely affect the viability of neighbouring business and industrial land uses;
- Be a suitable location for residential development, and provide a sufficient quality of residential amenity for the occupants;
- Benefit from suitable, sustainable and active travel connectivity to public transport and local facilities and amenities;
- Impact upon the amenity of the area, including the residential amenity of immediately neighbouring properties.

Business and industrial land use zoning

The application site lies within a Business and Industrial Area, as zoned in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 (ALDP). Policy 26 (Business and Industry) of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) is supportive of business and industry uses where they are compatible with the primary business function of the area, and of other employment uses where they will not prejudice the primary function of the area, and are compatible with the business and industrial character of the area.

Policy B1 (Business and Industrial Land) of the ALDP states:

'Land zoned for business and industrial uses on the Proposals Map, including already developed land, shall be retained for Class 4 (Business), Class 5 (General Industrial) and Class 6 (Storage and Distribution) uses and safeguarded from other conflicting development types. Other uses which may be suited to a business and industrial location, such as car showrooms and bus depots, shall be treated on their own merits. The expansion of existing uses within these locations will be permitted in principle.

Where business and industrial areas are located beside residential areas, we will restrict new planning permissions to Class 4 (Business). Buffer zones, which are appropriately sized and landscaped, may be required to separate these uses and safeguard residential amenity. Low amenity 'bad neighbour' uses must have regard to surrounding uses and their potential impact on the environment and existing amenity. In all cases, conditions may be imposed restricting levels of noise, hours of operation and external storage'

Although Policy 26 of NPF4 does not explicitly preclude alternative uses such as residential in business and industrial areas, it notes the importance of alternative uses in such areas not prejudicing the primary function of the area, and being compatible with the character of the area. The site does lie at the western edge of the Altens Industrial Estate, and is accessed separately

from Wellington Road, rather than from Hareness Road. As such, the application site's character is less business and industrial than the neighbouring uses to the east and south-east. Nevertheless, the vacant site is authorised for office use and directly neighbours existing business and industrial uses, and the proposal therefore presents some tension with the aims of Policy 26.

The proposed residential use of the application site is contrary to Policy B1 of the ALDP, being neither a use falling within Classes 4, 5 or 6, nor an alternative use that would otherwise be suited to a business and industrial location. Although the applicant's noise impact assessment (NIA) concludes that, subject to mitigation, an acceptable level of residential amenity could be achieved for the occupants of the proposed development in relation to protection from existing external sources of noise, thus the proposed development would not likely conflict with any existing business and industrial uses, Policy B1 also seeks to safeguard business and industrial land (developed or undeveloped) from *'other conflicting development types'*. Given the clear potential for conflict and issues that can arise between business and industrial uses and noise-sensitive residential uses, as alluded to in the second paragraph of Policy B1 quoted above, the redevelopment of the application site for residential use as proposed would likely preclude the neighbouring, currently vacant land to the north and east from being used for uses in either Classes 5 or 6 in the future.

Therefore, as the proposed development would result in the loss of an existing, authorised Class 4 use, would not be a use suitable for the character of the area, and would not safeguard adjacent land for potential future uses within Classes 4, 5 or 6, the proposal is contrary to Policy B1 of the ALDP, and would represent a departure from the development plan, if approved.

However, there are various other material considerations which are relevant to the assessment of this application, in respect of the non-compliance of the proposed residential use with Policy B1 of the ALDP, as follows:

- <u>Lack of demand for continued business/industrial use</u>

  Paragraph 12.1 of the ALDP states: *'Maintaining a ready supply of employment land in the right places is vital to Aberdeen retaining its position as a competitive and sustainable business location. To accord with this, a phased, large allocation of employment land has been identified, to meet the diverse needs of different types and sizes of businesses.'*

  Therefore, given the aim of Policy B1 of the ALDP appears to be the protection of employment land supply, it is pertinent to assess whether there is sufficient employment land across the city, and to consider what impact the loss of the existing office building would have on that supply.

  The applicant has provided a marketing statement, prepared by their property consultants, which outlines that marketing of the building for continued Class 4 office use commenced in 2016, 6 months prior to the expiry of the lease to Total. The expiry of the lease coincided with the downturn in the Aberdeen market for office space as a result of the fall in the price of oil in late 2014 / early 2015. Despite active marketing, there has been no feasible interest in the building, aside from a short-term, nil-rental lease to a local charity between c. 2021 and 2023.

  Whilst lack of demand for the occupation of the building for its current authorised use is not directly a material planning consideration, it is indirectly relevant as it demonstrates the wider situation in respect of the oversupply of office space in Aberdeen, predominantly due to the downturn in the oil & gas industry in recent years, combined with the rise in home

working post-Covid 19 pandemic. The readily available supply of newer grade 'A' office space in a range of locations across the city and particularly within the City Centre has exacerbated the situation in that locations such as Loirston House are not attractive to tenants.

- Employment land supply

  The Aberdeen City and Shire Employment Land Audit (ELA) is prepared annually, with the aim of providing up-to-date and accurate information on the supply and availability of employment land in the region. The most recently prepared audit (with a base date of 1st April 2023) was published in February 2024. The ELA identifies an established employment land supply of 254ha in Aberdeen City, of which 192ha is identified as marketable and 42 ha immediately available. Furthermore, paragraph 3.14 of the ALDP highlights the healthy position in relation to the supply of employment land, which meant that no new employment land allocations were included in the 2023 ALDP.

  The application site covers just c. 0.3ha. This indicates that the redevelopment of the site for an alternative use would not result in a shortage of available employment land.

- Context and location of the site within the business and industrial area

  Although the site is located within a Business and Industrial area, it lies on the periphery of the Altens Industrial Estate, to the south of the main vehicular entry point to the wider estate on Hareness Road. As such, whilst bound to the south-east by Altens Lorry Park, the site is not surrounded by industrial uses that would be incompatible with proposed residential use, as could be the case further into the estate. The site is bound to the south by an existing residential property, with a wider suburban residential area (Redmoss) beyond the Wellington Road dual carriageway to the west. Existing established tree belts run along both the southern and eastern edges of the site which help to partially separate it visually from the neighbouring industrial uses to the south-east. It is therefore appropriate to acknowledge that the context and character of the site differs from that of a more typical industrial estate environment that is found farther to the east.

Landscaping and amenity

Policy B1 also requires new development to be appropriately landscaped and to ensure no adverse impacts on the amenity of any neighbouring uses. New soft landscaping would be planted and the majority of trees within and neighbouring the site are to be retained. The proposed residential use would be compatible with the existing residential use of the neighbouring detached dwellinghouse to the south and, with a new close-boarded timber boundary fence proposed to be erected along the mutual boundary, the privacy of the existing dwelling would not be affected by the new use and its current level of amenity would be largely unaffected.

Summary

To summarise, whilst there is an oversupply of business and industrial land in the city and the building has been marketed unsuccessfully for continued/resumed office use, therefore the loss of the existing office use is acceptable, the new, noise-sensitive residential use, would likely preclude the future Class 5 or 6 use of the neighbouring sites to the north and east (currently vacant). As such, the development would not comprise a Class 4, 5 or 6 use, nor would it sufficiently safeguard adjacent land, zoned for business and industrial use, for that purpose. The proposed development is thus contrary, in principle, to the aims and requirements of Policy B1 of the ALDP,

and presents some tension with Policy 26 of NPF4, despite the aforementioned material considerations.

Housing on land not allocated for housing in the LDP

Paragraph c) of Policy 16 (Quality Homes) of NPF4 is supportive, in principle, of proposals for new homes that improve affordability and choice by being adaptable to changing and diverse needs, and which address identified gaps in provision, including affordable homes and adaptable and wheelchair accessible homes.

The proposed development, which would provide eight wheelchair accessible homes on the ground floor level, and a further sixteen mainstream affordable homes on the first floor, is thus compliant, in principle, with Policy 16 c).

However, paragraph f) of Policy 16 states:

Development proposals for new homes on land not allocated for housing in the LDP will only be supported in limited circumstances where:

i. the proposal is supported by an agreed timescale for build-out; and
ii. the proposal is otherwise consistent with the plan spatial strategy and other relevant policies including local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods;
iii. and either:
- *delivery of sites is happening earlier than identified in the deliverable housing land pipeline. This will be determined by reference to two consecutive years of the Housing Land Audit evidencing substantial delivery earlier than pipeline timescales and that general trend being sustained; or*
- *the proposal is consistent with policy on rural homes; or*
- *the proposal is for smaller scale opportunities within an existing settlement boundary; or*
- *the proposal is for the delivery of less than 50 affordable homes as part of a local authority supported affordable housing plan.*

In relation to criterion (i), the applicant has advised that, should planning permission be granted, the intention is to commence development immediately, with completion envisaged towards the end of 2026.

In relation to criterion (ii), as noted above the site lies within a business and industrial area, as zoned in the ALDP, and the proposed development is contrary to Policy B1. Although it is noted that the site lies in a relatively accessible location, nearby to bus stops and within 20 minutes' walking distance of local employment, amenities and shops (including food retailer Aldi on the opposite side of Hareness Road), the surrounding pedestrian environment is not particularly safe or welcoming, with no signalised crossings over Hareness Road between the site and Aldi, or safely accessible from the nearest signalised crossing over Wellington Road for northbound bus stops (see the 'Transport & accessibility, and 20-minute neighbourhoods' section below for further detail). As such, the application site is not considered to be otherwise consistent with the plan spatial strategy. Whilst it is compliant with some other relevant policies, such as those in relation to the sustainable reuse of brownfield land and vacant buildings, it presents tension with other policies such as Policy 15 (Local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods).

In relation to criterion (iii) of Policy 16, the proposal is both for a small-scale opportunity within an existing settlement boundary and would also deliver less than 50 affordable homes. However,

whilst the development is an identified key project within the Council's Aberdeen Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2025-2030 (SHIP), it is identified as being for 'specialist provision', rather than mainstream affordable housing. The supporting information submitted by the applicant advises that the ground floor flats would accommodate bariatric independent living, with ad-hoc care provision. The Council's Housing Strategy team have advised that specialist provision accommodation, including bariatric accommodation, is needed in the city, as evidenced in the latest housing need and demand assessment and the Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership's specialist provision marketing statement. The Housing Strategy team advise that, at the moment, there is no Registered Social Landlord (RSL) that will develop the building for specialist accommodation unless planning permission is first granted for general needs affordable housing.

Whilst the provision of affordable homes, and accessible homes for in-demand, specialist independent living accommodation in particular, is acceptable in principle, the intent of Policy 16 is to: *'encourage promote and facilitate the delivery of more high quality, affordable and sustainable homes, in the right locations….'* The first policy outcome goes on to seek good quality homes *'at the heart of great places'.*

Summary

Further details are set out in the following sections of the evaluation but, to summarise, the site is considered to be an unsuitable location for housing, both on business and industrial land but also immediately adjacent to a busy dual carriageway, somewhat disconnected from the nearest residential communities and poorly connected in terms of safe, welcoming pedestrian infrastructure to the nearest amenities. As such, despite the policy support, in principle, for affordable and wheelchair accessible housing, the proposed development is therefore considered to be contrary to the requirements of Policy 16(f)(ii) of NPF4.

Climate change, climate mitigation, and the reuse of brownfield land and empty buildings

Policy 1 (Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises) of NPF4 requires significant weight to be given to the global climate and nature crises in the consideration of all development proposals. Policy 2 (Climate mitigation and adaptation) requires development proposals to be designed and sited to minimise lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions as far as possible, and to adapt to current and future risks from climate change.

Policy 9 (Brownfield, Vacant and Derelict Land and Empty Buildings) of NPF4 is fully supportive of development proposals that will result in the sustainable reuse of brownfield land, including vacant buildings, taking into account their suitability for conversion to other uses. Given the need to conserve embodied energy, demolition is the least preferred option. Policy 12 (Zero Waste) of NPF4 states that development proposals will be supported where they reuse existing buildings and infrastructure.

The proposed development is relatively small-scale such that it would not, in itself, make any significant direct difference to the global climate and nature crises, nor to climate mitigation and adaptation. However, the proposed development would repurpose an existing, long-term vacant building in an accessible location within the existing Aberdeen settlement boundary for a reasonable number of affordable residential flats, which would make a contribution towards addressing housing need in the city and reducing future pressure on the release of further greenfield land elsewhere within the city for housing in less sustainable locations. Furthermore, the existing building's walls and roof would be upgraded to meet current building regulations in terms of energy efficiency and it is therefore considered that the development would be inherently

sustainable and could indirectly help to tackle the climate crisis and present opportunities to minimise greenhouse gas emissions. The proposals are therefore compliant, in principle, with the aims and requirements of Policies 1, 2, 9 and 12 of NPF4.

Amenity for residents

Policy D2 (Amenity) of the ALDP sets out various criteria which new residential development should meet, in order to ensure that its occupants would benefit from a satisfactory quality of residential amenity. These criteria include: adequate levels of privacy, minimum space standards for internal floor space and private external amenity space, minimal shading of external spaces, and satisfactory levels of daylight receipt and outlook.

Policy WB1 (Healthy Developments) of the ALDP states that: '*Developments are required to provide healthy environments, reduce environmental stresses, facilitate physical activity and promote physical and mental wellbeing.'*

Space standards, outlook, daylight receipt and privacy

The Council's Aberdeen Planning Guidance (APG) on Amenity & Space Standards seeks a minimum internal floor area of 52sqm for a one-bedroom dwelling and 66 sqm for a two-bedroom dwelling. However, the APG also notes that reusing and converting existing building stock is encouraged, as a more sustainable approach than demolition and rebuild, and advises that the Council may need to take a flexible approach to space standards due to the often constrained nature of converting existing buildings. The nine, one-bedroom ground floor flats would all be wheelchair accessible and would exceed the minimum space standard expected by the APG, with unit sizes ranging between 67 sqm and 93 sqm. On the first floor level however, the majority of the flats would be smaller than the guideline minimum space standard, with most of the flats ranging between 45 sqm and 50 sqm in size, with just two of the one-bed flats exceeding 52 sqm (53.2 sqm and 55.8 sqm respectively. The one two-bedroom unit at first floor level would have a floor area of 57.7 sqm, which is below the 66 sqm minimum space standard sought in the APG.

Albeit lower than the guideline minimum floor sizes, it is acknowledged that the first floor level flats would not be significantly smaller than the guideline minimum and their size is dictated, to an extent, by the existing floorplates and position of stairwells in the building. The number of units could, however, be reduced in order to increase the size of the flats and achieve a greater level of internal amenity.

The Amenity & Space Standards APG seeks dual aspect outlooks for dwellings wherever possible, noting the multiple amenity benefits for properties with more than one aspect, including better daylight and sunlight receipt, enhanced outlook, natural ventilation and the ability to position bedrooms towards a quieter aspect is the development is on a busy road.

Although nine of the flats would benefit from a dual aspect outlook, the majority would have a single-aspect. Whilst desirable for all residential units to be dual aspect, it is acknowledged that the single aspect layout for the majority of the units is largely dictated by the existing floorplates and the position of stairwells. The provision of access to multiple stairwells for all first floor flats for escape purposes, combined with the limited width of the building, necessitates a single-aspect layout, with a communal corridor running centrally throughout the building at first floor level.

The flats would all generally benefit from sufficient glazing, including full height windows and Juliet balconies for first floor level living rooms, and glazed doors into garden areas at ground floor level. The outlook for the majority of the flats would be reasonable given the context of the wider area,

with views out onto a mix of private or communal garden areas for most of the ground floor flats, and similar views from the first floor flats, from an elevated position. The retention of the existing, established tree belts along the southern and eastern boundaries would partially obscure views of the neighbouring industrial estate to the east and would provide a relatively attractive outlook for residents in those directions. The trees would, however, cast some shadow, particularly when in leaf in the summer months, that would partially restrict daylight receipt for windows on the building's rear (north-east) elevation, at ground floor level in particular. The trees would also cast some shade onto the private and communal garden areas to the rear and side (south) of the building, although the removal of two trees in the rear curtilage would help to increase daylight receipt for some flats.

In terms of privacy, privacy buffer planting strips would be placed in front of all front elevation windows onto communally accessible areas, in order to maximise privacy for occupants, whilst four of the ground floor units would also have access to, and overlook, their own private garden areas to the rear. None of the flats would be overlooked to any significant degree by each other, nor from any neighbouring properties, including the adjacent dwelling to the south, as a 2 m high close-boarded timber fence and hedge are proposed to be installed/planted along the southern boundary.

Open space

Policy NE2 (Green and Blue Infrastructure) of the ALDP notes that biodiverse, useable and appropriate open space will be required in new developments, including on brownfield sites, although the potentially constrained nature of brownfield sites will be taken into consideration if it is not possible to meet the on-site open space standards set out in the Council's Aberdeen Planning Guidance on Open Space & Green Infrastructure. The Open Space and Green Infrastructure APG seeks a minimum of 2.8 hectares of open space per 1,000 people in new residential developments. With 23 one-bedroom flats and one two-bedroom flat proposed, the number of people estimated to be likely to live in the development would be 32, equating to an open space requirement of 896 sqm of open space. The useable area of communal open space (amenity lawn and benches) to the south of the building would be approximately 250 sqm in size, with a 50 sqm communal drying green to the rear and further, unusable areas of tree and shrub planting also to be provided within the development. Approximately 300 sqm of private garden ground would also be provided, split between four of the ground floor units. The total provision of communal open space would thus be approximately 300 sqm, a deficit of nearly 600 sqm compared with the minimum amount sought in the Open Space and Green Infrastructure APG. As noted above, the areas of external amenity space within the development (both private and communal) would also be shaded for large parts of the day, via a combination of existing trees and, for the rear curtilage private gardens, by the building itself.

A financial contribution is sought in order to mitigate the potential impacts of the development on existing public open spaces nearby, but it is noted that, aside from Tullos Wood and Kincorth Hill, the nearest formal areas of open space (playing fields) are not in particularly close proximity to the site, being approximately 1 km and 1.5 km away in Cove and Kincorth respectively.

Whilst the development would have an open space deficit as per the Council's APG, on balance, taking into consideration the constrained nature of the brownfield site, it is considered that the proposed development would provide a sufficient amount of open space. However, the quality and useability of the open space to be provided would be compromised somewhat by shading cast by existing trees outwith the site, and by the building itself. As such, the open space to be provided is not fully compliant with the aspirations and requirements of Policy NE2 of the ALDP and the associated interim APG.

Noise

Policy 23 (Health and Safety), paragraph (e) of NPF4 and Policy WB3 (Noise) of the ALDP both seek to ensure that noise-sensitive developments, such as new housing, would be adequately protected from noise emissions generated by neighbouring noisy uses or other background noise, with paragraph (e) of Policy 23 noting that the 'agent of change' principle applies to noise-sensitive development. The applicant submitted a noise impact assessment, undertaken by a qualified acoustician, which finds that, without any mitigation, the noise emissions from vehicles on the adjacent, heavily trafficked Wellington Road dual carriageway would be of a 'large/very large' level of significance during both the daytime and night time. The impact of noise emissions from nearby industrial units and associated mechanical plant within the neighbouring Altens Lorry Park was found to be negligible however, and no other noise sources were identified that could have the potential to disturb residents.

The NIA recommends, however, that subject to the implementation of various mitigation measures, including: the provision of double glazed windows with a 'closed-window' scenario and acoustic trickle vents, the internal noise levels would be sufficiently reduced to meet the World Health Organisation guidelines for both daytime and night time maximum noise levels. The NIA also recommends that 2 metre high close-boarded timber fencing is installed in order to provide an acoustic barrier to protect the outdoor amenity spaces within the proposed development from road traffic and other ambient background noise. The recommended noise mitigation measures have been incorporated into the design of the proposed development.

The Council's Environmental Health Service have reviewed, and accept, the findings of the applicant's NIA. Therefore, if the application were to be approved, a condition could be attached requiring all of the noise mitigation measures to be implemented prior to the occupation of any units, which would ensure the proposed flats would all benefit from a satisfactory level of amenity in terms of protection from external sources of noise, generally in accordance with the requirements of Policies 23 of NPF4 and WB3 of the ALDP.

As per the Council's Noise APG and the Scottish Government's Planning Advice Note 1/2011 (Planning and Noise) however, it is preferable if satisfactory internal noise levels can be achieved for residents within dwellings without the need for a closed-window strategy. The proposal thus presents some tension with Policies 23 and WB3, and the associated APG.

Summary

To summarise, it is considered that the siting and layout of the proposed development would pose several challenges in relation to achieving a satisfactory level of residential amenity for the future occupants, due to its surrounding context, neighbouring a heavily trafficked dual carriageway and industrial uses, and the constrained floor areas, outlook and daylight receipt for several of the proposed flats. The amount and quality of the open space to be provided also fails to meet the minimum standards generally sought in the relevant policies and APG.

Whilst the constraints involved in converting an existing building for residential use are acknowledged, it is considered that, on balance, an insufficient quality of residential amenity would be created for future occupants of the proposed development (issue 3 in representations), thus the proposals are contrary to the aims and requirements of Policies D2 and WB1 of the ALDP, and the associated relevant APGs for the aforementioned reasons. The development also presents some tension with the aims and requirements of Policies NE2 and WB3 of the ALDP, and Policy 23 of NPF4, in that the amount and quality of on-site open space would be below that typically sought in

new residential development, and an undesirable closed window strategy would be required in order to achieve satisfactory internal protection from external sources of noise.

Design quality and placemaking

Policy 14 (Design, quality and place) of NPF4 requires development proposals to be designed to improve the quality of an area whether in urban or rural locations and regardless of scale. Policy 14 of NPF4 and Policy D1 (Quality Placemaking) of the ALDP require all new development to comply with the six qualities of successful places. The qualities of successful placemaking differ slightly between NPF4 and the ALDP, therefore as the ALDP was adopted more recently, it takes precedence in the event of any difference in policy between the two documents. The proposed development is therefore be assessed against each of the six qualities of successful placemaking as defined in Policy D1 of the ALDP as follows:

- Distinctive

  The proposed development would retain and re-use the existing building, with a modern wall cladding system to be applied to enhance the building's appearance. The absence of any new-build elements, with the exception of infilling the existing undercroft car parking area, would ensure that the development would not have any adverse impacts on the streetscape. Most of the existing trees within and bordering the site would be retained and supplemented with new tree planting and soft landscaping, proportionate to the scale and nature of the development, which would soften and enhance its setting.

- Welcoming

  The building would incorporate new windows and doors, including patio doors and Juliet balconies, and it would have a clearly defined entrance, thus giving the building an appropriate frontage, a more welcoming, domestic appearance than the existing situation, and legible wayfinding throughout the site.

- Safe and pleasant

  The internal layout of the building has been designed to ensure that all public areas would be sufficiently overlooked, thus maximising natural surveillance and active frontages at ground floor level, and minimising opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour. Private gardens would be provided for some of the ground floor flats and all residents would have access to a communal lawn area. Whilst private and communal open space is proposed, the size and quality of that open space is limited. The new boundary treatments would all be of a domestic scale and appearance, such that they would not detract from the character or visual amenity of the area. Whilst the development itself would be relatively safe and pleasant, the site's location immediately adjacent to a busy dual carriageway, another busy road (Hareness Road) and neighbouring an industrial estate, would not provide a particularly pleasant residential environment when taking into consideration the wider context.

- Easy to move around

  It is noted in the following section of the evaluation that the pedestrian linkages between the site and the nearest northbound bus stops, nearby shops and other amenities to the north in particular, are not ideal, particularly for vulnerable users or those with mobility issues, given the absence of a formal, signalised pedestrian crossing over Hareness Road. In the

event the application was to be approved, however, a condition could be attached requiring the installation of such a crossing, in order to provide enhanced pedestrian connectivity to the wider area. The proposed development itself would be easy to move around, with external pedestrian footpaths and access to both private and communal garden areas.

- Adaptable

  The proposed development has been designed so that the ground floor units would all be wheelchair accessible, and capable of accommodating specialist provision accommodation, if required.

- Resource efficient

  The proposed development would sustainably convert and re-use an existing, vacant building and brownfield site to provide new affordable housing.

To summarise, the proposed development would re-purpose an existing vacant building to provide affordable housing. The existing building is not of any particular architectural merit and the refurbishment and recladding of the building would represent a visual enhancement to the localised streetscape, without harming any key views in the wider surrounding area. Whilst the proposed development is generally compatible with the majority of the six qualities of successful placemaking, it is considered that the wider context of the surrounding area is not particularly pleasant or easy to move around, therefore the proposals present some tension with the aims and aspirations of Policy D1 of the ALDP and Policy 14 of NPF4.

Transport & accessibility, and 20-minute neighbourhoods

Policies 13 (Sustainable Transport) of NPF4 and T2 (Sustainable Transport) of the ALDP require developments to demonstrate that sufficient measures have been taken to minimise traffic generated and to maximise opportunities for sustainable and active travel. Policy 13, paragraph (b), also places an emphasis on the provision of *'easy, segregated and safe links to local facilities via walking, wheeling and cycling networks'*, and requires developments to *'incorporate safety measures including safe crossings for walking and wheeling'*.

Policy T3 (Parking) states that low and zero car developments will be supported in suitable locations where there is adequate access to sustainable and active travel. Where this is not possible, development shall be required to comply with the parking standards set out in Aberdeen Planning Guidance: Transport and Accessibility.

Policy 15 (Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods) of NPF4 requires development proposals to contribute to local living including, where relevant to 20-minute neighbourhoods. Facilities and amenities outlined in Policy 15 as contributing towards successful 20-minute neighbourhoods include: public transport and safe, high-quality walking, wheeling and cycling networks, employment, shopping, health facilities, schools, open space and affordable housing.

Public transport, pedestrian safety and accessibility

The application site lies approximately 200m from the nearest bus stops (to the south) on both sides of Wellington Road. These bus stops are served by multiple regular bus services to and from the city centre and the south of the city. In this regard, the site is well connected in terms of public transport. However, although there are bus stops in close proximity to the site, the northbound bus stops are situated on the opposite side of Wellington Road, which is a heavily trafficked dual

carriageway at the section adjacent to the application site. Although there are some dropped kerbs which provide an informal crossing point over the dual carriageway (with a rest point in the central reservation) linking the northbound and southbound bus stops, the nearest safe (signalled) pedestrian crossings over Wellington Road are either 165 m to the north, on the opposite side of Hareness Road which itself does not incorporate any signalised crossing points, or 480 m to the south, towards the Souter Head roundabout.

As such, although the site does lie in close proximity to bus stops, the pedestrian accessibility to the northbound bus stops, which would provide public transport access to the city centre, would involve crossing either Wellington Road or Hareness Road via non-signalised crossing points. This is not ideal from a pedestrian safety perspective, particularly for those less mobile such as wheelchair users.

In terms of the aspiration for all new development to comply with the 20-minute neighbourhoods principle set out in Policy 15 of NPF4, the site lies within 20 minutes' walking distance of some shops (including food retailers: Aldi and Lidl), a pub/restaurant (The Wellington), areas of open space and other facilities and amenities on Wellington Circle, in Kincorth and towards Cove (including Altens Community Centre). There is also a significant amount of employment land nearby where residents of the development could potentially work. However, as with the nearest northbound bus stops, the main pedestrian routes connecting the site with the nearest local facilities and amenities would largely involve the need to use non-signalised crossing points over heavily trafficked roads, some of which (Hareness Road in particular) see a significant amount of heavy goods vehicles. It is thus considered that whilst the site does lie within 20 minutes' walk of various facilities, amenities and public transport stops, the pedestrian networks surrounding the site are not particularly safe or high quality, when factoring in the requirement to cross nearby, busy roads (issue 3 in representations). The proposed development therefore fails to comply fully with the aims and aspirations of Policies 13 and 15 of NPF4, and presents some tension with Policy T2 of the ALDP.

More than 100% cycle parking (26 spaces) is proposed, to be appropriately located internally at ground floor level, which is acceptable in accordance with the relevant policies and guidance.

Car parking

The application site lies in an Outer City Area, as defined in the Council's Transport & Accessibility Aberdeen Planning Guidance. Although the site lies within walking distance of public transport services and various facilities and amenities, it is acknowledged that residents of the proposed development may be likely to own cars and the provision of dedicated off-street parking is thus desirable. The Transport & Accessibility APG incorporates a guideline figure of 0.8 car parking spaces per unit for housing association / social rented housing developments in the Outer City. The car parking requirement for the 24 housing association flats therefore equates to 20 spaces (rounded up from 19.2). The proposed development would incorporate 26 car parking spaces, including two disabled bays and one EV charging point. As such there would be a slight overprovision as per the Interim APG guidance but the small amount of additional spaces is minimal and would facilitate one space per unit. It is thus considered that sufficient car parking would be provided for the proposed development and the proposals are therefore compliant with Policy T3 (Parking) of the ALDP.

Road traffic and road safety

The existing site incorporates approximately twice the amount of car parking spaces that are proposed for the new development. The proposal would thus result in a net decrease in private

vehicle trips compared with the authorised use (were it to be re-occupied for Class 4 use), and would not have any significant impact on the local road network (issue 2 in representations).

The existing left-in, left-out vehicular entrance to the site would be retained, and would thus avoid any potential for road safety issues on Wellington Road. Within the site, sufficient aisle widths would be achieved, allowing for emergency vehicles and bin lorries to enter and exit the site in a forward gear, and minimising the potential for any road or pedestrian safety issues within the site itself.

Affordable housing

Policy 16 (Quality Homes) of NPF4 and Policy H5 (Affordable Housing) of the ALDP require 25% of all housing developments of 5 or more units to be provided as affordable housing. The proposed development would comprise 100% affordable housing (social housing to be operated by a Registered Social Landlord). The proposal is in the Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP), earmarked for specialist accommodation, and would significantly exceed the minimum 25% affordable housing requirement as set out in Policies 16 and H5. Due to the housing mix of the development being predominantly one-bed flats, and thus not fully in accordance with the requirements of Policy H3 (Housing Mix) of the ALDP (see below), were the application to be approved, all of the units could be secured as affordable housing in perpetuity, via either a condition or Section 75 legal agreement.

Density

Policy H3 (Density) of the ALDP seeks an appropriate net density of development on all housing allocations and windfall sites. Whilst the policy doesn't specify a minimum density for residential developments on sites under one hectare in size, it notes that sites over one hectare in size should have a minimum density of 50 dwellings per hectare, with higher densities expected within the city centre, on public transport nodes and on brownfield sites.

The site is approximately 3,200sqm in size and with 24 flats proposed, that equates to a density of approximately 75 dwellings per hectare. Such a density is considered to be compatible with the Policy H3 minimum density sought for larger sites and would represent the efficient and sustainable re-use of the existing building on an accessible brownfield site. The proposals are thus considered to be of a satisfactory density considering the context of the site and the surrounding area, in accordance with Policy H3.

Housing mix

Policy 16 (Quality Homes) of NPF4 is supportive of proposals for new homes that improve affordability and choice, and which address identified gaps in provision, including wheelchair accessible homes, affordable homes, supported accommodation, care homes and sheltered housing.

Policy H4 (Housing Mix and Need) of the ALDP seeks an appropriate housing mix in housing developments to reflect diverse housing need, including homes for older and disabled people. The policy also requires housing to be designed with accessibility and future adaptability in mind, and requires a suitable mix of dwelling types to be provided in smaller developments, in the interests of placemaking and local housing need and demand.

Although the flats would be predominantly one-bedroom units, they would include eight wheelchair accessible units and the proposed development would comprise 100% affordable flats, to be

operated by Registered Social Landlord. The proposed development is included within the Council's SHIP and there is demand for one-bed affordable flats in the city, with two and three-bed flats in low demand for social rent. Therefore, based on the current need for one-bed social-rented flats in the city, and wheelchair accessible accommodation, the lack of a mix of dwelling types and tenure for the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in the instance, in accordance with Policy 16 of NPF4 and despite some minor conflict with the aims of Policy H4 of the ALDP.

Trees, landscaping and biodiversity

Policy 6 (Forestry, Woodland and Trees) of NPF4 and Policy NE5 (Trees and Woodland) of the ALDP both seek the retention of existing trees wherever possible, and Policy NE5 requires appropriate replacement planting where any trees require to be felled for development.

Policy D5 (Landscape Design) of the ALDP requires development proposals to be designed with an effective, functional and attractive landscape framework supported by clear design objectives, with the level of detail appropriate to the scale of development.

Policy 3 (Biodiversity) of NPF4 requires proposals for local development *'to include appropriate measures to conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity, in accordance with national and local guidance. Measures should be proportionate to the nature and scale of development.'*

An established tree belt runs along the site's southern and eastern boundaries, although the majority of those trees are situated outwith the site boundary. A cluster of smaller trees is positioned at the front of the site, adjacent to the site access, whilst three trees are positioned within the rear (east) curtilage. With the exception of two Norway Maple trees in the rear curtilage, all of the existing trees both within, and adjacent to, the site are proposed to be retained. Although some works are proposed within the root protection areas of the southern and eastern tree belts, the works in those areas would be limited to the replacement of areas of hardstanding with soft landscaping, thus likely enhancing the long-term health of those trees by providing better access to water and nutrients for the roots, where they are present within the site boundary.

The two Norway Maple trees in the rear curtilage are proposed to be felled in order to reduce shading of external amenity space and windows. As part of the development, it is proposed to plant a total of fifteen new trees of varying species and sizes, alongside a number of shrubs, boundary hedges, plants and a mixture of wildflower and amenity grass. The loss of the two existing trees is justified and would be outweighed by the net gain in tree cover on the site, in accordance with Policies 6 and NE5, whilst the wider soft-landscaping scheme would soften and enhance the visual amenity of the site, compared with the existing situation.

Given the relatively constrained, brownfield nature of the site, and the need for useable areas of private and communal open space, it is not possible to incorporate a significant amount of new landscaping but nevertheless, the development would be appropriately landscaped, in accordance with the requirements of Policy D5 of the ALDP. The proposals would also provide a small-scale, localised biodiversity gain for the site compared to the existing situation and it is therefore considered that the proposals are acceptable in accordance with Policy 3 of NPF4.

Planning obligations

Policy 18 (Infrastructure First) of NPF4 and Policy I1 (Infrastructure Delivery and Planning Obligations) of the ALDP both require any deficiencies in local public facilities or infrastructure that would arise as a result of a proposed new development to be addressed via the payment of

financial contributions, where necessary. The Council's Developer Obligations team has reviewed the proposals in line with the Council's Planning Obligations Supplementary Guidance and in consultation with various stakeholders, and they advise that financial contributions are required in order to offset the impact of the proposed development on the local core path network, healthcare facilities, open space and community facilities.

In terms of impacts on local schools, the Council's Schools Estates team advise that, on the basis that the proposed development would comprise predominantly one-bedroom units, it would not be expected that these would accommodate children, therefore the development is unlikely to have any discernible impact on pupil numbers within local schools. Therefore no education contribution is sought in this instance.

The applicant advised that they are agreeable to paying the required contributions, which would be secured via a Section 75 legal agreement, had the application been approved. Therefore, had the application been approved, a legal agreement could have been agreed to secure the planning obligations, thus the proposed development is acceptable in accordance with the requirements of Policies 18 of NPF4 and I1 of the ALDP.

Flooding and drainage

Policy 22 (Flood Risk and Water Management) of NPF4 and Policy NE4 (Our Water Environment) of the ALDP both require new development to not be at risk of flooding and be adequately drained, thereby not increasing the risk of flooding to any neighbouring properties. The policies also require new developments to connect to the public sewer for foul drainage and for surface water to be drained sustainably on-site, without any new connections into the public combined sewer network.

No changes to the existing drainage arrangements are proposed and given the nature of the proposed development, with no new built elements outwith the footprint of the existing building, and a net reduction in the amount of hardstanding due to the formation of new soft landscaped garden ground, the development would be adequately drained and would not pose a flood risk to any neighbouring properties, nor would it be at risk of flooding itself.

Scottish Water have confirmed that there is sufficient capacity in Nigg Waste Water Treatment Works to service the proposed development and they have requested that the developer submits a direct enquiry to Scottish Water to ascertain whether there is sufficient capacity in the Invercannie Water Treatment Works to accommodate the development.

The proposed development would not be at risk of flooding and would be adequately drained, ensuring no increased risk of flooding to any neighbouring uses and no new connections to the public sewer network – all in accordance with Policy 22 of NPF4 and NE4 of the ALDP.

Waste management

Policies 12 (Zero Waste) of NPF4 and R5 (Waste Management Requirements for New Development) of the ALDP require all new developments to have sufficient space for the storage of general waste, recyclable materials and compostable wastes where appropriate.

The Council's Waste Strategy team advised that the development would require to accommodate five general waste bins, five general waste bins (all 1280l) and one food waste container. A bin store large enough to accommodate the aforementioned bins is proposed to be erected towards the front of the site and a swept path analysis drawing demonstrates that a bin lorry would be able to enter and exit the site in a forward gear. As such, the proposals are compliant with Policies 12

and R5.

Low & zero carbon buildings, and water efficiency

Policy R6 (Low and Zero Carbon Buildings and Water Efficiency) of the ALDP requires new buildings to demonstrate that a proportion of the carbon emissions reduction target set by Scottish Building Standards is met through the installation and operation of low and zero carbon generating technologies and to reduce pressure on water abstraction from the River Dee through the incorporation of water saving technologies. These requirements are not applicable to changes of use or the conversion of existing buildings however, thus the proposed development does not conflict with Policy R6.

Policy R8 (Heat Networks) of the ALDP requires developments (including conversions exceeding 1,000sqm floorspace) within the city centre and/or within an identified heat network zone to connect to an existing heat network provide an alternative form of on-site sustainable heating or cooling. Although the building exceeds 1,000sqm in floor area, the site does not lie within the city centre and at the time of writing no Aberdeen Planning Guidance has yet been produced in relation to Heat Networks, therefore Policy R8 is not applicable to the proposed development.

Digital infrastructure

Policy CI1 (Digital Infrastructure) of the ALDP requires all new residential and commercial development to have access to modern, up-to-date high-speed communications infrastructure. The application site lies in an area of the city where high-speed broadband is known to be readily available, thus the proposals are acceptable in accordance with Policy CI1.

Suicide risk

Policy 23 (Health and Safety), paragraph (f) of NPF4 requires development proposals to be designed to take into account suicide risk. The proposed development would not incorporate any particular features that would increase the risk of suicide, being a low-rise residential development with appropriate associated landscaping and boundary treatments. The proposals are thus considered to be generally acceptable and in accordance with Policy 23(f) of NPF4.

Matters raised in representations

Matters 2 and 3 raised in the representations received from third parties are addressed in the foregoing evaluation. The remaining matters not addressed above are addressed, in turn, as follows:

1. *There is too much housing in Aberdeen. The site should remain in commercial use*

   Response: The Aberdeen City Council Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee declared a housing emergency in Aberdeen on 5 September 2024. There is a need for additional housing in Aberdeen and, in particular, there is an identified need for one-bedroom and wheelchair-accessible affordable flats. Nevertheless, even if there were deemed to be sufficient housing in Aberdeen, overprovision of housing (perceived or actual) would not be a material reason to refuse a planning application. As noted in the above evaluation, Policy B1 of the ALDP does state that land zoned for business and industrial use should be retained for uses in Class 4, 5 or 6.

1. *The access to the site is not suitable, and could have road safety implications*

Response: The existing vehicular and pedestrian access from Wellington Road and the associated, adopted footway, would be retained. The vehicular access point is a left-in-left-out arrangement which minimises the risk for road safety issues on Wellington Road. The Council's Roads Development Management team have reviewed the proposed development and do not have any road safety concerns.

2. *There are other sites elsewhere that are more suited to affordable housing.*

   Response: Each planning application is assessed on its own merits and there is no policy requirement for a sequential test to take place in relation to the location of new affordable housing in the city. Nevertheless, as set out in the above evaluation, it is considered that the application site is not suitable for residential use.

Summary

To summarise, the creation of residential accommodation on land zoned for business and industrial use is contrary, in principle, to Policy B1 (Business and Industrial Land) of the ALDP and presents tension with Policy 26 (Business and Industry) of NPF4. The proposed residential use would also not safeguard neighbouring land zoned for business and industrial use (developed or undeveloped) from other, conflicting development types, as required by Policy B1.

Furthermore, the development would not create a satisfactory level of amenity for residential use, partially due to on-site constraints (relatively small floor areas, single aspect outlooks, daylight & sunlight receipt and on-site open space deficits) - contrary to Policy D2 (Amenity) of the ALDP and the Amenity and Space Standards APG and presenting tension with Policy NE2 (Green and Blue Infrastructure) of the ALDP - but also due to the location of the site within the surrounding context, immediately neighbouring a busy dual carriageway to the west and an industrial estate to the east. As a result, the development would be somewhat remote from the nearest residential communities and not sited in a particularly pleasant or easy to move around environment, contrary to a number of the six qualities of successful placemaking as set out in Policy 14 (Design, Quality and Place) of NPF4 and Policy D1 (Quality Placemaking) of the ALDP. Whilst mitigation measures are proposed to ensure adequate protection for residents from external sources of noise, the mitigation measures include a closed-window strategy, which is not a preferred solution as set out in the Council's Noise APG and Planning Advice Note 1/2011, thus the proposal presents some tension with Policies 23 (Health and Safety) of NPF4 and WB3 (Noise) of the ALDP. Overall, it is thus considered that the development would not provide a healthy environment that 'reduces environmental stresses and promotes physical and mental wellbeing', contrary to the aims of Policy WB1 (Healthy Developments) of the ALDP.

Although the development would be connected into the adopted footpath network and would be sited within a 20 minute walk of various shops, amenities, public transport routes and employment land, the surrounding pedestrian network is not of a particularly high quality, especially for those with mobility issues, as accessing the majority of the aforementioned amenities would involve crossing over Hareness Road and/or Wellington Road, with a lack of safe, signalised crossing points in the immediate vicinity of the development. The proposed development therefore fails to comply fully with Policies 13 (Sustainable Transport) and 15 (Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods) of NPF4 and presents some tension with Policy T2 (Sustainable Travel) of the ALDP. Whilst the provision of a suitable, safe means of crossing Hareness Road could be conditioned were the application to be approved it would not, in itself, address the wider aforementioned concerns and policy conflicts of the proposed development.

The aforementioned issues relating to the safeguarding of land zoned for business and industrial use, quality of residential amenity and pedestrian connectivity are all also likely to be exacerbated by future proposals for the recently approved Energy Transition Zone (which the site and surrounding land fall within the masterplan area for), and the use of Wellington Road and Hareness Road as the main vehicular route (Aberdeen South Harbour Link Road) serving the Aberdeen South Harbour. As such, there is likely to be an increase in the use of the immediately adjacent roads in the future by heavy goods vehicles and other traffic.

As the site is an unsuitable location for housing, both in terms of the land use zoning in the ALDP but also in terms of the conflict with the aforementioned policies relating to amenity and connectivity, the proposed development is therefore also contrary to the requirements of Policy 16 (Quality Homes), paragraph (f)(ii) of NPF4 which sets out the limited circumstances under which proposals for new homes on land not allocated for housing in the LDP can be supported.

It is acknowledged that the proposed development does have some merit and complies with several policies of the development plan, particularly in relation to the proposed provision of specialist, accessible affordable housing and the sustainable re-use of a long-term vacant building and brownfield site, with associated benefits in combating climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions at a local level. However, it is considered that the benefits of the proposed development, the compliance with various policies and the associated material considerations noted in the foregoing evaluation are not of a sufficient weight to outweigh the aforementioned issues and conflicts with the other policies as set out above. The proposed development is therefore considered to be unacceptable on balance, is contrary to the development plan, and there are no material considerations that otherwise justify a departure from that conclusion.

DECISION

Refuse

REASON FOR DECISION

1. The provision of residential accommodation on land zoned for business and industrial use is contrary to the aims and requirements of Policy B1 (Business and Industrial Land) of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 (ALDP), being a use that is not compatible with business and industrial uses and which would not safeguard neighbouring land (developed or undeveloped) from other, conflicting development types.

2. The proposed development would not be a suitable location for residential use, being somewhat remote from existing residential communities and sited immediately adjacent to a busy dual carriageway and industrial estate. It would thus not be particularly pleasant or easy to move around, contrary to Policy 14 (Design, Quality and Place) of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and Policy D1 (Quality Placemaking) of the ALDP. The development itself would also not provide a satisfactory level of residential amenity conducive to the health and wellbeing of future occupants, with deficits in terms of internal floor areas, outlook, daylight & sunlight receipt and the amount and quality of on-site open space, contrary to Policies D2 (Amenity) and WB1 (Healthy Developments) of the ALDP.

3. Although the development would be connected into the adopted footpath network and would be sited within a 20 minute walk of various shops, amenities, public transport routes

and employment land, the surrounding pedestrian network is not of a particularly high quality, especially for those with mobility issues, as accessing the majority of the aforementioned amenities would involve crossing over Hareness Road and/or Wellington Road, with a lack of safe, signalised crossing points in the immediate vicinity of the development. The proposed development therefore fails to comply fully with Policies 13 (Sustainable Transport) and 15 (Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods) of NPF4.

4. As the site is an unsuitable location for housing, in terms of both the land use zoning in the ALDP and in terms of the substandard quality of amenity and connectivity, the proposed development is also contrary to Policy 16 (Quality Homes), paragraph (f)(ii) of NPF4, which sets out the limited circumstances under which proposals for new homes on land not allocated for housing in the LDP can be supported.

ABERDEEN
CITY COUNCIL

Marischal College Planning & Sustainable Development Business Hub 4, Ground Floor North Broad Street Aberdeen AB10 1AB Tel: 01224 523 470 Fax: 01224 636 181 Email: pi@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Applications cannot be validated until all the necessary documentation has been submitted and the required fee has been paid.

Thank you for completing this application form:

ONLINE REFERENCE 100701552-001

The online reference is the unique reference for your online form only. The Planning Authority will allocate an Application Number when your form is validated. Please quote this reference if you need to contact the planning Authority about this application.

Type of Application

What is this application for? Please select one of the following: *

☒ Application for planning permission (including changes of use and surface mineral working).

☐ Application for planning permission in principle.

☐ Further application, (including renewal of planning permission, modification, variation or removal of a planning condition etc)

☐ Application for Approval of Matters specified in conditions.

Description of Proposal

Please describe the proposal including any change of use: * (Max 500 characters)

Change of use of from Class 4 (Business) to form 24 affordable flats, including formation/replacement of doors and windows; installation of cladding, and alterations to the car park and garden ground with associated works

Is this a temporary permission? * ☐ Yes ☒ No

If a change of use is to be included in the proposal has it already taken place? (Answer 'No' if there is no change of use.) * ☐ Yes ☒ No

Has the work already been started and/or completed? *

☒ No ☐ Yes – Started ☐ Yes - Completed

Applicant or Agent Details

Are you an applicant or an agent? * (An agent is an architect, consultant or someone else acting on behalf of the applicant in connection with this application) ☐ Applicant ☒ Agent

Agent Details

Please enter Agent details

Company/Organisation:	Bradley Craig Architects		
Ref. Number:		You must enter a Building Name or Number, or both: *	
First Name: *	Bradley	Building Name:	24
Last Name: *	Craig	Building Number:	
Telephone Number: *	07951641496	Address 1 (Street): *	Newburgh Crescent
Extension Number:		Address 2:	Bridge of Don
Mobile Number:		Town/City: *	Aberdeen
Fax Number:		Country: *	United Kingdom
		Postcode: *	AB22 8ST
Email Address: *	bradley@bradleycraigarchitects.com		

Is the applicant an individual or an organisation/corporate entity? *

☐ Individual ☒ Organisation/Corporate entity

Applicant Details

Please enter Applicant details

Title:		You must enter a Building Name or Number, or both: *	
Other Title:		Building Name:	Fairways House
First Name: *		Building Number:	
Last Name: *		Address 1 (Street): *	George Street
Company/Organisation	CTL Estates	Address 2:	
Telephone Number: *		Town/City: *	Manchester
Extension Number:		Country: *	United Kingdom
Mobile Number:		Postcode: *	M25 9WS
Fax Number:			
Email Address: *	ittan@ctlestates.co.uk		

Site Address Details

Planning Authority: Aberdeen City Council

Full postal address of the site (including postcode where available):

Address 1: LOIRSTON HOUSE

Address 2: 102 WELLINGTON ROAD

Address 3:

Address 4:

Address 5:

Town/City/Settlement: ABERDEEN

Post Code: AB12 3BH

Please identify/describe the location of the site or sites

Northing 802854 Easting 394779

Pre-Application Discussion

Have you discussed your proposal with the planning authority? * ☒ Yes ☐ No

Pre-Application Discussion Details Cont.

In what format was the feedback given? *

☒ Meeting ☒ Telephone ☒ Letter ☒ Email

Please provide a description of the feedback you were given and the name of the officer who provided this feedback. If a processing agreement [note 1] is currently in place or if you are currently discussing a processing agreement with the planning authority, please provide details of this. (This will help the authority to deal with this application more efficiently.) * (max 500 characters)

Pre-application advice and meeting with planning team

Title: Mr Other title:

First Name: Alexander Last Name: Ferguson

Correspondence Reference Number: Date (dd/mm/yyyy):

Note 1. A Processing agreement involves setting out the key stages involved in determining a planning application, identifying what information is required and from whom and setting timescales for the delivery of various stages of the process.

Site Area

Please state the site area: 3120.40

Please state the measurement type used: ☐ Hectares (ha) ☒ Square Metres (sq.m)

Existing Use

Please describe the current or most recent use: * (Max 500 characters)

Class 4 (Business)

Access and Parking

Are you proposing a new altered vehicle access to or from a public road? * ☐ Yes ☒ No

If Yes please describe and show on your drawings the position of any existing. Altered or new access points, highlighting the changes you propose to make. You should also show existing footpaths and note if there will be any impact on these.

Are you proposing any change to public paths, public rights of way or affecting any public right of access? * ☐ Yes ☒ No

If Yes please show on your drawings the position of any affected areas highlighting the changes you propose to make, including arrangements for continuing or alternative public access.

How many vehicle parking spaces (garaging and open parking) currently exist on the application Site? 64

How many vehicle parking spaces (garaging and open parking) do you propose on the site (i.e. the Total of existing and any new spaces or a reduced number of spaces)? * 24

Please show on your drawings the position of existing and proposed parking spaces and identify if these are for the use of particular types of vehicles (e.g. parking for disabled people, coaches, HGV vehicles, cycles spaces).

Water Supply and Drainage Arrangements

Will your proposal require new or altered water supply or drainage arrangements? * ☐ Yes ☒ No

Do your proposals make provision for sustainable drainage of surface water?? * (e.g. SUDS arrangements) * ☐ Yes ☒ No

Note:-

Please include details of SUDS arrangements on your plans

Selecting 'No' to the above question means that you could be in breach of Environmental legislation.

Are you proposing to connect to the public water supply network? *

☐ Yes

☐ No, using a private water supply

☒ No connection required

If No, using a private water supply, please show on plans the supply and all works needed to provide it (on or off site).

Assessment of Flood Risk

Is the site within an area of known risk of flooding? * ☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Don't Know

If the site is within an area of known risk of flooding you may need to submit a Flood Risk Assessment before your application can be determined. You may wish to contact your Planning Authority or SEPA for advice on what information may be required.

Do you think your proposal may increase the flood risk elsewhere? * ☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Don't Know

Trees

Are there any trees on or adjacent to the application site? * ☒ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, please mark on your drawings any trees, known protected trees and their canopy spread close to the proposal site and indicate if any are to be cut back or felled.

Waste Storage and Collection

Do the plans incorporate areas to store and aid the collection of waste (including recycling)? * ☒ Yes ☐ No

If Yes or No, please provide further details: * (Max 500 characters)

Please refer to site plan

Residential Units Including Conversion

Does your proposal include new or additional houses and/or flats? * ☒ Yes ☐ No

How many units do you propose in total? * 24

Please provide full details of the number and types of units on the plans. Additional information may be provided in a supporting statement.

All Types of Non Housing Development – Proposed New Floorspace

Does your proposal alter or create non-residential floorspace? * ☐ Yes ☒ No

Schedule 3 Development

Does the proposal involve a form of development listed in Schedule 3 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure (Scotland) Regulations 2013 * ☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ Don't Know

If yes, your proposal will additionally have to be advertised in a newspaper circulating in the area of the development. Your planning authority will do this on your behalf but will charge you a fee. Please check the planning authority's website for advice on the additional fee and add this to your planning fee.

If you are unsure whether your proposal involves a form of development listed in Schedule 3, please check the Help Text and Guidance notes before contacting your planning authority.

Planning Service Employee/Elected Member Interest

Is the applicant, or the applicant's spouse/partner, either a member of staff within the planning service or an elected member of the planning authority? * ☐ Yes ☒ No

Certificates and Notices

CERTIFICATE AND NOTICE UNDER REGULATION 15 – TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (SCOTLAND) REGULATION 2013

One Certificate must be completed and submitted along with the application form. This is most usually Certificate A, Form 1, Certificate B, Certificate C or Certificate E.

Are you/the applicant the sole owner of ALL the land? * ☒ Yes ☐ No

Is any of the land part of an agricultural holding? * ☐ Yes ☒ No

Certificate Required

The following Land Ownership Certificate is required to complete this section of the proposal:

Certificate A

Land Ownership Certificate

Certificate and Notice under Regulation 15 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013

Certificate A

I hereby certify that –

(1) - No person other than myself/the applicant was an owner (Any person who, in respect of any part of the land, is the owner or is the lessee under a lease thereof of which not less than 7 years remain unexpired.) of any part of the land to which the application relates at the beginning of the period of 21 days ending with the date of the accompanying application.

(2) - None of the land to which the application relates constitutes or forms part of an agricultural holding

Signed: Bradley Craig

On behalf of: CTL Estates

Date: 28/02/2025

☒ Please tick here to certify this Certificate. *

Checklist – Application for Planning Permission

Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997

The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013

Please take a few moments to complete the following checklist in order to ensure that you have provided all the necessary information in support of your application. Failure to submit sufficient information with your application may result in your application being deemed invalid. The planning authority will not start processing your application until it is valid.

a) If this is a further application where there is a variation of conditions attached to a previous consent, have you provided a statement to that effect? *

☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ Not applicable to this application

b) If this is an application for planning permission or planning permission in principal where there is a crown interest in the land, have you provided a statement to that effect? *

☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ Not applicable to this application

c) If this is an application for planning permission, planning permission in principle or a further application and the application is for development belonging to the categories of national or major development (other than one under Section 42 of the planning Act), have you provided a Pre-Application Consultation Report? *

☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ Not applicable to this application

Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997

The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013

d) If this is an application for planning permission and the application relates to development belonging to the categories of national or major developments and you do not benefit from exemption under Regulation 13 of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013, have you provided a Design and Access Statement? *

☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ Not applicable to this application

e) If this is an application for planning permission and relates to development belonging to the category of local developments (subject to regulation 13. (2) and (3) of the Development Management Procedure (Scotland) Regulations 2013) have you provided a Design Statement? *

☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ Not applicable to this application

f) If your application relates to installation of an antenna to be employed in an electronic communication network, have you provided an ICNIRP Declaration? *

☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ Not applicable to this application

g) If this is an application for planning permission, planning permission in principle, an application for approval of matters specified in conditions or an application for mineral development, have you provided any other plans or drawings as necessary:

☒ Site Layout Plan or Block plan.
☒ Elevations.
☒ Floor plans.
☐ Cross sections.
☒ Roof plan.
☐ Master Plan/Framework Plan.
☒ Landscape plan.
☒ Photographs and/or photomontages.
☐ Other.

If Other, please specify: * (Max 500 characters)

Provide copies of the following documents if applicable:

A copy of an Environmental Statement. *	☐ Yes ☒ N/A
A Design Statement or Design and Access Statement. *	☒ Yes ☐ N/A
A Flood Risk Assessment. *	☐ Yes ☒ N/A
A Drainage Impact Assessment (including proposals for Sustainable Drainage Systems). *	☐ Yes ☒ N/A
Drainage/SUDS layout. *	☐ Yes ☒ N/A
A Transport Assessment or Travel Plan	☐ Yes ☒ N/A
Contaminated Land Assessment. *	☐ Yes ☒ N/A
Habitat Survey. *	☐ Yes ☒ N/A
A Processing Agreement. *	☐ Yes ☒ N/A

Other Statements (please specify). (Max 500 characters)

Declare – For Application to Planning Authority

I, the applicant/agent certify that this is an application to the planning authority as described in this form. The accompanying Plans/drawings and additional information are provided as a part of this application.

Declaration Name: Mr Bradley Craig

Declaration Date: 28/02/2025

Payment Details

Pay Direct

Created: 28/02/2025 12:55

DECISION NOTICE

The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997

Detailed Planning Permission

Bradley Craig
Bradley Craig Architects
24 Newburgh Crescent
Bridge Of Don
Aberdeen
AB22 8ST

on behalf of **CTL Estates**

Aberdeen City Council in exercise of its powers under the above mentioned Act hereby **refuses planning permission** for the development specified below and shown in the plans and drawings listed.

Application Reference Number	250202/DPP
Address of Development	Loirston House 102 Wellington Road Aberdeen AB12 3BH
Description of Development	Change of use of from Class 4 (Business) to form 24no. affordable flats, including formation/replacement of doors, formation of windows: installation of cladding, and alterations to the car park and garden ground with associated works including boundary treatments, bin store and landscaping
Date of Decision	5 June 2025

DETAILS OF ANY VARIATION MADE TO THE APPLICATION

In agreement with the applicant, the following variations were made to the application under section 32A of the 1997 act –

- Additional information submitted, including changes to layout, boundary treatments and landscaping.

REASON FOR DECISION

The reasons on which the Council has based this decision are as follows –

1. The provision of residential accommodation on land zoned for business and industrial use is contrary to the aims and requirements of Policy B1 (Business and Industrial Land) of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 (ALDP), being a use that is not compatible with business and industrial uses and which would not safeguard neighbouring land (developed or undeveloped) from other, conflicting development types.

2. The proposed development would not be a suitable location for residential use, being somewhat remote from existing residential communities and sited immediately adjacent to a busy dual carriageway and industrial estate. It would thus not be particularly pleasant or easy to move around, contrary to Policy 14 (Design, Quality and Place) of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and Policy D1 (Quality Placemaking) of the ALDP. The development itself would also not provide a satisfactory level of residential amenity conducive to the health and wellbeing of future occupants, with deficits in terms of internal floor areas, outlook, daylight & sunlight receipt and the amount and quality of on-site open space, contrary to Policies D2 (Amenity) and WB1 (Healthy Developments) of the ALDP.

3. Although the development would be connected into the adopted footpath network and would be sited within a 20 minute walk of various shops, amenities, public transport routes and employment land, the surrounding pedestrian network is not of a particularly high quality, especially for those with mobility issues, as accessing the majority of the aforementioned amenities would involve crossing over Hareness Road and/or Wellington Road, with a lack of safe, signalised crossing points in the immediate vicinity of the development. The proposed development therefore fails to comply fully with Policies 13 (Sustainable Transport) and 15 (Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods) of NPF4.

4. As the site is an unsuitable location for housing, in terms of both the land use zoning in the ALDP and in terms of the substandard quality of amenity and connectivity, the proposed development is also contrary to Policy 16 (Quality Homes), paragraph (f)(ii) of NPF4, which sets out the limited circumstances under which proposals for new homes on land not allocated for housing in the LDP can be supported.

A full evaluation and account of the processing of the application is contained in the report of handling, which is available by entering the application reference number at https://publicaccess.aberdeencity.gov.uk/.

PLANS AND DRAWINGS

LHA-2504-LS Rev B	Site Layout (Landscaping)
D(0-)02 E	Site Layout (Proposed)
D(0-)04	First Floor Plan (Proposed)
L(0-)01	Location Plan
D(0-)03 C	Ground Floor Plan (Proposed)
D(0-)05 A	Multiple Elevations (Proposed)
A(0-)04 A	Construction Detail
25063-SK-01	Site Layout (Proposed)
25063-SK-02	Site Layout (Proposed)
LHA-2504-AIA	Site Layout (Other)
A(0-)01	Construction Detail
A(0-)02	Construction Detail
A(0-)03	Construction Detail

Signed on behalf of the planning authority

Daniel Lewis
Development Management Manager

IMPORTANT INFORMATION RELATED TO THIS DECISION

RIGHT OF APPEAL

If the applicant is aggrieved by the decision of the planning authority –

a) to refuse planning permission;
b) to refuse approval, consent or agreement requried by a condition imposed on a grant of planning permission;
c) to grant planning permission or any approval, consent or agreement subject to conditions,

the applicant may require the planning authority to review the case under section 43A of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 within three months from the date of this notice. A review request must be made using the'Notice of Review' form available from https://www.eplanning.scot/.

SERVICE OF PURCHASE NOTICE

If permission to develop land is refused and the owner of the land claims that the land has become incapable of reasonably beneficial use in its existing state and cannot be rendered capable of reasonably beneficial use by the carrying out of any development that would be permitted, the owners of the land may serve on the planning authority a purchase notice requiring the purchase of the owner of the land's interest in the land in accordance with Part 5 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

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Aberdeen City Council – Development Management Team Consultation Request

Case Officer: Alex Ferguson	**To:** ACC - Contaminated Land Team
E-mail: AFerguson@aberdeencity.gov.uk	**Date Sent:** 6 March 2025
Tel.: 01224 045063	**Respond by:** 27 March 2025
Application Type: Detailed Planning Permission	
Application Address: Loirston House 102 Wellington Road Aberdeen AB12 3BH	
Proposal Description: Change of use of from Class 4 (Business) to form 24no. affordable flats, including formation/replacement of doors, formation of windows; installation of cladding, and alterations to the car park and garden ground with associated works	
Application Reference: 250202/DPP	
Consultation Reference: DC/ACC/SSPKJZBZ00C01	

To view the plans and supporting documentation associated with the application please follow this link.

In the case of pre-application enquires please login at https://publicaccess.aberdeencity.gov.uk and in 'Consultation Search' enter the consultation reference (shown above) into the 'Letter Reference' field and then click 'Search'.

Unless agreed with the case officer, should no response be received by the respond by date specified above it will be assumed your service has no comments to make.

Should further information be required, please let the case officer know as soon as possible in order for the information to be requested to allow timeous determination of the application. **Response**

Please select one of the following.

No observations/comments.	
Would make the following comments (please specify below).	**X**
Would recommend the following conditions are included with any grant of consent.	
Would recommend the following comments are taken into consideration in the determination of the application.	
Object to the application (please specify reasons below).	

COMMENTS

This Service notes the above development proposal and would comment as follows:

The site was previously occupied by 'Upper Kirkhill' farmhouse (Kirkhill House) and other residential properties (Linden and Kimberly), prior to development of the current office building (Loirston House) in the early 1990s. The current use is best described as commercial rather than industrial and therefore unlikely to have resulted in significant contamination of the land, although some contamination is possible from adjacent industrial uses.

In view of the above, we would recommend the following advisory:

This Service does not believe the potential for land contamination issues at the site is sufficient to justify the attachment of conditions. However, should any ground contamination be discovered during development, the Planning Authority should be notified immediately. The extent and nature of the contamination should be investigated and a suitable scheme for the mitigation of any risks arising from the contamination should be agreed and implemented to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority.

Responding Officer: Neil Stirling
Date: 19/03/25
Email: nstirling@aberdeencity.gov.uk

DEVELOPER OBLIGATIONS:

Assessment Report

DATE:	10 April 2025
APPLICATION REF:	250202/DPP
DESCRIPTION:	Change of use of from Class 4 (Business) to form 24no. affordable flats, including formation/replacement of doors, formation of windows: installation of cladding, and alterations to the car park and garden ground with associated works
ADDRESS:	Loirston House, 102 Wellington Road
TO:	CTL Estates, C/O Bradley Craig Architects
COPIED TO:	Alex Ferguson, Case Officer

BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN BASIS

This Developer Obligations Assessment Report sets out the obligations that are necessary to address the impact of your development proposal on local infrastructure as well as requirements for affordable housing provision.

Policies covering both of these elements are included in the Aberdeen City Local Development Plan 2023, which your application is assessed in accordance with.

The relevant policies from the Local Development Plan are: Policy I1 (Infrastructure Delivery and Planning Obligations); and Policy H5 (Affordable Housing).

Detail on the methodologies used for calculating obligations is set out in Supplementary Guidance: Planning Obligations and further guidance on the provision of affordable housing is included in Aberdeen Planning Guidance: Affordable and Specialist Housing. The supplementary guidance forms part of the statutory development plan for decision making purposes.

This Assessment Report will set out the basis for any agreement you enter into with Aberdeen City Council.

SUMMARY OF OBLIGATIONS

OBLIGATION	LEVEL OF CONTRIBUTION
Infrastructure	
Transportation	To be advised direct by the Transportation Team
Core Path Network	£9,505
Primary Education	Nil
Secondary Education	Nil
Healthcare Facilities	£13,041
Open Space	£3,241
Community Facilities	£27,401
Sports & Recreation	Nil
Affordable Housing	
Affordable Housing Contribution	6 units

BREAKDOWN AND CALCULATION OF OBLIGATIONS

This section of the report outlines how the obligations above have been calculated.

Calculation of Standard House Unit Equivalent (SHUE)

Applications are generally assessed on the basis of standard house unit equivalents, with a three bedroomed house taken as a Standard House Unit Equivalent (SHUE). Section 4 of Supplementary Guidance: Planning Obligations provides more detail on the calculation of SHUEs.

This application for Detailed Planning Permission comprises:

- 23 no. 1 bed units
- 1 no. 2 bed units

This equates to a SHUE of 14.6. This assessment is therefore based on 14.6 standard house unit equivalents, except in the case of education contributions, where 1 bed units are excluded from the calculations.

Please note that any change to the SHUE may have an impact on the level of obligations.

Infrastructure

Transportation

Any transportation requirements will be identified and confirmed direct by the City Council's Transportation Team.

Core Path Network

Core Paths and links to the Core Path Network are an infrastructure facility necessary for the purposes of recreation and sustainable active travel. New developments are required to install or upgrade Core Paths that are designated within the site and contribute towards addressing any cumulative impacts on surrounding core paths.

In this instance, a contribution has been identified towards Core Paths 79 (Kincorth Hill) & 103 (North Balnagask Road to Wellington Road).

Contribution: 14.6 x £651 = £9,505

Primary Education

The application site is within the catchment area for Loirston Primary School.

Given the proposed development comprises predominantly one-bedroom flats, it is not expected that these would accommodate school children, and therefore the development is unlikely to have any discernible impact on pupil numbers within local schools.

Contribution: Nil

Secondary Education

The application site is within the catchment area for Lochside Academy.

Given the proposed development comprises predominantly one-bedroom flats, it is not expected that these would accommodate school children, and therefore the development is unlikely to have any discernible impact on pupil numbers within local schools.

Contribution: Nil

Healthcare Facilities

Infrastructure requirements have been calculated with NHS Grampian on the basis of national health standards and by estimating the likely number of new patients generated by the proposed development. Contributions are calculated using nationally recognised space standards and build costs, based upon the population requirements for GP surgeries, dental chairs and community pharmacies.

In this instance, a contribution will be directed towards internal reconfiguration works to increase capacity at both the Cove Bay and Kincorth Medical Practices, as these existing facilities are currently operating at, or over capacity.

Contribution: 14.6 x £893.20 (Reconfiguration Rate) = £13,041

Open Space

Where there is insufficient open space provided as part of the proposal in reference to Aberdeen Planning Guidance: Open Space and Green Infrastructure, or where the Council's Open Space Audit demonstrates that the minimum quantity and accessibility standards are met by existing provision, then a contribution towards raising the quality of existing provision may be required.

In this instance, contributions have been identified towards the enhancement of existing open spaces in the vicinity of the development.

Contribution: 14.6 x £222 = £3,241

Community Facilities

In order for occupants of the proposed development to fully utilise community facilities, improvements will be necessary. The development is not required to address existing shortcomings in community facilities. However, the cumulative impact of development will put additional pressure on local facilities and this will require mitigation.

In this instance, a contribution has been identified towards Greyhope School and Community Hub (including Torry Library), Tullos Learning Centre

and Cove Library, which have plans in place for a number of upgrades including: bike lockers, noise dampening, improving accessibility and creating spaces to support additional support needs.

A contribution will be sought on the basis of 0.69 m^2 of community facilities per SHUE at a build cost of £2,720 per m^2.

Contribution: 14.6 x 0.69m^2 x £2,720 = £27,401

Sports & Recreation

In this instance, no contribution has been identified.

Contribution: Nil

Affordable Housing

Policy H5 seeks a minimum of 25% of any development of 5 or more dwelling units to be provided as affordable housing.

For developments of 20 units or more, it is expected that the affordable housing should be delivered on-site in accordance with the preferred hierarchy of affordable housing types in Section 2.5 of Aberdeen Planning Guidance: Affordable and Specialist Housing. For developments of fewer than 20 units, the provision of affordable housing may be on-site, off-site or a commuted sum payment.

In this instance, the affordable housing requirement equates to 6 units.

It is noted that the application proposes all 24 of the flats to be affordable and delivered on-site as social rented accommodation, operated by a Registered Social Landlord. This may require to be controlled through a legal agreement.

REMITTANCE OF OBLIGATIONS

Remittance of financial obligations can be undertaken either through entering into a Section 69 agreement (in the case of upfront payment) or a Section 75 agreement (in all other cases). In all cases, the relevant legal agreement is required prior to release of the Planning Decision Notice.

Where there is a requirement for affordable housing on site, in kind provision and/or the amount of developer obligations for infrastructure is such that an upfront payment may be considered prohibitive, a Section 75 agreement will be required. Please note that Applicants are liable for both the costs of their own Legal Agent fees and the Council's legal fees and outlays in the preparation of the document. These costs should be taken into account when considering the options.

The provision of an upfront payment will allow a planning consent to be issued promptly.

In the case of upfront payment, a Planning Decision Notice cannot be issued until a payment in respect of developer obligations has been made. Prior to remitting funds the applicant should check with the Planning Officer that the payment is the only outstanding matter. The Planning Officer will be informed directly by the Planning & Monitoring Officer when funds have cleared.

Management of Funds

Contributions are currently held in the Council's balance sheet in a unique account to which notional interest is added on a monthly basis. In the event of a repayment of contribution the interest added will be calculated to reflect, in addition, compounding on an annual basis.

Unless otherwise specified in the relevant legal agreement, the Council undertakes to spend contributions received in respect of an appropriate project or projects in line with the detail of this assessment within 7 years of the date when planning permission is implemented (evidenced through the notice of initiation of development). In the event of the contribution or part of it not being spent within this time period the contribution or part will be refunded to the applicant or their nominee along with relative interest accrued.

REMITTANCE ADVICE: Upfront Payments

Payment for developer obligations can be made using the Council's **online payment portal** at http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk

Click on the pay it tab and select Developer Obligations from the payment portal. Paying online is the quickest way to secure planning consent where developer obligations are required.

If you cannot use the payment portal, payment can be made by BACS transfer.

BACS Payments

Bank Details for Payment by BACS:
Aberdeen City Council General Account
Sort Code 82-60-11
Account No. 80009421
I - Ban no.
GB38CLYD82601180009421
BIC no. CLYDGB21350
Aberdeen City Council General Account BACS Payment

To make a BACS payment, email developerobligations@aberdeencity.gov.uk and the Planning Officer to confirm that you are making a payment via BACS and to confirm the full amount due and planning application reference. Failure to advise the team that you are making payment will significantly delay the issue of your planning consent.

Please ensure that your planning application reference is included as your BACS reference in the following format: P000000.

Receipts

All payments made will be acknowledged as received by way of email.

Non Payment

Applicants and Agents should be aware that where all other planning issues have been resolved and only the payment of developer obligations is preventing the release of the Decision Notice, non-payment may result in the application being subsequently recommended for refusal as contrary to the relevant policies in the Local Development Plan.

REMITTANCE: Under Section 75 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act

Indexation

Unless otherwise specified, payments will be index linked to the BCIS All In Tender Price Index at Q4 2023.

Phasing of Obligations

Unless otherwise specified and agreed, payment of obligations will be billed quarterly in arrears based on completions in the previous quarter, as evidenced through building control completion certificates and also as advised by the developer. An initial payment will also normally be required prior to the commencement of development.

In the event of the contribution or part of it not being spent within the time period specified in the legal agreement, the contribution or part will be refunded to the Applicant or their nominee along with relative interest accrued.

Preparation of Legal Agreement

The Applicant is cautioned that the costs of preparing a Section 75 agreement from the Applicant's own Legal Agents may in some instances be in excess of the total amount of contributions required. As well as their own Legal Agent's fees Applicants will be liable for payment of the Council's legal fees and outlays in connection with the preparation of the Section 75 agreement. The Applicant is therefore encouraged to contact their own Legal Agent who will liaise with the Council's Legal Service on this issue.

Instruction of Legal Agreement

Please note that should you wish to proceed via this route the legal agreement can be instructed as soon as Heads of Terms (items for which contributions have been sought, overall level of contributions and number, tenure and mix of affordable housing) as set out in this Report have been agreed with the Developer Obligations Team and you have advised of the details of your Legal Agent.

The Planning Officer is responsible for the instruction of the legal agreement following confirmation from the Developer Obligations and Transportation Teams that Heads of Terms have been agreed.

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Aberdeen City Council – Development Management Team Consultation Request

Case Officer: Alex Ferguson	**To:** ACC - Environmental Health
E-mail: AFerguson@aberdeencity.gov.uk	**Date Sent:** 6 March 2025
Tel.: 01224 045063	**Respond by:** 27 March 2025
Application Type: Detailed Planning Permission	
Application Address: Loirston House 102 Wellington Road Aberdeen AB12 3BH	
Proposal Description: Change of use of from Class 4 (Business) to form 24no. affordable flats, including formation/replacement of doors, formation of windows; installation of cladding, and alterations to the car park and garden ground with associated works	
Application Reference: 250202/DPP	
Consultation Reference: DC/ACC/SSPKKKBZ00C03	

To view the plans and supporting documentation associated with the application please follow this link.

In the case of pre-application enquires please login at https://publicaccess.aberdeencity.gov.uk and in 'Consultation Search' enter the consultation reference (shown above) into the 'Letter Reference' field and then click 'Search'.

Unless agreed with the case officer, should no response be received by the respond by date specified above it will be assumed your service has no comments to make.

Should further information be required, please let the case officer know as soon as possible in order for the information to be requested to allow timeous determination of the application. **Response**

Please select one of the following.

No observations/comments.	
Would make the following comments (please specify below).	**X**
Would recommend the following conditions are included with any grant of consent.	
Would recommend the following comments are taken into consideration in the determination of the application.	
Object to the application (please specify reasons below).	

COMMENTS

This Service notes the above development proposal and would comment as follows:

Environmental Noise

The proposed development is considered a Noise Sensitive Development, and due to its location, is likely to be impacted by road traffic noise and noise from commercial/industrial operations in the vicinity.

In addition, if any new heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) plant is proposed, this has the potential to impact on existing noise sensitive receptors.

An appropriate noise assessment by a suitably qualified consultant should be carried out to predict the impact on sensitive receptors and specify control measures. The assessment should be undertaken in accordance with Planning Advice Note (PAN) 1/2011 Planning and Noise and its accompanying Technical Advice Note and the methodology should be submitted and agreed in writing with the Environmental Protection Team in advance.

Construction Noise

To protect the amenity of neighbouring properties/occupants, development works (including site/ground preparation, demolition, and construction) causing noise beyond the site boundary should not occur outside the following hours:

- Monday to Friday 0700 hours to 1900 hours
- Saturday 0800 hours to 1300 hours

Responding Officer: Neil Stirling
Date: 18/03/25
Email: nstirling@aberdeencity.gov.uk

MEMO

Corporate Services

Governance

Business Hub 15, Third Floor South, Marischal College

To	Alex Ferguson, Senior Planner, Strategic Place Planning		
From	Neil Stirling, Scientific Officer, Governance		
Email	nstirling@aberdeencity.gov.uk	Date	06/05/25
Tel.	01224 067758	Our Ref.	
		Your Ref.	250202/DPP

250202/DPP – Loirston House, 102 Wellington Road, Aberdeen AB12 3BH

This Service has reviewed the Noise Impact Assessment (Grosle Environmental Services, 25th April 2025) submitted in support of the development and would comment as follows:

The report proposes a closed windows approach with alternative means of ventilation (trickle vents) to address road traffic noise impacts and ensure acceptable noise levels inside habitable rooms. This Service is satisfied that a suitable internal living environment can be achieved with this approach provided the windows and trickle vents meet the specifications detailed in Sections 6.1.1 and 6.1.2 of the report, namely:

- Whole development – Windows – It is proposed to provide double glazed units (closed, except for purge ventilation by residents) that achieves an Rw + Ctr 32.

- Whole development – Trickle Vents – As highlighted above, the windows shall be closed (except for purge ventilation by residents) and it is proposed to install Greenwoods acoustic trickle vents 1600DNFW that achieves Rw + Ctr 32. Other acoustic trickle vents can be used that achieve the same or greater sound attenuation.

Noise levels (daytime) within external amenity areas (communal gardens) were found to range from 51.1 to 58.5 dB (L_{Aeq}). For reference, the World Health Organisation Guidelines for Community Noise (1999) state:

To protect the majority of people from being seriously annoyed during the daytime, the outdoor sound level from steady, continuous noise should not exceed 55 dB L_{Aeq} on balconies, terraces and in outdoor living areas. To project the majority of people from being moderately annoyed during the daytime, the outdoor sound level should not exceed 50 dB L_{Aeq}. Where it is practical and feasible, the lower outdoor sound level should be considered the maximum desirable sound level for new development.

To address this, the report recommends that acoustic barriers are provided around garden areas (Section 5.11).

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Consultee Comments for Planning Application 250202/DPP

Application Summary

Application Number: 250202/DPP
Address: Loirston House 102 Wellington Road Aberdeen AB12 3BH
Proposal: Change of use of from Class 4 (Business) to form 24no. affordable flats, including formation/replacement of doors, formation of windows; installation of cladding, and alterations to the car park and garden ground with associated works
Case Officer: Alex Ferguson

Consultee Details

Name: Mel Booth
Address: Aberdeen City Council, Marischal College, Broad Street, Aberdeen AB10 1AB
Email: Not Available
On Behalf Of: ACC - Housing

Comments

The application description refers to conversion to 24 affordable flats, however the drawings refer to 'specialist provision social housing.' The provision of specialist provision accommodation, including bariatric accommodation, is needed in the city, as evidenced in the latest housing need and demand assessment and the Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership's specialist provision market position statements.

At the moment, there is not a RSL who can proceed with the development, unless planning permission is granted for general needs social housing, as RSLs need certainty that the development will be "future proofed", should there no longer be a requirement for specialist provision homes in the future.

From a RSL perspective, unless planning permission is granted for general needs housing, this development will not be able to proceed as affordable housing.

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MEMO

Strategic Place Planning

Commissioning

Business Hub 4, Ground Floor North, Marischal College

To	Development Management, Strategic Place Planning		
From	Jack Penman, Engineer, Roads Development Management		
E-mail	JPenman@aberdeencity.gov.uk	Date	12/03/25
		Our Ref.	DPP-250202
		Your Ref.	

Planning Application No. DPP-250202

I have considered the above planning application have the following observations:

1. Development Proposal

1.1. I note that this proposal is for a change of use of from Class 4 (Business) to form 24no. affordable flats, including formation/replacement of doors, formation of windows; installation of cladding, and alterations to the car park and garden ground with associated works at Loirston House, 102 Wellington Road, Aberdeen, AB12 3BH.

1.2. The site is in the outer city boundary and not in a CPZ.

2. Walking and Cycling

2.1. The site has existing pedestrian access which connects to the adopted footway.

2.2. The section of Wellington Road fronting the site has been re-determined as shared use. This allows cycling off the carriageway, which given the speed and type of road is beneficial. The shared use path links to several core paths and other cycle infrastructure.

3. Public Transport

3.1. There are well served public transport stops on Wellington Road which are located approximately 300m from the site.

4. Parking

4.1. ACC parking guidelines for affordable housing in the outer city boundary is 0.8 spaces per unit. We have however found that this standard does not adequately address residents requirements. The proposal of at least 1 space per unit would be acceptable to Roads.

4.2. ACC standard for car parking bays is that they should be 2.5m x 5m with a 6m aisle width. Can this be confirmed for all spaces? End of aisles require a 0.5m buffer turning facility to aid with access to the end spaces.

4.3. I note two accessible spaces are being proposed. ACC standards are for accessible spaces to be provided on a ratio of 1 in 20 (or part thereof) for residential dwellings. These should be provided on top of the 24 spaces.

4.4. Are there any EV spaces being proposed? Details of the location of the charging infrastructure should be provided to ensure that it is not creating obstructions. Consideration should be given to ensure that EV charging bays are accessible. See https://www.bsigroup.com/enGB/standards/pas-1899/ for more details.

4.5. A minimum of 24 cycle parking spaces are required. These should be long stay (secure and covered) details of these are required.

5. Vehicle Access/Local Road Network

5.1. Access to the site is by the existing junction with Wellington Road. This operates as a left in and left out which is acceptable given the dual carriageway. There is a roundabout at Souterhead and Harness Road which provides a safe means of vehicles accessing the required side of the carriageway.

5.2. With the proposed internal layout changes can the applicant confirm that a fire tender can enter and exit the site in a forward gear. This will require Swept Path Analysis (SPA) and should include a 250mm buffer from all kerbsides, parking bays etc. to account for driver variability.

5.3. The site is proposing a reduced level of car parking than exists currently. This combined with the sites location which directly opens onto a strategic road means the proposal will likely have no adverse impact on the running of the road network.

6. Travel Plan

6.1. A residential travel pack should be developed and provided to residents. The RTP should include measures to promote sustainable travel from the site. A draft plan should be provided and approved by Roads.

7. Waste Management Plan

7.1. It is noted that ACC Waste team have currently objected to this proposal. The applicant should address their concerns in terms of bin store. It should be noted that Roads would not permit collection from Wellington Road at this location. The waste vehicle would therefore be required to enter and exit the site in a forward gear to perform the collection. This should be evidenced with SPA and as per above must include the suitable buffer.

8. Drainage Impact Assessment

8.1. As this is a brownfield site it is assumed that existing drainage measures will be utilised.

9. Conclusion

9.1. There are outstanding issues with this proposal. I will be in a position to provide further/final comment on receipt to a response to this memo.

Jack Penman
Engineer
Roads Development Management

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MEMO

Strategic Place Planning

Commissioning

Business Hub 4, Ground Floor North, Marischal College

To	Development Management, Strategic Place Planning		
From	Jack Penman, Engineer, Roads Development Management		
E-mail	JPenman@aberdeencity.gov.uk	Date	09/05/25
		Our Ref.	DPP-250202 **v3**
		Your Ref.	

Planning Application No. DPP-250202

I have considered the above planning application have the following observations:

1. Development Proposal

1.1. I note that this proposal is for a change of use of from Class 4 (Business) to form 24no. affordable flats, including formation/replacement of doors, formation of windows; installation of cladding, and alterations to the car park and garden ground with associated works at Loirston House, 102 Wellington Road, Aberdeen, AB12 3BH.

1.2. The site is in the outer city boundary and not in a CPZ.

1.3. This is the **third** revision of Roads comments based upon the updated information submitted by the applicant. Updated Roads comments are in **bold.**

2. Walking and Cycling

2.1. The site has existing pedestrian access which connects to the adopted footway.

2.2. The section of Wellington Road fronting the site has been re-determined as shared use. This allows cycling off the carriageway, which given the speed and type of road is beneficial. The shared use path links to several core paths and other cycle infrastructure.

3. Public Transport

3.1. There are well served public transport stops on Wellington Road which are located approximately 300m from the site.

4. Parking

4.1. ACC parking guidelines for affordable housing in the outer city boundary is 0.8 spaces per unit. We have however found that this standard does not adequately address residents requirements. The proposal of at least 1 space per unit would be acceptable to Roads.

4.2. ACC standard for car parking bays is that they should be 2.5m x 5m with a 6m aisle width which this proposal adheres to which is acceptable

4.3. **The two accessible spaces being provided on top of the 24 parking spaces this is acceptable.**

4.4. EV infrastructure now falls under the remit of building standards. Should there be a requirement for EV the charging infrastructure should be provided in locations that ensure that it is not creating obstructions. Consideration should be given to ensure that EV charging bays are accessible. See https://www.bsigroup.com/enGB/standards/pas-1899/ for more details.

4.5. A minimum of 24 cycle parking spaces are required. These should be long stay (secure and covered) this should be conditioned.

5. Vehicle Access/Local Road Network

5.1. Access to the site is by the existing junction with Wellington Road. This operates as a left in and left out which is acceptable given the dual carriageway. There is a roundabout at Souterhead and Harness Road which provides a safe means of vehicles accessing the required side of the carriageway.

5.2. I note the swept path analysis (SPA) which has been provided. These include the required 250mm buffer and are acceptable. The SPA has shown that there is a requirement to modify the splitter island. This will require Roads Construction Consent approval. I would urge the applicant to discuss this at the earlier opportunity with the RCC team.

5.3. The site is proposing a reduced level of car parking than exists currently. This combined with the sites location which directly opens onto a strategic road means the proposal will likely have no adverse impact on the running of the road network.

6. Travel Plan

6.1. I note the draft travel plan which has been provided. A final copy should be agreed by Roads before occupation and contain site specific information.

7. Waste Management Plan

7.1. It is noted that the waste vehicle will enter the site and the SPA has shown the vehicle can enter and exit in a forward gear. This is acceptable to Roads.

8. Drainage Impact Assessment

8.1. As this is a brownfield site it is assumed that existing drainage measures will be utilised.

9. Conclusion

9.1. **Roads have no objection to this proposal.**

Jack Penman
Engineer
Roads Development Management

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Aberdeen City Council – Development Management Team Consultation Request

Case Officer: Alex Ferguson	**To:** ACC - Schools Estates Team
E-mail: AFerguson@aberdeencity.gov.uk	**Date Sent:** 6 March 2025
Tel.: 01224 045063	**Respond by:** 27 March 2025

Application Type: Detailed Planning Permission
Application Address: Loirston House 102 Wellington Road Aberdeen AB12 3BH
Proposal Description: Change of use of from Class 4 (Business) to form 24no. affordable flats, including formation/replacement of doors, formation of windows; installation of cladding, and alterations to the car park and garden ground with associated works
Application Reference: 250202/DPP
Consultation Reference: DC/ACC/SSPKJZBZ00C04

To view the plans and supporting documentation associated with the application please follow this link.

In the case of pre-application enquires please login at https://publicaccess.aberdeencity.gov.uk and in 'Consultation Search' enter the consultation reference (shown above) into the 'Letter Reference' field and then click 'Search'.

Unless agreed with the case officer, should no response be received by the respond by date specified above it will be assumed your service has no comments to make.

Should further information be required, please let the case officer know as soon as possible in order for the information to be requested to allow timeous determination of the application.

Response

Please select one of the following.

No observations/comments.	
Would make the following comments (please specify below).	✓
Would recommend the following conditions are included with any grant of consent.	
Would recommend the following comments are taken into consideration in the determination of the application.	
Object to the application (please specify reasons below).	

COMMENTS

Given that the proposed development is made up of predominantly one-bedroom flats, it would not be expected that these would accommodate children, and therefore the development is unlikely to have any discernable impact on pupil numbers within local schools.

Responding Officer: Andrew Jones
Date: 10/03/25
Email: ajones@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Ext: 045101

Aberdeen City Council – Development Management Team Consultation Request

Case Officer: Alex Ferguson	**To:** ACC - Waste And Recycling
E-mail: AFerguson@aberdeencity.gov.uk	**Date Sent:** 6 March 2025
Tel.: 01224 045063	**Respond by:** 27 March 2025
Application Type: Detailed Planning Permission	
Application Address: Loirston House 102 Wellington Road Aberdeen AB12 3BH	
Proposal Description: Change of use of from Class 4 (Business) to form 24no. affordable flats, including formation/replacement of doors, formation of windows; installation of cladding, and alterations to the car park and garden ground with associated works	
Application Reference: 250202/DPP	
Consultation Reference: DC/ACC/SSPKVRBZ00C03	

To view the plans and supporting documentation associated with the application please follow this link.

In the case of pre-application enquires please login at https://publicaccess.aberdeencity.gov.uk and in 'Consultation Search' enter the consultation reference (shown above) into the 'Letter Reference' field and then click 'Search'.

Unless agreed with the case officer, should no response be received by the respond by date specified above it will be assumed your service has no comments to make.

Should further information be required, please let the case officer know as soon as possible in order for the information to be requested to allow timeous determination of the application. **Response**

Please select one of the following.

No observations/comments.	
Would make the following comments (please specify below).	
Would recommend the following conditions are included with any grant of consent.	
Would recommend the following comments are taken into consideration in the determination of the application.	
Object to the application (please specify reasons below).	N

COMMENTS

As I understand, the proposed development will consist of **change of use of from Class 4 (Business) to form 24no. affordable flats, including formation/replacement of doors, formation of windows; installation of cladding, and alterations to the car park and garden ground with associated works.**

I have consulted with colleagues across the waste operations team. I can confirm that Aberdeen City Council intend to provide the following services upon building completion.

Please note the information provided below by Waste Services is independent of the outcome of the planning application, which is being determined by the planning authority.

Each **24 flats** will be provided with:

- **5 x 1280l general waste container** 1410mm H x 1265mm W x 1030mm D (plus 90cm minimum clearance to manoeuvre bins)
- **5 x 1280l mixed recycling container** 1410mm H x 1265mm W x 1030mm D (plus 90cm minimum clearance to manoeuvre bins)
- **1 x food waste container for each bin store.** 1366mm H x 734mm W x 734mm D (plus 90cm minimum clearance to remove internal bin from front opening casing)
- **1x kitchen caddy and caddy liners (for each flat)**

The following costs **will be charged to the developer:**

- **Each 1280l bin costs £477.00**
- **Each food waste container costs £594.00**
- **Kitchen caddy and caddy liners £0.00**
- **A delivery of 10 or less bins will incur a £35 delivery fee.**

No garden waste will be provided for **flat residences** as it is assumed grounds will be maintained as part of a service charge for the building and undertaken by a commercial contractor.

It is pertinent to note that these services will be provided taking account of the following:

Specific concerns:

- Proposed bin store is too small to accommodate required number of containers.
- Our vehicle will not enter the premises for Health & Safety reasons therefore there will need to be adjustments provided to the entry of premises – to allow waste vehicle stop on the entry lane for operational purposes.

General points:

- If the bin store will be **locked and/ or involve a barrier, 8 keys must be provided for each store**, providing access to the different collection crews and Recycling Officer for monitoring contamination. These should be dispatched to the Waste Team.
- **No excess** should be stored out with the containment provided. This is fly tipping.
- Large item collections can be arranged by visiting www.aberdeencity.gov.uk
- Further information can be found in the Waste Supplementary Guidance available at: https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-05/APG%20Waste%20Management%20Requirements%20for%20New%20Developments_0.pdf
- **Developers must contact Aberdeen City Council a minimum of ONE month before properties will be occupied** this is to ensure that bins are on site prior to residents moving into properties and to give enough time to register addresses on the CAG (Council Address Gazetteer) to allow for the development to be added to the refuse vehicle routes.
- A Purchase Order should be raised with Aberdeen City Council using the above details and we will provide further guidance for purchasing the bins.

- Bin purchases are VAT free. Please do not include VAT in your PO
- Please submit a PO for the bins you require.

Responding Officer: J Talaga
Date: 7th of March 2025
Email: wasteplanning@aberdeencity.gov.uk

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Monday, 17 March 2025

Local Planner
Strategic Pace Planning
Aberdeen City Council
Aberdeen
AB10 1AB

Development Operations
The Bridge
Buchanan Gate Business Park
Cumbernauld Road
Stepps
Glasgow
G33 6FB

Development Operations
Freephone Number - 0800 3890379
E-Mail - DevelopmentOperations@scottishwater.co.uk
www.scottishwater.co.uk

Dear Customer,

Loirston House, 102 Wellington Road, Aberdeen, AB12 3BH
Planning Ref: 250202/DPP
Our Ref: DSCAS-0128654-C3H
Proposal: Change of use of from Class 4 (Business) to form 24no. affordable flats, including formation/replacement of doors, formation of windows: installation of cladding, and alterations to the car park and garden ground with associated works.

Please quote our reference in all future correspondence

Scottish Water has no objection to this planning application. The applicant should be aware that this does not confirm that the proposed development can currently be serviced.

Please read the following carefully as there may be further action required. Scottish Water would advise the following:

Water Capacity Assessment

- This proposed development is within the Invercannie Water Treatment Works catchment. To allow us to fully appraise the proposals we suggest that the applicant completes a Pre-Development Enquiry (PDE) Form and submits it directly to Scottish Water via our Customer Portal

Waste Water Capacity Assessment

- There is currently sufficient capacity for a foul only connection in the Nigg Waste Water Treatment works to service your development. However, please note that further investigations may be required to be carried out once a formal application has been submitted to us.

Please Note

The applicant should be aware that we are unable to reserve capacity at our water and/or waste water treatment works. When planning permission has been granted and a formal connection application has been submitted, we will review the availability of capacity at that time and advise the applicant accordingly.

Surface Water

For reasons of sustainability and to protect our customers from potential future sewer flooding, Scottish Water will not accept any surface water connections into our combined sewer system.

There may be limited exceptional circumstances where we would allow such a connection for brownfield sites only, however this will require significant justification from the customer taking account of various factors including legal, physical, and technical challenges.

In order to avoid costs and delays where a surface water discharge to our combined sewer system is anticipated, the developer should refer to our guides which can be found at https://www.scottishwater.co.uk/Help-and-Resources/Document-Hub/Business-and-Developers/Connecting-to-Our-Network which detail our policy and processes to support the application process, evidence to support the intended drainage plan should be submitted at the technical application stage where we will assess this evidence in a robust manner and provide a decision that reflects the best option from environmental and customer perspectives.

Drinking Water Protected Areas

A review of our records indicates that there are no Scottish Water drinking water catchments or water abstraction sources, which are designated as Drinking Water Protected Areas under the Water Framework Directive, in the area that may be affected by the proposed activity.

Next Steps

Developments are required to submit a Pre-Development Enquiry (PDE) Form via our Customer Portal prior to any formal technical application being submitted, allowing us to fully appraise the proposals.

Where it is confirmed through the PDE process that mitigation works are necessary to support a development, the cost of these works is to be met by the developer, which Scottish Water can contribute towards through Reasonable Cost Contribution regulations.

I trust the above is acceptable however if you require any further information regarding this matter, please contact me on **0800 389 0379** or via the e-mail address below or at planningconsultations@scottishwater.co.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Ruth Kerr
Development Services Analyst
PlanningConsultations@scottishwater.co.uk

Scottish Water Disclaimer:

"It is important to note that the information on any such plan provided on Scottish Water's infrastructure, is for indicative purposes only and its accuracy cannot be relied upon. When the exact location and the nature of the infrastructure on the plan is a material requirement then you should undertake an appropriate site investigation to confirm its actual position in the ground and to determine if it is suitable for its intended purpose. By using the plan you agree that Scottish Water will not be liable for any loss, damage or costs caused by relying upon it or from carrying out any such site investigation."

Supplementary Guidance

- Scottish Water asset plans can be obtained from our appointed asset plan providers:
    - Site Investigation Services (UK) Ltd
    - Tel: 0333 123 1223
    - Email: sw@sisplan.co.uk
    - www.sisplan.co.uk

- Scottish Water's current minimum level of service for water pressure is 1.0 bar or 10m head at the customer's boundary internal outlet. Any property which cannot be adequately serviced from the available pressure may require private pumping arrangements to be installed, subject to compliance with Water Byelaws. If the developer wishes to enquire about Scottish Water's procedure for checking the water pressure in the area, then they should write to the Development Operations department at the above address.

- If the connection to the public sewer and/or water main requires to be laid through land out-with public ownership, the developer must provide evidence of formal approval from the affected landowner(s) by way of a deed of servitude.

- Scottish Water may only vest new water or waste water infrastructure which is to be laid through land out with public ownership where a Deed of Servitude has been obtained in our favour by the developer.

- The developer should also be aware that Scottish Water requires land title to the area of land where a pumping station and/or a Sustainable Drainage System (SUDS) proposed to vest in Scottish Water is constructed.

- Please find information on how to submit application to Scottish Water at our Customer Portal.

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SPECIALIST CRIME DIVISION

PLANNING CONSULTATION COMMENTS FORM

Planning Application Ref. No.	SB036/25 / 250202/DPP
Planning Officer	Alex Ferguson
Architectural Liaison Officer	PC A0395 Mark Irvine
Date Comments Requested	27th March 2025
Date Comments Submitted	26th March 2025

Change of use of from Class 4 (Business) to form 24 affordable flats, including formation/replacement of doors, formation of windows; installation of cladding, and alterations to the car park and garden ground with associated works.

Police Scotland recommend that the architects and design team consult with Police Scotland Architectural Liaison Officers at the predesign stage.

It is recommended that the developer liaise with the Police Scotland Architectural Liaison service at each stage of the development, for more detailed advice and for the purposes of designing out crime using the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).

Due consideration should also be given to crime reduction measures during the construction phase to ensure that goods and materials are not subject to theft. The area is a medium crime area, effected by theft and vandalism.

Finally, Police Scotland encourage the applicant to attain the 'Secured by Design' award as this demonstrates that safety and security have been proactively considered and that this development will meet high standards in these respects.

PC A0395 Irvine
Architectural Liaison Officer

Cuong Man Phu
4 Queens Court
Aberdeen
AB15 4ZZ

26 March 2025

Aberdeen Council Planning

Loirston House, Wellington Road, Aberdeen, AB12 3BH

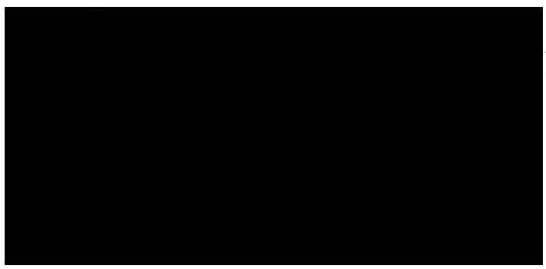
I wish to object on the proposed planning application on the following three grounds.

1. This has been predominantly and exclusive area for commercial property and has a major roundabout. It has been a commercial office since inception. It does not have the amenity as opposed to the development of houses nearby.

2. The access is not suitable as to the lack of infrastructure and road safety concerns.

3. This is based in a prominent and exclusive commercial area. It is not suitable for residential development because of the lack of infrastructure and safety concerns which can affect vulnerable people in residential accommodation.

Yours sincerely



Cuong Man Phu

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Comments for Planning Application 250202/DPP

Application Summary

Application Number: 250202/DPP
Address: Loirston House 102 Wellington Road Aberdeen AB12 3BH
Proposal: Change of use of from Class 4 (Business) to form 24no. affordable flats, including formation/replacement of doors, formation of windows: installation of cladding, and alterations to the car park and garden ground with associated works
Case Officer: Alex Ferguson

Customer Details

Name: Mr Ben Smith
Address: 1c devanha terrace Aberdeen AB11 7TW

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour
Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application
Comment Reasons:
Comment:Not convinced that the traffic will not be negatively affected by this proposal. Surely there is a better site for this.

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Comments for Planning Application 250202/DPP

Application Summary

Application Number: 250202/DPP
Address: Loirston House 102 Wellington Road Aberdeen AB12 3BH
Proposal: Change of use of from Class 4 (Business) to form 24no. affordable flats, including formation/replacement of doors, formation of windows: installation of cladding, and alterations to the car park and garden ground with associated works
Case Officer: Alex Ferguson

Customer Details

Name: Mr Ngozi VINCENT-ELOAGU
Address: 14 Kirkbrae Drive Cults Aberdeen AB15 9RH

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public
Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application
Comment Reasons:
Comment:I feel that this building should be replaced with a commercial property, and that there are other sites more suited for affordable housing. I do not think affordable housing should be on a site so prominent.

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Comments for Planning Application 250202/DPP

Application Summary

Application Number: 250202/DPP
Address: Loirston House 102 Wellington Road Aberdeen AB12 3BH
Proposal: Change of use of from Class 4 (Business) to form 24no. affordable flats, including formation/replacement of doors, formation of windows: installation of cladding, and alterations to the car park and garden ground with associated works
Case Officer: Alex Ferguson

Customer Details

Name: Mr Thomas Russo
Address: 61 Corthan Crescent Aberdeen AB12 5BA

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour
Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application
Comment Reasons:
Comment:There is too much housing in Aberdeen. We need more commercial units to create jobs and not housing.

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Comments for Planning Application 250202/DPP

Application Summary

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Address: Loirston House 102 Wellington Road Aberdeen AB12 3BH
Proposal: Change of use of from Class 4 (Business) to form 24no. affordable flats, including formation/replacement of doors, formation of windows: installation of cladding, and alterations to the car park and garden ground with associated works
Case Officer: Alex Ferguson

Customer Details

Name: Mr Yee Wai Chong
Address: 47 Victoria Street Aberdeen AB10 1UX

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour
Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application
Comment Reasons:
Comment:I wish to object on the proposed planning application on the following three grounds.

1. This has been predominantly and exclusive area for commercial property and has a major roundabout. It has been a commercial office since inception. It does not have the amenity as opposed to the development of houses nearby.

2. The access is not suitable as to the lack of infrastructure and road safety concerns.

3. This is based in a prominent and exclusive commercial area. It is not suitable for residential development because of the lack of infrastructure and safety concerns which can affect vulnerable people in residential accommodation.

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Comments for Planning Application 250202/DPP

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Case Officer: Alex Ferguson

Customer Details

Name: Mrs Stacy Ferguson
Address: 36 cairnlee avenue east Cults Aberdeen AB15 9NH

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public
Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application
Comment Reasons:
Comment:The access is not suitable for this type of development.

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Policy List

250202

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)

Policy 1 (Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises)

Policy 2 (Climate Mitigation and Adaptation)

Policy 3 (Biodiversity)

Policy 6 (Forestry, Woodland Trees)

Policy 9 (Brownfield, Vacant and Derelict Land and Empty Buildings)

POlicy 12 (Zero Waste)

Policy 13 (Sustainable Transport)

Policy 14 (Design, Quality and Place)

Policy 15 (Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods)

Policy 16 (Quality Homes)

Policy 18 (Infrastructure First)

Policy 22 (Flood Risk and Water Management)

Policy 23 (Health and Safety)

Policy 26 (Business and Industry)

Aberdeen Local Development Plan (2023)

Policy B1 (Business and Industrial Land)

Policy CI1 (Digital Infrastructure)

Policy D1 (Quality Placemaking)

Policy D2 (Amenity)

Policy D5 (Landscape Design)

Policy H3 (Density)

Policy H4 (Housing Mix and Need)

Policy H5 (Affordable Housing)

Policy I1 (Infrastructure Delivery and Planning Obligations)

Policy NE2 (Green and Blue Infrastructure)

Policy NE4 (Our Water Environment)

Policy NE5 (Trees and Woodland)

Policy R2 (Degraded and Contaminated Land)

Policy R5 (Waste Management Requirements for New Developments)

Policy R6 (Low and Zero Carbon Buildings and Water Efficiency)

Policy R8 (Heat Networks)

Policy T2 (Sustainable Transport)

Policy T3 (Parking)

Policy WB1 (Healthy Developments)

Policy WB2 (Air Quality)

Policy WB3 (Noise)

Aberdeen Planning Guidance

Affordable & Specialist Housing

Amenity & Space Standards

Harmony of Uses

Health and Wellbeing

Landscape

Noise

Open Space & Green Infrastructure

Planning Obligations

Resources for New Development

Transport & Accessibility

Trees & Woodlands

National Guidance

- Planning Advice Note 1/2011 (Planning and Noise)
https://www.gov.scot/publications/planning-advice-note-1-2011-planning-noise/

ABERDEEN
CITY COUNCIL

Marischal College Planning & Sustainable Development Business Hub 4, Ground Floor North Broad Street Aberdeen AB10 1AB Tel: 01224 523 470 Fax: 01224 636 181 Email: pi@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Applications cannot be validated until all the necessary documentation has been submitted and the required fee has been paid.

Thank you for completing this application form:

ONLINE REFERENCE 100720066-001

The online reference is the unique reference for your online form only. The Planning Authority will allocate an Application Number when your form is validated. Please quote this reference if you need to contact the planning Authority about this application.

Applicant or Agent Details

Are you an applicant or an agent? * (An agent is an architect, consultant or someone else acting on behalf of the applicant in connection with this application) ☐ Applicant ☒ Agent

Agent Details

Please enter Agent details

Company/Organisation:	Pink Granite Planning T/A Harvey Planning Consulting		
Ref. Number:		You must enter a Building Name or Number, or both: *	
First Name: *	Harrison Patrik	Building Name:	B1 Vantage Park
Last Name: *	Harvey	Building Number:	
Telephone Number: *	+441224941728	Address 1 (Street): *	Old Gloucester Road
Extension Number:		Address 2:	Hambrook
Mobile Number:		Town/City: *	Bristol
Fax Number:		Country: *	United Kingdom
		Postcode: *	BS16 1GW
Email Address: *	info@harveyplanning.co.uk		

Is the applicant an individual or an organisation/corporate entity? *

☐ Individual ☒ Organisation/Corporate entity

Applicant Details

Please enter Applicant details

Title:		You must enter a Building Name or Number, or both: *	
Other Title:		Building Name:	c/o Agent
First Name: *		Building Number:	
Last Name: *		Address 1 (Street): *	c/o Agent
Company/Organisation	CTL Estates	Address 2:	
Telephone Number: *		Town/City: *	c/o Agent
Extension Number:		Country: *	c/o Agent
Mobile Number:		Postcode: *	
Fax Number:			
Email Address: *	info@harveyplanning.co.uk		

Site Address Details

Planning Authority:	Aberdeen City Council

Full postal address of the site (including postcode where available):

Address 1:	LOIRSTON HOUSE
Address 2:	102 WELLINGTON ROAD
Address 3:	
Address 4:	
Address 5:	
Town/City/Settlement:	ABERDEEN
Post Code:	AB12 3BH

Please identify/describe the location of the site or sites

Northing	802854	Easting	394779

Description of Proposal

Please provide a description of your proposal to which your review relates. The description should be the same as given in the application form, or as amended with the agreement of the planning authority: *
(Max 500 characters)

Change of use of from Class 4 (Business) to form 24no. affordable flats, including formation/replacement of doors, formation of windows: installation of cladding, and alterations to the car park and garden ground with associated works including boundary treatments, bin store and landscaping

Type of Application

What type of application did you submit to the planning authority? *

☒ Application for planning permission (including householder application but excluding application to work minerals).

☐ Application for planning permission in principle.

☐ Further application.

☐ Application for approval of matters specified in conditions.

What does your review relate to? *

☒ Refusal Notice.

☐ Grant of permission with Conditions imposed.

☐ No decision reached within the prescribed period (two months after validation date or any agreed extension) – deemed refusal.

Statement of reasons for seeking review

You must state in full, why you are a seeking a review of the planning authority's decision (or failure to make a decision). Your statement must set out all matters you consider require to be taken into account in determining your review. If necessary this can be provided as a separate document in the 'Supporting Documents' section: * (Max 500 characters)

Note: you are unlikely to have a further opportunity to add to your statement of appeal at a later date, so it is essential that you produce all of the information you want the decision-maker to take into account.

You should not however raise any new matter which was not before the planning authority at the time it decided your application (or at the time expiry of the period of determination), unless you can demonstrate that the new matter could not have been raised before that time or that it not being raised before that time is a consequence of exceptional circumstances.

Refer to the Notice of Review Statement of Case in the Supporting Documents section

Have you raised any matters which were not before the appointed officer at the time the Determination on your application was made? * ☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, you should explain in the box below, why you are raising the new matter, why it was not raised with the appointed officer before your application was determined and why you consider it should be considered in your review: * (Max 500 characters)

Please provide a list of all supporting documents, materials and evidence which you wish to submit with your notice of review and intend to rely on in support of your review. You can attach these documents electronically later in the process: * (Max 500 characters)

Notice of Review Statement of Case (including appendices) and planning application material from 250202/DPP

Application Details

Please provide the application reference no. given to you by your planning authority for your previous application.

250202/DPP

What date was the application submitted to the planning authority? *

28/02/2025

What date was the decision issued by the planning authority? *

05/06/2025

Review Procedure

The Local Review Body will decide on the procedure to be used to determine your review and may at any time during the review process require that further information or representations be made to enable them to determine the review. Further information may be required by one or a combination of procedures, such as: written submissions; the holding of one or more hearing sessions and/or inspecting the land which is the subject of the review case.

Can this review continue to a conclusion, in your opinion, based on a review of the relevant information provided by yourself and other parties only, without any further procedures? For example, written submission, hearing session, site inspection. *

☐ Yes ☒ No

Please indicate what procedure (or combination of procedures) you think is most appropriate for the handling of your review. You may select more than one option if you wish the review to be a combination of procedures.

Please select a further procedure *

By means of inspection of the land to which the review relates

Please explain in detail in your own words why this further procedure is required and the matters set out in your statement of appeal it will deal with? (Max 500 characters)

We request a site visit so that the committee members can appreciate the character and amenity of the site and building within the surrounding context.

In the event that the Local Review Body appointed to consider your application decides to inspect the site, in your opinion:

Can the site be clearly seen from a road or public land? * ☒ Yes ☐ No

Is it possible for the site to be accessed safely and without barriers to entry? * ☐ Yes ☒ No

Checklist – Application for Notice of Review

Please complete the following checklist to make sure you have provided all the necessary information in support of your appeal. Failure to submit all this information may result in your appeal being deemed invalid.

Have you provided the name and address of the applicant?. * ☒ Yes ☐ No

Have you provided the date and reference number of the application which is the subject of this review? * ☒ Yes ☐ No

If you are the agent, acting on behalf of the applicant, have you provided details of your name and address and indicated whether any notice or correspondence required in connection with the review should be sent to you or the applicant? * ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

Have you provided a statement setting out your reasons for requiring a review and by what procedure (or combination of procedures) you wish the review to be conducted? * ☒ Yes ☐ No

Note: You must state, in full, why you are seeking a review on your application. Your statement must set out all matters you consider require to be taken into account in determining your review. You may not have a further opportunity to add to your statement of review at a later date. It is therefore essential that you submit with your notice of review, all necessary information and evidence that you rely on and wish the Local Review Body to consider as part of your review.

Please attach a copy of all documents, material and evidence which you intend to rely on (e.g. plans and Drawings) which are now the subject of this review * ☒ Yes ☐ No

Note: Where the review relates to a further application e.g. renewal of planning permission or modification, variation or removal of a planning condition or where it relates to an application for approval of matters specified in conditions, it is advisable to provide the application reference number, approved plans and decision notice (if any) from the earlier consent.

Declare – Notice of Review

I/We the applicant/agent certify that this is an application for review on the grounds stated.

Declaration Name: Mr Harrison Patrik Harvey

Declaration Date: 04/08/2025

Payment Details

Pay Direct

Created: 04/08/2025 16:06

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Harvey Planning Consulting

NOTICE OF REVIEW STATEMENT OF CASE

Description of Development:

Change of use of from Class 4 (Business) to form 24no. affordable flats, including formation/replacement of doo formation of windows: installat of cladding, and alterations to car park and garden ground w associated works including boundary treatments, bin store and landscaping

Application Reference:

250202/DPP

Appeal Site:

Loirston House, 102 Wellington Road, Aberdeen, AB12 3BH

Appellant:

CTL Estates

August 2025

Table of Contents

1. Introduction 3

2. Site Overview 6

Site Location 6

Accessibility 7

Zoning and Designations 7

Land Use Context 8

Existing Site Features 10

Planning History 10

3. Proposal Overview 12

Land Use 12

Layout 12

Scale and Appearance 14

Landscape and Biodiversity Planting 14

Access, Parking and Bin Storage 15

4. Planning Policy Context 16

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) 16

Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 (ALDP) 17

5. Planning Appeal Assessment 19

Reason 1: Principle of Development in the business and industry zone 20

Reason 2: Residential amenity and placemaking 30

Reason 3: Accessibility 38

Reason 4: Housing on unallocated land 39

Other Material Considerations 40

6. Conclusion 42

Document Control

Rev	Title	Date	Signed
V1	Notice of Review Statement of Case	25 July 2025	HH
V2	Notice of Review Statement of Case	30 July 2025	HH

1. Introduction

11 This Notice of Review appeal is made on behalf of CTL Estates ('the appellant') under section 43A of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 to review the Planning Authority's decision to refuse planning permission for the development described below. The appeal site relates to the vacant office building and curtilage located at Loirston House, 102 Wellington Road, Aberdeen, AB12 3BH.

Description of Development: *Change of use of from Class 4 (Business) to form 24no. affordable flats, including formation/replacement of doors, formation of windows: installation of cladding, and alterations to the car park and garden ground with associated works including boundary treatments, bin store and landscaping.*

12 The planning application was submitted on 28 February 2025 and validated on 4 March 2024 under reference: 250202/DPP. It was subsequently refused under delegated powers on 5 June 2025. This decision was made despite the proposal receiving clear support from Aberdeen City Council's (ACC) Housing Strategy Team due to its contribution toward addressing an identified strategic housing need. Notably, no objections were raised by any internal or external statutory consultees.

13 Based on our review of the Decision Notice, there are four key reasons for refusal, the key headlines of which are listed below:

1. **Principle of Development in the business and industry zone** (Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP) Policy B1)
2. **Residential amenity and placemaking** (National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) Policies 14 and ALDP Policies D1, D2 and WB1)
3. **Pedestrian accessibility** (NPF4 Policies 13 and 15)
4. **Housing on unallocated land** (NPF4 Policy 16)

14 This Notice of Review Statement of Case provides considered justification to demonstrate: (1) the proposal would not result in any land use conflict with the B1 Business and Industry zone; (2) it would create a high quality place and pleasant residential environment; (3), it would enhance pedestrian connectivity and integrate with an existing 20 minute neighbourhood; and (4) it would be an appropriate location for affordable and specialist provision housing (despite not being allocated in the ALDP). In addition to addressing the concerns raised in the reasons for refusal, the statement will also set out in full the key benefits that will come about from the scheme, which are summarised as follows:

> **Delivers much-needed affordable specialist provision housing:** The proposed development will deliver 100% affordable housing, including wheelchair-accessible units at ground floor level. The homes have been specifically designed for ancillary specialist provision accommodation, aimed at meeting the needs of individuals with bariatric conditions, mental health challenges, and/or learning disabilities. The proposed tenure and specialist

nature of the accommodation were agreed in close collaboration with ACC's Housing Strategy Team and the Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership (ACHSCP) well in advance of the planning application, with the project formally recognised within the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) since at least 2024. The proposed house tenure directly addresses a critical and well-evidenced gap in Aberdeen's current housing provision in accordance with the principles of NPF4 Policy 16 and ALDP Policies H4 and H5. Given its potential to reduce delayed hospital discharges and support independent living, the development offers clear health and social care benefits that should be given substantial weight in the overall planning assessment.

Reuse and regeneration of long-term vacant building: The proposal will support the reuse and revitalisation of an office block that has had no interest in use as an office since it was vacated in September 2016 by Total E&P. This is despite site having been actively marketed for Class 4 uses for almost a decade. Bringing the building back into an active use supports NPF4 Policy 9 principles of encouraging the sustainable reuse of empty buildings and will conserve embodied energy by avoiding demolition in accordance with NPF4 Policies 1 and 2 and ALDP Policy R6. If this appeal is dismissed, the only other viable option would be to demolish the building in accordance with the existing demolition warrant (reference: 240701). The appellant cannot indefinitely sustain the major financial setback of continued vacant office rates and holding costs. It is therefore absolutely critical that this appeal succeeds to avoid the loss of the building and the consequential release of embodied carbon, which goes against the policy intent of NPF4 Policy 9.

Biodiversity enhancement: The proposal will deliver meaningful biodiversity enhancements around the existing building footprint and will reduce the overall existing hard surface coverage. This approach aligns with the aims of NPF4 Policy 3, which promotes the enhancement of biodiversity through development.

15 This statement comprehensively rebuffs the Council's reasons for refusal outlined in the Decision Notice and demonstrates how the proposal accords with the ALDP and NPF4 in all respects. Therefore, the proposal is an appropriate form of development in this location and one which is worthy of support.

16 The full list of supporting documentation accompanying this appeal is set out below:

Appendix 1: Comments from NHS Grampian, Audrey Nicoll MSP and Stephen Flynn MP
Appendix 2: Relevant Correspondence Between Applicant and ACC Housing Strategy Team
Appendix 3: Strategic Housing Investment Plans
Appendix 4: Precedent Planning Decision (Former Banks O' Dee Nursing Home)
Appendix 5: NPF4 and ALDP Policy Extracts

Appendix 6: Housing Demand, Health and Land Supply Supporting Information

17 The full list of planning application material from 250202/DPP that is included with this Notice of Review appeal, is listed subsequently. The dates noted in brackets refer to the dates the material was lodged.

Application Form (28 February 2025)
Photo 1 (Site Photo) (28 February 2025)
Location Plan (28 February 2025)
Existing Elevations (28 February 2025)
Existing First Floor Plan (28 February 2025)
Existing Ground Floor Plan (28 February 2025)
Existing Site Plan (28 February 2025)
Design and Access Statement (28 February 2025)
Proposed First Floor Plan (28 February 2025)
Marketing Statement (7 April 2025)
Tree Protection Management drawing (24 April 2025)
Arboricultural Assessment Drawing (24 April 2025)
Arboricultural Impact Assessment Drawing (24 April 2025)
Swept Path - Fire Truck (24 April 2025)
Swept Path - Refuse Truck (24 April 2025)
Travel Plan Framework (24 April 2025)
Tree Survey Report (24 April 2025)
Noise Impact Assessment (25 April 2025)
Proposed Fence Type C - 1800mm Hit-and-Miss Fence (1 May 2025)
Proposed Fence Type B - 1800mm Close Boarded Fence (1 May 2025)
Proposed Fence Type A - 2000mm Close Boarded Fence (1May 2025)
Proposed Ground Floor Plan (8 May 2025)
Proposed Site Plan (8 May 2025)
Proposed Waste Bin Enclosure - 1500mm (8 May 2025)
Supporting Planning Statement (14 May 2025)
Proposed Elevations (14 May 2025)
Landscaping Plan (19 May 2025)
Report of Handling (5 June 2025)
Decision Notice (5 June 2025)

2. Site Overview

Site Location

2.1 The appeal site measures ~3,120m² and comprises the vacant two storey office building and associated curtilage, previously known as Loirston House. It is situated in a mixed use area on the western periphery of Altens Industrial Estate, ~3km to the south of Aberdeen City Centre.

2.2 The appeal site is located just south of the Wellington Road / Hareness Road / West Tullos Road roundabout junction. The site is bound to the north by natural/semi-natural greenspace (as identified in the Open Space Audit) owned by Aberdeen City Council. To the east, the site is adjoined by Altens Lorry Park and a vacant hardstand pad that was formerly occupied by the Lauries Hotel building (prior to being demolished in 2014). To the south, the site is adjoined by the residential property of Kimberley House, as well as additional natural/semi-natural greenspace. Lastly, the site is bordered to the west by the dual carriageway of Wellington Road (A956).

2.3 The location of the site in relation to the immediate surrounding area is shown in the map below:

Figure 1: *Site location map (Source: Google Earth)*

Accessibility

2.4 The site benefits from a high level of accessibility due to its strategic position on the south-eastern corner of the Wellington Road (A956) and Hareness Road roundabout, with direct left-in/left-out access and footpath connections to Wellington Road. This access arrangement enables safe and efficient entry and exit to the site and will be retained as part of the proposed change of use scheme. Wellington Road is a key arterial road and public transport corridor, which provides frequent bus services every ~20 minutes to the city centre (via bus routes 13 and 727). It is noted that the 727 bus route provides hourly services directly to Aberdeen Airport. The nearest bus stop is the Redmoss Park bus stop ~230m south of the site in front of the Shell Gas Station.

Zoning and Designations

2.5 Pursuant the ALDP, the appeal site and wider Altens Industrial Estate to the east is situated in the Business & Industry (B1) zone (refer to Figure 2). The site is not located near any national or local natural heritage designations, nor is it within vicinity of any designated heritage assets. Per SEPA flood maps, the site is not affected by flooding.

Figure 2: *ALDP 2023 Zoning map (Source: ALDP)*

Land Use Context

2.6 While the site is in the Business & Industry Zone, the surrounding areas to the north, south and west is characterised by a mix of non-employment land uses, as described in Table 1 below. Per the table below, many of these non-employment land uses front Wellington Road and are located within the same B1 zone. This diversity of land uses on the periphery of Business and Industry zoned land is not uncommon, particularly adjacent highly accessible arterial routes such as Wellington Road.

North	Land 70m to the north of Hareness Road contains the Aldi sup , which replaced the former Amec office building (application reference: 210114/DPP). Further north is the former Shell Tullos Complex which is currently being partially demolished to make way for a new EV charging hub with ancillary shop (Class 1A) (application reference: 241137/DPP). These non-employment uses are all located in the B1 Busines: Industry zone. Less than 400m to the north is the Cat Cairn and Tullos Wood Nature preserve, which is within a convenient walking distance of the site via the footpath along Altens Farm Road.
South	A series of three detached residential properties (includin House) are located to the south of the appeal site, all of which are in the B1 Business and Industry zone. Further south is the Shell Gas Station (sui generis), also a non-employment use in the B1 Business and Industry zone. Land 800m to the south-west of the site is the Wellington Circle Retail Park, which comprises large format Class 1A retail uses (Ikea and Makro), a Puregym (Class 11), another Shell Gas Station (sui generis) and a series of drive-thru food and drink outlets (sui generis), all of which are in the B1 Business and Industry zone. Behind this retail park is the existing Cove Rangers FC Sports Facility (Class 11) which comprises a series of outdoor football pitches, the Get Active Lochside gym and Soccer Stars Academy. 800m –1.5km to the south-east of the site is the Altens Community Centre, the Altens Health Club (gym) and the Cove Bay Health Centre.
East	To the east of the site is the wider Altens Industrial Estate, which comprise a range of office buildings and dilapidated industrial units. This estate forms part of the Energy Transition Zone (ETZ) Masterplan. Under the ETZ Masterplan, there are no specific plans for the site or adjoining land.
West	Land to the west of the site on the opposite side of Wellington F within the Residential (R1) zone and comprises the Redmoss residential area. This residential area comprises a mix of non-residential uses including the Wellington Pub, Police Scotland Station (Nigg), Nigg Parish Church, Little Clouds Nursery and a series of smaller shops and services (e.g. barber and tax accountant). Further west along West Tullos Road is the Kincorth Hill Local Nature Reserve and the residential area of Kincorth. There are a variety of amenities and services within Kincorth, including a medical centre, library, community centre, primary school, gym and shops; these uses are all within an 8 minute bus or 19 minute walk of the site.

Table 1: *Site Context*

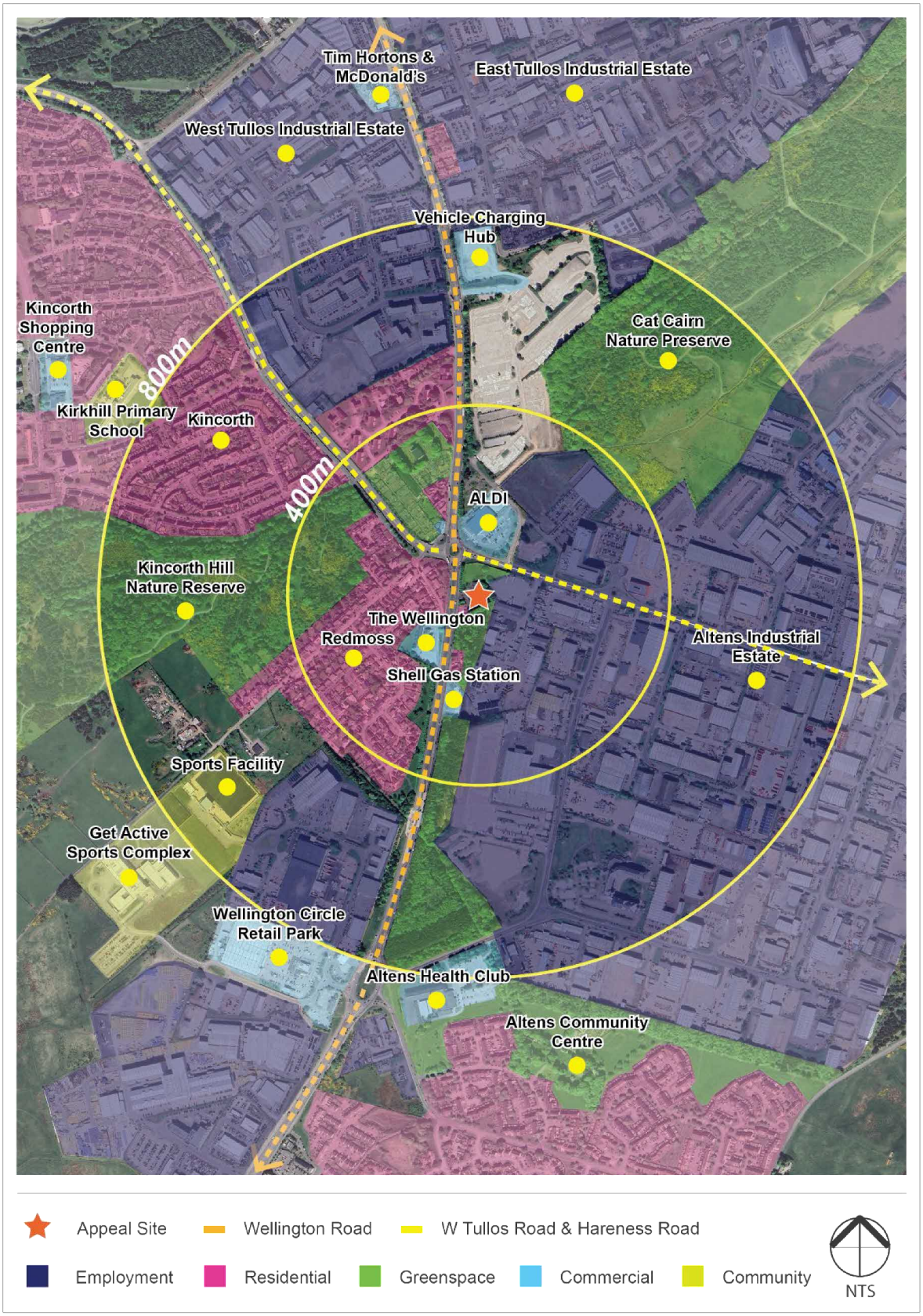

Figure 3: *Surrounding land uses (Source: Google Earth)*

2.7 Considering the ancillary specialist provision nature of the use, it is important to note that the site is within 20 minutes of a variety of medical centres and hospitals. Specifically, the Albyn Hospital is located just a 10 minute drive from the site, Woodend Hospital is within a 17 minute drive and the Aberdeen Royal Infirmary within an 18 minute drive. Kincorth Medical Centre is located an 8 minute bus / drive or 19 minute walk from the site, Cove Bay Health Centre is located within a four minute drive and 24 minute walk of the site.

2.8 Overall, the site's strategic location in a mixed use neighbourhood and position directly adjacent the arterial corridor of Wellington Road (which provides convenient access to Aberdeen City Centre to the north), makes it an excellent location for the proposed affordable specialist living accommodation. The site's accessibility to a range of services, amenities and facilities required for daily living accords with the NPF4 principles of 20 minute neighbourhoods.

Existing Site Features

2.9 Loirston House is a vacant office building constructed in the late 20th century, featuring a 'T'-shaped building footprint with open-plan office space arranged over two storeys. The building is constructed to a robust and durable standard with a steel frame and reinforced concrete structure that is well-suited for repurposing to support the proposed use.

2.10 The building has remained largely unoccupied since it was vacated by Total E&P in September 2016—following the significant downturn in the Oil and Gas sector triggered by the 2014/15 collapse in oil prices. Despite sustained efforts by the landowner to market the property for Class 4 use since that time, no new tenant has been secured.

2.11 Externally, the site features 64 car parking spaces, which includes an undercroft car park underneath the south-western wing of the building. Mature tree belts border the eastern, southern and western boundaries of the site. This existing planting provides an attractive streetscape outcome and buffers / screens the site from the adjoining industrial uses to the east. These existing tree belts will be retained.

Planning History

2.12 The planning application history associated with Loirston House is tabulated below. None of these applications affect the appeal.

Application reference	Description of the Development	Decision	Decision Date
P101502	Erection of perimeter security fence and gate, installation of cctv cameras, smoking shelter and cycle stands	Approved	14/10/2010

P101826	Erection of 1 No.non-illuminated freestanding V shaped sign at entrance	Approved	26/11/2010

Table 2: *Planning history associated with the site*

2.13 On 20 September 2024, the appellant obtained a demolition warrant (building warrant reference: 240701). The appellant cannot sustain the significant financial setback of vacant rates and holding costs. Therefore, this demolition is required as a fallback position if the proposed opportunity to positively reuse the building for combined affordable housing and specialist living accommodation falls through.

3. Proposal Overview

3.1 Detailed planning permission is sought for change the use of the former office building to form 24 affordable residential flats, with associated alterations to the external appearance of the building, car parking, bin store, boundary treatments and landscaping.

Land Use

3.2 The proposed development comprises 100% affordable housing to be operated by a Registered Social Landlord (RSL). The proposal will be used as mainstream affordable flats (sui generis), as applied for and clearly expressed within the application description. An RSL will be secured once planning permission has been granted and there is certainty that the development will proceed, as acknowledged in the ACC Housing Strategy Team comments.

3.3 While general needs affordable housing is the main land use, all the flats are designed to include a level of specialist provision accommodation for those with a disability or long-term health condition such as individuals with mental health conditions and/ or learning disabilities. The nine (9) flats on the ground floor are specifically intended to provide wheelchair accessible specialist provision accommodation for individuals with bariatric conditions. As set out in the Planning Statement, the specialist provision aspect would be limited to ad-hoc care and does not necessitate on-site specialist care facilities or permanent care staff. Accordingly, this specialist provision component will be ancillary to the primary use of the development as general affordable flats (sui generis) and the proposal does not constitute a Class 8 use. As set out in the Design and Access Statement, the flats on the first floor have also been designed with flexibility for ancillary specialist provision use. It is noted that the provision of care for residents in residential properties is a common feature and is in fact included within the Use Class definition for Class 9 (houses), which is not dissimilar to flats (sui generis).

Layout

3.4 As outlined in the Design and Access Statement submitted with the planning application, the existing office building and its associated curtilage were originally designed with future adaptability in mind, allowing for a range of potential future land uses. As such, the existing building and curtilage are well-suited for a swift and efficient conversion to residential use with minimal structural intervention and external modifications required.

3.5 The proposed physical works are principally intended to optimise the reuse of the existing vacant building as a valuable brownfield asset, with the aim of maximising its potential to deliver much needed affordable housing. In addition, external works proposed are intended to enhance the site's overall suitability for residential use, while

also minimising the existing level of hardstand, and increasing the quality of green space around the building for outdoor recreation and biodiversity enhancement.

3.6 The limited works required to the existing building and site layout are summarised as follows:

Infill of the ground floor undercroft carpark to provide three flats;
Reclad building elevations with white drydash (ground floor) and rockpanels (first floor), plus new windows and doors for acoustic amenity;
Reduction in size of carpark from 64 spaces to 26 spaces (including two disabled bays);
Installation of boundary treatments (e.g. close-board fencing and hedgerows between private gardens);
Biodiversity and landscape planting around existing outdoor open spaces to enhance the overall natural character of the site; and
Felling of two trees (Norway Maples) to increase natural light on the eastern side of the building.

Figure 4: *Proposed Site Plan showing that there will be minimal external works required other than to reduce the overall level of hardstanding (Source: Bradley Craig Architects)*

3.7 Internally, the nine (9) ground floor flats will be spacious wheelchair accessible one-bedroom dwellings with a kitchen, living room, accessible wet room and utility store. On the first floor, there will be 14 one-bedroom flats and one two-bedroom flat. Community facilities / storage rooms are provided on both levels, which includes bicycle parking racks for 26 bicycles.

Scale and Appearance

3.8 The proposal does not involve an increase in building bulk or scale as the proposed works are limited to holding fabric of the existing building footprint. Works to the existing building elevations are relatively minor in nature and are purely intended to refresh the existing tired building elevations and uplift the overall appearance of the site, particularly when viewed from Wellington Road. As set out in the Design and Access Statement, the proposed change of use scheme meets six qualities of successful places set out under NPF4 Policy 14. Figure 5 shows the proposed front building elevation (southwest elevation).

Figure 5: *Proposed Southwest Elevation (Source: Bradley Craig Architects)*

Landscape and Biodiversity Planting

3.9 A Biodiversity Landscaping Plan was lodged in support of the planning application to demonstrate the proposed landscape and biodiversity planting strategy for the proposed development. Per the Biodiversity Landscaping Plan, the proposal will retain the existing mature belts surrounding the site and supplement this with 15 native trees, shrubs / hedgerows, and a mix of wildflower and amenity grass around the building.

3.10 The proposed increase in landscape planting, together with the reduction in hardstanding, will help create a high-quality and attractive living environment for future residents. The planting strategy has also been designed to increase the visual and natural buffer between the development, Wellington Road, and the adjacent industrial use to the east. As acknowledged in the Report of Handling, the wider soft-landscaping scheme would soften and enhance the visual amenity of the site, particularly when compared with the existing situation.

3.11 A new close-boarded timber boundary fence is proposed to be erected along the mutual boundary with Kimberley House to the south, ensuring the privacy of the existing dwelling would not be affected by the new use and its current level of amenity would be largely unaffected (as agreed in the Report of Handling). Close-board fencing is also proposed along the north-eastern boundary of the site adjacent the existing 2.4m blockwork wall (to be retained). This close-board fence together with the existing blockwork wall will provide a continuous barrier between the proposal and the hardstand pad to the east (former Lauries Hotel site).

3.12 Importantly, the landscape planting strategy will deliver a significant biodiversity enhancement for the site, particularly given the proposal seeks to reuse rather than demolish and redevelop the existing building, which preserves embodied energy and promotes a highly sustainable development outcome. As confirmed by the Report of Handling, the proposed landscape and biodiversity enhancement scheme accords with the requirements of Policies D5 and NE5 of the ALDP and Policies 3 and 6 of NPF4.

Access, Parking and Bin Storage

3.13 The proposal will take access off Wellington Road via the existing left-in/left-out access. The Report of Handling confirms that the existing left-in/left-out vehicular access to the site is acceptable given the dual carriageway and would allow for emergency vehicles and bin lorries to enter and exit the site in a forward gear with no road or pedestrian safety concerns.

3.14 In terms of car parking, the proposed development provides 26 car parking spaces, including two disabled bays and one EV charging point. This represents a significant reduction in hardstand area by 38 car parking spaces. The proposed car parking arrangement is confirmed by the Report of Handling to be acceptable and compliant with Policy T3 of the ALDP and the Transport & Accessibility Aberdeen Planning Guidance.

3.15 The proposal provides a dedicated bin storage area adjacent the car park that is large enough to accommodate five 1280L general waste and mixed recycling bins, and one food waste container. The swept path analysis drawing lodged in support of the planning application demonstrates that a bin lorry would be able to enter the site, collect the bins, and exit the site in a forward gear. As such, the proposal complies with NPF4 Policy 12 and ALDP Policy R5, as confirmed in the Report of Handling.

3.16 Notably, Aberdeen City Council (ACC) Roads Development Management Team and Waste and Recycling Services raised no objections to the site access, traffic generation, car parking and waste servicing arrangements of the proposal.

4. Planning Policy Context

4.1 Sections 25 and 37(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 require that all applications for planning permission be determined having regard to the development plan unless so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. NPF4 together with the ALDP form the development plan for the appeal. This section sets out the applicable components of the development plan and other material considerations relevant to the assessment and determination of this appeal.

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)

4.2 NPF4 is the statutory framework for Scotland's long term spatial development, which has an outlook to 2045. NPF4 was adopted on 13 of February 2023 and guides spatial development at a national level through setting out the Scottish Government's overarching long term spatial strategy and principles. The national spatial strategy seeks to facilitate future net zero, nature-positive places that are designed to reduce emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change, whilst protecting, recovering and restoring our environment. It also seeks to create future places with homes and neighbourhoods that are healthier, affordable and vibrant places to live.

4.3 Most relevant to the assessment of this appeal are the 33 national planning policies under Part 2 of the NPF4. Importantly, as noted at p.95 and p.98 of NPF4 and set out under the Chief Planner letter: transitional arrangements for National Planning Framework 4 - February 2023, the 33 national planning policies are to be read and applied as a whole.

4.4 The following national planning policy provisions from NPF4 are relevant to the assessment of this appeal:

Policy 1 (Tackling the climate change and nature crisis)
Policy 2 (Climate mitigation and adaptation)
Policy 3 (Biodiversity)
Policy 6 (Forestry woodland and trees)
Policy 9 (Brownfield, vacant and derelict land and empty buildings)
Policy 12 (Zero waste)
Policy 13 (Sustainable transport)
Policy 14 (Design, quality and place)
Policy 15 (Local Living and 20 minute neighbourhoods)
Policy 16 (Quality homes)
Policy 18 (Infrastructure first)
Policy 20 (Blue and green infrastructure)
Policy 22 (Flood risk and water management)
Policy 23 (Health and safety)
Policy 26 (Business and industry)

4.5 The following national planning guidance is relevant to the assessment of this appeal:

Planning Advice Note 1/2011 (Planning and Noise)
BRE Guidelines (2022)

4.6 As demonstrated in section 5 below, the appeal scheme aligns with the relevant national planning policy outcomes and is thus considered to accord with the overarching long term spatial strategy of NPF4.

Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 (ALDP)

4.7 The ALDP was adopted on 19 June 2023. The ALDP is the principal local policy document used to guide decisions on planning applications in the City of Aberdeen. At its heart, the ALDP seeks to deliver sustainable and healthy communities.

4.8 The following policy provisions from the ALDP are relevant to the assessment of this appeal:

Policy B1 (Business and Industrial Land)
Policy CI1 (Digital Infrastructure)
Policy D1 (Quality Placemaking)
Policy D2 (Amenity)
Policy D5 (Landscape Design)
Policy H3 (Density)
Policy H4 (Housing Mix and Need)
Policy H5 (Affordable Housing)
Policy I1 (Infrastructure Delivery and Planning Obligations)
Policy NE2 (Green and Blue Infrastructure)
Policy NE4 (Our Water Environment)
Policy NE5 (Trees and Woodland)
Policy R2 (Degraded and Contaminated Land)
Policy R5 (Waste Management Requirements for New Developments)
Policy R6 (Low and Zero Carbon Buildings and Water Efficiency)
Policy T2 (Sustainable Transport)
Policy T3 (Parking)
Policy WB1 (Healthy Developments)
Policy WB3 (Noise)

4.9 Alongside the ALDP is a suite of Planning Guidance (APG) documents that were adopted as non-statutory Planning Advice on 3 November 2023. These guidance documents are material in the assessment and determination of planning applications as they provide more detailed information on policies and sites. The following APG documents have been identified as relevant to this appeal:

Affordable & Specialist Housing

Amenity & Space Standards
Harmony of Uses
Health and Wellbeing
Landscape
Noise
Open Space & Green Infrastructure
Planning Obligations
Resources for New Development
Transport & Accessibility
Trees & Woodlands

4.10 The above-listed ALDP policy provisions and associated Planning Guidance documents are addressed in the planning appeal assessment below.

5. Planning Appeal Assessment

5.1 This section of the Appeal Statement of Case sets out the appellant's grounds of appeal. The application that is subject to this appeal (250202/DPP) was refused under delegated powers on 5 June 2025. In refusing to grant planning permission, four reasons for refusal were given as follows:

Reason 1: Principle of Development in the business and industry zone

The provision of residential accommodation on land zoned for business and industrial use is contrary to the aims and requirements of Policy B1 (Business and Industrial Land) of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 (ALDP), being a use that is not compatible with business and industrial uses and which would not safeguard neighbouring land (developed or undeveloped) from other, conflicting development types.

Reason 2: Residential amenity and placemaking

The proposed development would not be a suitable location for residential use, being somewhat remote from existing residential communities and sited immediately adjacent to a busy dual carriageway and industrial estate. It would thus not be particularly pleasant or easy to move around, contrary to Policy 14 (Design, Quality and Place) of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and Policy D1 (Quality Placemaking) of the ALDP. The development itself would also not provide a satisfactory level of residential amenity conducive to the health and wellbeing of future occupants, with deficits in terms of internal floor areas, outlook, daylight & sunlight receipt and the amount and quality of on-site open space, contrary to Policies D2 (Amenity) and WB1 (Healthy Developments) of the ALDP.

Reason 3: Accessibility and 20 minute neighbourhoods

Although the development would be connected into the adopted footpath network and would be sited within a 20 minute walk of various shops, amenities, public transport routes and employment land, the surrounding pedestrian network is not of a particularly high quality, especially for those with mobility issues, as accessing the majority of the aforementioned amenities would involve crossing over Hareness Road and/or Wellington Road, with a lack of safe, signalised crossing points in the immediate vicinity of the development. The proposed development therefore fails to comply fully with Policies 13 (Sustainable Transport) and 15 (Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods) of NPF4.

Reason 4: Housing on unallocated land

As the site is an unsuitable location for housing, in terms of both the land use zoning in the ALDP and in terms of the substandard quality of amenity and connectivity, the proposed development is also contrary to Policy 16 (Quality Homes), paragraph (f)(ii) of NPF4, which sets out the limited circumstances under which proposals for new homes on land not allocated for housing in the LDP can be supported.

5.2 The four reasons for refusal are addressed in-turn in the commentary below. The below assessment demonstrates that reasons for refusal are unfounded, and the proposal aligns with the relevant policies of the ALDP and NPF4 such that Officer's decision should be overturned.

Reason 1: Principle of Development in the business and industry zone

5.3 The first reason for refusal relates to the principle of the development within the B1 Business and Industry zone, which the Planning Service deem to be unacceptable. Specifically, the issue Planning Service take issue with the proposed residential land use in the zone, which is not considered to be suited to a business and industry location. Furthermore, the Planning Service state that the proposed residential use "*would likely preclude the neighbouring, currently vacant land to the north and east from being used for uses in either Classes 5 or 6 in the future*" (Report of Handling, pg.8).

5.4 Although ALDP Policy B1 does not expressly prohibit residential development, the appellant recognises that the proposed use does not align with the traditional employment uses (Classes 4, 5 and 6) typically supported under this policy. Nonetheless, any perceived policy tension is clearly outweighed by a series of compelling material considerations that support the appeal proposal. These material considerations are listed below and addressed in full under the subsequent sub-headings.

1 The proposed residential use is compatible with the existing mixed-use character along the Wellington Road corridor;
2. It would deliver much-needed affordable and specialist provision housing, addressing a recognised shortfall within the city; and
3. It would secure the sustainable re-use of a long-term vacant office building, positively enabling the regeneration of a brownfield site.

Compatibility with the surrounding mixed use area

5.5 It is widely recognised in contemporary planning practice that the edges of industrial estates often function as transitional zones between core employment uses (Class 4, 5 and 6 uses) and adjacent non-employment uses. These peripheral areas are typically more accessible, often fronting key arterial routes, and generally have a greater level of separation from the higher-intensity industrial operations concentrated within the core of the estate. As such, these locations are frequently more suited to a mixture of land uses, such as residential or retail developments, particularly where said uses complement the surrounding area and do not undermine or conflict with the ongoing operation of existing employment uses.

5.6 Modern land use planning policy, primarily NPF4, promotes a shift away from exclusionary monofunctional zoning practices in favour of a more holistic mixed use and place-based planning approach. Relevant to this appeal, NPF4 specifically

supports more connected and compact neighbourhoods (NPF4 Policy 15), the reuse of brownfield land and empty buildings (NPF4 Policy 9), and the delivery of high-quality, sustainable places that reflect local character and reduce reliance on car travel (Policies 13 and 14). Transitional areas on the fringe of industrial estates and adjacent major transport corridors, such as the appeal site, represent ideal opportunities to deliver a mix of land uses in line with these national planning policy priorities.

5.7 The transitional character of the western edge of Altens Industrial Estate is clearly reflected by the existing land use pattern along Wellington Road. As outlined in section 2.6 earlier, this area contains a variety of non-employment uses situated within the B1 Business and Industry zoning designation. These land uses include a Shell Gas Station, three detached residential properties, areas of greenspace, and an Aldi supermarket (application reference: 210114/DPP). As shown in Figure 1, the appeal site lies directly between these uses, adjacent to Kimberley House (residential property) and greenspaces identified in the Aberdeen Open Space Audit, reinforcing its suitability for alternative, non-employment use.

5.8 The contextual location of the site on the periphery of the Business and Industry zone is recognised as a material consideration in the Report of Handling. Specifically, the Report of Handling states that "*whilst bound to the south-east by Altens Lorry Park, the site is not surrounded by industrial uses that would be incompatible with proposed residential use, as could be the case further into the estate*" and *"It is therefore appropriate to acknowledge that the context and character of the site differs from that of a more typical industrial estate environment that is found farther to the east"* (Report of Handling, pg. 9). This material consideration should have been afforded greater weight, particularly when considering the integrated mixed use and place-based planning approach encouraged by NPF4.

5.9 This established pattern of mixed-use development is not unique to this location. Across the city, particularly along major transport corridors such as Wellington Road, similar examples exist within B1 zoned land. Specifically, further along Wellington Road, there is an established presence of non-employment uses within the B1 Business and Industry zones of East and West Tullos Industrial Estates (to the north) and Wellington Circle Estate (to the south). In East and West Tullos Estates, there are several non-employment uses along Wellington Road, including various drive-throughs (Tim Hortons McDonald's and Costa Coffee), Class 1A retail uses (Tesco Superstore and Lidl), the recently approved EV charging hub (application reference: 241137/DPP), as well as residential land near the Greenbank Road junction. Similarly, B1 Business and Industry land in the Wellington Circle Estate comprises the Wellington Circle Retail Park (which includes a combination of Class 1A, Class 11 and sui generis uses), a Shell Gas Station (sui generis) and a series of drive-through food and drink outlets (sui generis). This city-wide pattern demonstrates that the integration of non-employment uses along the peripheries of industrial estates is a well-established practice, particularly adjacent to major arterial routes like Wellington Road, and reflects an accepted, pragmatic approach to land use planning in Aberdeen and the rest of Scotland.

5.10 Considering the established land use context on the western periphery of Altens Industrial Estate and other similar peripheral industrial areas across the city, the proposed reuse of the former Loirston House office building for residential purposes represents a logical and appropriate solution for the site. It is compatible with the character and function of the surrounding area and aligns with the pattern of non-employment land uses that exist within the B1 zoning designation along Wellington Road, particularly the residential cluster immediately to the south. As such, due to this site-specific context, the proposed development is considered to align with the reasonable expectations of the B1 zone.

5.11 It is noted that the approval of residential uses in the B1 Industry and Business zone is not unique. In April 2025 a comparable change of use application for 24 affordable flats was approved at the Former Banks O' Dee Nursing Home in the B1 Business and Industry zone (application reference: 230685/DPP). Under this application, the proposed residential use was not considered to be incompatible with the B1 designation due to the contextual location of the site, which comprised a mixture of uses similar to the location of the appeal site. Refer to Appendix 4 for a copy of the Committee Report and Approved Plans from 230685/DPP.

5.12 The proposed development does not undermine the operation of adjacent industrial uses and is thus wholly compatible with the continued operation of these uses. A mature landscape buffer currently exists along the eastern boundary of the site, which is further reinforced by a 2.4-metre-high blockwork wall. As part of the proposed works, a 2m high close-boarded timber fence will extend this boundary treatment to ensure further visual and functional separation from the neighbouring employment premises to the east. In addition, acoustic mitigation measures are proposed to protect residential amenity and ensure acceptable noise levels inside habitable rooms. These acoustic mitigation measures include the provision of double-glazed windows with a 'closed-window' scenario and acoustic trickle vents (refer to the Noise Impact Assessment). Collectively, these measures ensure that the amenity of future residents will be safeguarded without detriment to the continued operation of neighbouring employment uses. The Report of Handling confirms that the above-mentioned mitigation measures will ensure that "*the proposed development would not likely conflict with any existing business and industrial uses*" (Report of Handling, pg.8).

5.13 While the Report of Handling acknowledges the proposed development would not conflict with existing surrounding business and industrial uses, it asserts that the residential use would nonetheless be unacceptable on the basis that it may "*preclude the neighbouring, currently vacant land to the north and east from being used for uses in either Classes 5 or 6 in the future*" (Report of Handling, p.8). The appellant respectfully disagrees with this assessment. The proposal should be assessed in relation to the existing land use context, along with any future proposals that are supported by either a live planning application or extant planning permission. This is common planning practice as it is impossible to make an informed decision based on hypothetical, uncertain development that could occur in the surrounding area in the

future. This approach ensures that decisions are evidence-based, proportionate, and grounded in material planning considerations. Accordingly, as demonstrated previously, under current circumstances, the use is compatible with the existing surrounding employment land use context.

5.14 Further to the above, the development will be accessed directly from Wellington Road and does not require any connection to the internal industrial road network via Hareness Road. This avoids introducing residential traffic onto the main industrial access route into Altens Industrial Estate. As such, there is no evidence that the proposal would result in any land use conflict or operational constraint for neighbouring businesses within the wider Altens Industrial Estate to the east.

5.15 By contrast, redevelopment of the site for a Class 5 (general industrial) or Class 6 (storage and distribution) use would be inconsistent with the established pattern of non-employment uses in this transitional location and could result in detrimental amenity impacts on the adjoining Kimberley House. Moreover, as discussed in the subsequent sections, there is a clear lack of demand for continued Class 4 (business) use on the site.

Delivery of much-needed affordable and specialist provision accommodation

5.16 On 15 May 2024, Scotland declared a national housing emergency. Following this declaration, on 5 September 2024, Aberdeen City Council declared a housing emergency due to a critical shortage of affordable homes across the city.

5.17 The proposed development will deliver 100% affordable housing, including ground floor wheelchair-accessible units specifically designed for individuals with bariatric conditions. The first-floor flats are also designed to be adaptable, enabling them to meet a range of specialist needs, including accommodation for individuals with mental health conditions and/or learning disabilities. This directly aligns with the aims of ALDP Policies H4 and H5 and NPF4 Policy 16. The proposal specifically comprises of 100% affordable housing which is recognised in the Report of Handling "*to significantly exceed the minimum 25% affordable housing requirement as set out in Policies 16 and H5*" (Report of Handling, pg. 18). The Report of Handling also acknowledges that NPF4 Policy 16 (c) provides in principle support for affordable and wheelchair accessible housing, however, places limited weight on this important specialist social housing solution and the associated public benefits it could provide. The appellant maintains that this form of accommodation responds to a critical and well-evidenced housing need within Aberdeen and, as such, should be given substantial material weight in the overall planning assessment.

5.18 Right from project inception, the core objective of this change of use proposal was twofold: (1) to bring a long-term vacant building back into productive use and (2), to provide an immediately deliverable solution to Aberdeen's identified shortage of affordable housing, particularly for individuals with disabilities or long-term health conditions. This need was identified and refined through early pre-application

engagement with ACC's Housing Strategy Team and ACHSCP, which started back in September 2022. Following on from those initial pre-application discussions, the ACC Housing Strategy Team and the ACHSCP have played an active role in shaping the proposal, ensuring the affordable and specialist provision housing would respond directly to strategic housing priorities. Following lodgement of the application, the Housing Strategy Team subsequently issued a supportive consultation response on 11 March 2025, reinforcing the proposal's alignment with the city's housing delivery objectives.

5.19 The early involvement of ACC Housing Strategy Team and the ACHSCP meant that the site was committed as a key affordable housing project for the city under the adopted Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2025 –2030 (SHIP). In fact, the site has been allocated in the SHIP since at least 2024 (refer to Appendix 3). This proves that the project is not just a windfall housing scheme on an unallocated site but is in fact earmarked as a priority project that will provide an important contribution towards a specific affordable housing need and enable the Council to achieve its affordable housing targets set out in the Aberdeen City Council Local Housing Strategy 2018-2032 (ALHS).

5.20 The supportive consultation response from the ACC Housing Strategy Team (11 March 2025) referred specifically to the direct need for specialist provision accommodation for individuals with bariatric conditions in accordance with the Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership's Independent Living and Specialist Housing Market Position Statement (2024-2034) (ACHSCP Position Statement). Per the ACHSCP Position Statement, "*there has been an increase in the number of people requiring specialist bariatric care*" (pg. 17). This increase in the number of people requiring care is compounded by the limited availability of housing designed for bariatric care. This is highlighted by the Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Housing Needs & Demand Assessment: 2023 -2028 (HNDA), which states that "*there is an identified lack of accommodation for people with complex care needs or those with bariatric conditions*" (HNDA, pg. 270). Specifically, the ACHSCP confirms that there are only three homes available in Aberdeen City Council's housing stock that are designed specifically for bariatric care (Position Statement, pg. 18).

5.21 The HNDA identifies a further **ten bariatric homes** required to meet the existing and unmet need for this type of accommodation in the short term (up to 5 years). Furthermore, predicted data in the ACHSCP shows that a total of **30 bariatric homes** would be required to meet the increasing needs of the city by 2034 (ACHSCP Position Statement, pg. 18). As it stands, there are no current plans in Aberdeen for specialist accommodation for individuals with bariatric conditions (HNDA, pg. 184).

5.22 In addition to the need for bariatric housing, the Aberdeen City Council LHS identifies that there is a "*lack of suitable housing for people who have a learning disability, mental health or substance misuse problems*" (pg. 59). Specifically, there are currently **31 individuals** in Aberdeen with complex care needs requiring accommodation (HNDA). The HNDA (pg. 236) identifies a need for an **additional 8 unit development,**

every 2 years plus one site (8 units) per year to meet the emerging needs of those with learning disabilities and mental health issues. This need corresponds with the findings of the ALHS, which states that there is a "*lack of suitable housing for people who have a learning disability, mental health or substance misuse problems*" (pg. 59). Therefore, the proposal would clearly satisfy an urgent unmet need for affordable specialist provision accommodation for those with bariatric conditions, mental health and/or learning disabilities.

5.23 The need for accommodation suitable for individuals with bariatric conditions, mental health conditions and learning disabilities was highlighted by NHS Grampian and Audrey Nicoll MSP who were both consulted on this appeal:

"I feel that it is very clear that the City is in significant need of the type of accommodation proposed. The aforementioned document details the need for bariatric accommodation with tracking and hoisting, wheelchair accessible units and provision for accommodation for people with brain injury, dementia, mental health and learning disabilities." (NHS Grampian Comments on Loirston House application)

"the planning application sets forth proposals which adheres to a range of local and national housing policy, and additionally meets a specific and bespoke housing need that is in very short supply." (Audrey Nicoll MSP Comments on Loirston House application)

5.24 The ACHSCP has also always been supportive of the principle of specialist provision housing at Loirston House, as confirmed by correspondence received from the ACC Housing Strategy Team back in September 2022 (refer to Appendix 2). This correspondence proves that the need for specialist provision housing was identified by the ACHSCP well before an application was even submitted. Members of the ACHSCP even visited the site back on 2 September 2022 and did not raise any concerns regarding the site location or quality of the building for the proposed 100% affordable and specialist provision housing.

5.25 There is also a general shortfall in wheelchair accessible housing, with **737 households** in Aberdeen not having their needs met due to a lack of wheelchair accessibility (HNDA, pg. 271). This is exacerbated by the **47% rise** in the number of applicants in Aberdeen that have identified the need for additional space requirements due to illness or disability (HNDA, pg. 270)

5.26 Not only would the proposal fill an obvious gap in affordable specialist provision accommodation, but it would also help reverse housing related hospital delayed discharges and promote independent living in a homely environment. The impact on delayed hospital discharge on the individual / patient can be significant if appropriate accommodation cannot be found (HNDA, pg. 185). The Coming Home Implementation Report 2022 poignantly outlines that "*for every day spent unnecessarily in hospital, that person loses part of their connection with their community, their family, and their friends*" (Coming Home Implementation Report,

pg. 11). Unnecessary or prolonged hospitalisation can lead to deconditioning and deterioration, as well as long-term loss of independence, often resulting in premature and avoidable placement in residential care (Discharge without Delay Discussion Document, pg. 10).

5.27 The ACHSCP Position Statement outlines that the lack of housing to suit areas of identified housing need puts increased pressure on the health and social care system through delays in hospital discharges and results in unnecessary deteriorations in health (ACHSCP, pg. 6). Furthermore, the average cost of a hospital bed is around £800 per night, therefore there is also a cost incurred by NHS for each patient who is delayed (ACHSCP Discharged Without Delay Report, pg.5). In relation to specialist provision housing for individuals with bariatric conditions, the ACHSCP specifically states that "*Care workers and Occupational Therapists currently have concerns on planning for the future in how we care for those with bariatric needs*" (ACHSCP, pg. 17). When consulted on this appeal, NHS Grampian similarly stressed the issues faced by the health and social care system in relation to delayed discharge and lack of suitable homes:

"*We experience first hand the issues surrounding patient outflow, given the lack of accommodation of this nature, which ultimately creates flow pressures within acute hospital settings, with delayed discharge and delayed transfer of care featuring significant ly.*" (NHS Grampian Comments on Loirston House application)

5.28 Per the ALHS, delayed hospital discharge is likely to get worse, with there being a rising trend in the number of people in hospital waiting for specialist housing provision. The length of delay is often more than six weeks, which can result in a high number of bed-days lost (ALHS, pg.63). The latest statistics from 2 September 2024 confirm that **62 Aberdeen City citizens** were classed as a delayed discharge in hospital (ACHSCP Discharged Without Delay Report, pg.4). This would equate to approximately £33,600 per patient per annum (over £2 million in total) based on the average cost of a hospital bed outlined in section 5.27 above. The proposal is for an immediately deliverable affordable and specialist provision housing solution that will provide an effective short-term contribution toward reversing delayed hospital discharge for those with bariatric conditions, mental health conditions and/or learning disabilities.

5.29 As recognised in section 5.266 of the HNDA, there is a major shift in the balance of care, with a move away from care and support being provided in an institutional setting towards appropriate services delivered in a more homely, community-based setting. This shift to independent living is a key Strategic Outcome set out under Chapter 5 of the LHS:

"People are supported to live, as far as is reasonably practicable, independently at home or in a homely setting in their community." (ALHS, pg. 59)

5.30 Living independently at home is also the second of nine national health and wellbeing outcomes set out under the National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes: Framework (2015), as follows:

"*People, including those with disabilities or long term conditions, or who are frail, are able to live, as far as reasonably practicable, independently and at home or in a homely setting in their community*" (National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes: Framework, pg.4)

5.31 The right to live independently and be included in a community is also an obligation under Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Article 19 specifically states:

"a) Persons with disabilities have the opportunity to choose their place of residence and where and with whom they live on an equal basis with others and are not obliged to live in a particular living arrangement;

b) Persons with disabilities have access to a range of in-home, residential and other community support services, including personal assistance necessary to support living and inclusion in the community, and to prevent isolation or segregation from the community;

c) Community services and facilities for the general population are available on an equal basis to persons with disabilities and are responsive to their needs."
(UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 19)

5.32 The letter of support from Audrey Nicoll MSP recognises the social and health benefits of the proposal scheme:

"I am also mindful that the provisions within the planning application would be of significant benefit to the tenants who could be housed there, and will improve the social and health outcomes of such individuals" (Audrey Nicoll MSP Comments on Loirston House application)

5.33 The proposal facilitates those with bariatric conditions, mental health and/or learning disabilities to move to an independent dwelling within an appropriate community setting. This aligns with UN, national and local priorities and obligations set out above.

5.34 Given the proposal is for a change of use and minimal works are required to the existing building and associated curtilage to bring it into residential use, the proposed affordable housing can be delivered without delay. Furthermore, as outlined in the Design and Access Statement, the construction costs associated with bariatric housing are usually substantially higher than normal due to the need for reinforced structures and robust fittings, larger spaces and accessibility features. This is also highlighted in the Aberdeen Local Housing Strategy 2025 –2030 –Evidence base, which states that "*bariatric standard accommodation comes at a significant*

additional development costs, which has hampered further development" (pg. 67). As the proposal is for the conversion of an existing building that already has a reinforced structure, this will significantly reduce these costs and allow for a more timeous and affordable alternative to new build bariatric housing.

5.35 Overall, while the Report of Handling recognises that NPF4 Policy 16 (c) provides in principle support for affordable, specialist provision and wheelchair accessible housing, it places limited weight on this important specialist social housing outcome and the associated public benefits it would deliver. The appellant submits that, based on the grounds presented above, there is a demonstrable and overriding need in the city for affordable housing, particularly affordable housing that is adapted for wheelchair access and ancillary specialist provision use. This is in line with NPF4 Policy 16 and ALDP Policies H4 and H5. The wider health and social care benefits, including reducing delayed hospital discharges and enabling independent living, represents a significant material consideration that should carry substantial weight in the balance of planning judgement, particularly when assessing the principle of development. Please note, the relevant housing demand, health and land supply information cited above is included in Appendix 6.

Reuse and revitalisation of a vacant building

5.36 The ALDP spatial strategy prioritises the regeneration of brownfield sites throughout the existing built-up areas of the city for increasing housing supply. It also recognises the importance of regenerating brownfield sites for regenerating communities and bringing vacant buildings back into effective use.

"*Brownfield sites are expected to contribute an increasing amount of our housing requirements over the period to 2032.*" (ALDP spatial strategy, pg. 17)

"*Redeveloping the urban area can regenerate communities, maintain local services, remove local eyesores, bring land and buildings back into effective use*" (ALDP spatial strategy, pg. 19)

5.37 The proposal directly supports the ALDP spatial strategy and policy intent of NPF4 Policy 9 by facilitating the adaptive reuse of a long-term vacant building for the delivery of specialist provision affordable housing. As evidenced by the submitted Marketing Statement, Loirston House has been vacant since September 2016 (**nine years**), with no interest in its future use as an office building. This lack of commercial interest is also acknowledged in the Report of Handling, which states that "*Despite active marketing, there has been no feasible interest in the building*" (Report of Handling, pg.9).

5.38 The vacant building incurs significant annual holding costs exceeding £120,000 per year, which is not sustainable in the long-term. Continued safeguarding of the site for Class 4 (business) use, despite an absence of market interest, places an undue financial burden on the landowner and fails to optimise the site's potential to be

sustainably reused in accordance with NPF4 Policy 9. Retaining the building purely for Class 4 office use is therefore clearly detrimental for supporting the long-term preservation of the building and alternative strategies to secure a viable long-term use are required, such as the proposed affordable housing solution.

5.39 If this appeal is dismissed, the only other viable option will be to demolish the building in accordance with the existing demolition warrant (reference: 240701). The appellant cannot indefinitely sustain the major financial setback of continued vacant office rates and holding cots. Repurposing the vacant office building for affordable housing must be given priority over demolition. It is therefore absolutely critical that this appeal succeeds to avoid the loss of the building and the consequential release of carbon, which goes against the spirit of NPF4 Policies 1, 2, 9 and 12. Cumulatively, Policies 1 and 2 place significant weight on addressing the global climate and nature crises and the proposal's contribution toward this national priority through the reuse and upgrade of an existing vacant building should be given significant weight. The Report of Handling acknowledges the proposal's compliance with the aims and provisions of NPF4 Policies 1, 2, 9 and 12 on the basis that:

"the development would be inherently sustainable and could indirectly help to tackle the climate crisis and present opportunities to minimise greenhouse gas emissions." (Report of Handling, pg. 12)

5.40 As noted in section 3, only minor changes are proposed to the structure of the existing building and external elevations to maximise its potential to deliver much needed affordable housing and enhance its visual appearance. Furthermore, upgrades to the existing building's walls and roof will be carried out to ensure the building meets current building regulations in terms of energy efficiency. As the proposal will not significantly alter the fabric of the existing office building, the building could readily be reverted to Class 4 use in the future if this were ever required. Designing buildings to support flexibility for adaptation over time is encouraged under NPF4 Policy 14.

5.41 The Aberdeen City and Shire Employment Land Audit (ELA) confirms that there is ample supply of business and industry land within the city, with 254 ha established land available as of 2023. The market for business uses within the wider City of Aberdeen has been weak for some time, particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic, and there is little expectation that this will change. Given the healthy supply of employment land across the city, the loss of ~0.3 ha of employment land would be negligible and could nonetheless be replaced through the allocation of new land in the upcoming ALDP. This is also recognised in the Report of Handling.

5.42 The principle of the proposed change of use is thus supported by the ALDP spatial strategy and NPF4 Policy 9. This should be afforded significant weight in light of the Marketing Statement supplied by the appellant and considering the current market conditions for business uses in city. Its reuse also accords with NPF4 Policies 1, 2 and 12, as it would conserve embodied energy by avoiding demolition. While the Report of Handling recognises that the proposal complies with the aims and provisions of these

policies, it does not attribute enough weight to these policies. This goes against the spirit of NPF4 which states that significant weight will be given to the global climate and nature crises.

5.43 Taken together, the material considerations set out above provide strong grounds for a departure from the site's B1 Business and Industry designation based on other key NPF4 policies (Policy 1, 2, 9, 12 and 16) that support the principle of the proposed development. The principle of development is therefore considered to be acceptable on the basis that the change of use: (1) is consistent the established character of the area, (2) delivers an immediate response to an identified housing shortfall and (3) regenerates a long-standing vacant building.

5.44 It is important to note the Chief Planner's instructions to consider NPF4 as a whole document rather than as a set of standalone policies. Therefore, the proposal's compliance with the range of policies set out above outweighs the tension with the individual B1 Business and Industry policy.

Reason 2: Residential amenity and placemaking

5.45 The second reason for refusal is split into two parts. The first part relates to the proposed residential amenity, which the Planning Service do not consider to be satisfactory or conducive to the health and wellbeing of future occupants. The second part relates to design quality and placemaking, which the Planning Service do not support due to the site's location being "*remote from existing residential communities and sited immediately adjacent to a busy dual carriageway and industrial estate*" (Decision Notice). It cites NPF4 Policy 14 and ALDP Policies D1, D2 and WB1 as the premise for this reason for refusal, although the Report of Handling refers to additional ALDP and NPF4 policies (as discussed). These two parts are addressed in-turn below.

Residential amenity

5.46 The Report of Handling breaks the residential amenity section into three topics, which are listed as follows:

Space standards, outlook, daylight receipt and privacy
Open space
Noise

5.47 Each of these topics are addressed under the sub-headings below.

Space standards, outlook, daylight receipt and privacy

5.48 The Report of Handling outlines that the nine wheelchair accessible ground floor flats significantly exceed the internal floor space standards recommended by the Aberdeen Planning Guidance (APG) on Amenity & Space Standards, with unit sizes

ranging between **67 m² and 93 m²** (p.12). However, it expresses concern over the size of the first floor flats, which range between **47m² and 56m²** and fall marginally below the recommended minimum internal floor area of 52m² for a one bedroom flat and 66m² for a two bedroom flat, as set out under section 2.10 of the APG.

5.49 The proposal has been designed make the most efficient use of the existing building. This meant that the proposed internal layout was dictated by the existing floorplates and position of stairwells. The shortfall in the first-floor flat sizes is marginal and is counterbalanced by the provision of generous communal storage facilities totalling approximately **71m²** across the building. This marginal reduction is largely offset by the provision of generous communal storage facilities across both levels of the building. When these community storage areas are factored in, the discrepancy between the proposed flat sizes and the APG space standards is 'de minimis' and the minor reduction is not considered to compromise overall quality or functionality of the residential accommodation.

5.50 Moreover, the appellant submits that greater flexibility should be applied in interpreting the internal space standards in this instance, due to the inherent constraints associated with the conversion of an existing building. Section 2.18 of the APG acknowledges that conversions may require compromises where no feasible alternative exists or where other material benefits are achieved. In this case, the proposed scheme delivers significant public benefits. Notably the provision of affordable housing with integrated ancillary specialist provision / wheelchair accessible accommodation that addresses a critical unmet housing need within the city (as set out in Sections 5.16–5.35). Furthermore, allowing minimal deviations from the space standards is essential for the viability of the conversion and to avoid the significantly more resource-intensive and unsustainable alternative of demolition and redevelopment.

5.51 While the Report of Handling acknowledges the flexibility afforded to conversions under section 2.18 of the APG, it does not adequately consider or balance the clear public benefits of the proposal against the minor deviations from internal space standards. As a result, the assessment lacks proportionality and consistency, particularly when compared with the Planning Service's approach to similar proposals in the city. A clear example of this inconsistency is seen in the approved change of use to 24 affordable flats at the Former Banks O' Dee Nursing Home (application reference: 230685/DPP). Like the appeal scheme, that approval involved one bedroom flats on the first floor which were below the minimum 52m² guideline specified in the APG. Specifically, the first floor flats ranged between 45m² and 49m², which is smaller than the one bedroom flats proposed under the appeal scheme. Per the Committee Report, these flats were supported as a deviation from the APG guideline due to the constraint posed by the existing floor plates of the building and stairwells, much like the proposal. The reuse of the building was cited as justification for allowing this variation from the APG standards. The Committee Report specifically states:

"*Albeit lower than the guideline minimum floor size of 52sqm, the first floor level flats would not be significantly smaller than the guideline minimum and their size is dictated, to an extent, by the existing floorplates and position of stairwells in the building. Given the sustainable re-use of the existing building, the relatively minor deficit in internal floor areas for the majority of the first floor level flats is considered to be acceptable.*" (Committee Report, pg. 15) –refer to Appendix 4 for a copy of the Committee Report and Approved Plans

5.52 This example case highlights a precedent where sound planning judgment was applied to allow a slight deviation in the APG space standards to facilitate the sustainable reuse of an existing building. The same reasoning should reasonably be applied to the current proposal.

5.53 Lastly, it is noted that the UK nationally described space standards (2015) specifies that the minimum space standard for one bedroom flats is $37m^2$, which is significantly less than the $52m^2$ recommended for a one bedroom flat under the APG on Amenity & Space Standards. While these standards do not apply to Scottish Local Planning Authorities, it does provide a useful UK-wide benchmark for what is considered to provide a satisfactory level of residential amenity for occupants.

5.54 Turning now to daylight, the Report of Handling expresses concern that the majority of flats would only have single aspect rather than dual aspect and that the established trees along the eastern boundary would cast shade onto the eastern side of the building and garden areas. Section 2.4 of the APG on Amenity & Space Standards provides flexibility for daylight considerations for conversions of existing buildings where existing floorplates and layouts may be constrained, resulting in no feasible alternative to the creation of single aspect dwellings. In such instances, section 2.4 of the APG seeks to ensure that conversions incorporate appropriate mitigation, such as:

"*increasing the amount of daylight which can enter the rooms, through the use of larger windows, ensuring a high-quality outlook, increasing the internal floor area and/or providing access to private external amenity space*" (APG Amenity & Space Standards, pg. 8)

5.55 As acknowledged in the Report of Handling, all the flats "*benefit from sufficient glazing, including full height windows and Juliet balconies for first floor level living rooms, and glazed doors into garden areas at ground floor level*" (pg. 12). Furthermore, the Planning Service agree that the outlook for the majority of flats would be reasonable, with views onto communal gardens and established tree belts. Therefore, even though some of the flats are single aspect, this is considered to be acceptable in light of the proposal being for a conversion rather than a new build and including mitigation measures recommended under section 2.4 of the APG.

5.56 In terms of shade, it is noted that the BRE Guidelines (2022) for daylight and sunlight suggest that trees and shrubs do not normally need to be included in technical daylight and sunlight assessments, particularly in the context of conversions of

existing buildings which often warrant greater flexibility for daylight performance. The guidelines simply note that if an existing garden or outdoor space is already heavily obstructed then any further loss of sunlight should be kept to a minimum. In this case, the proposal includes the removal of two trees in the existing rear outdoor amenity area, specifically to improve daylight receipt for the north-eastern elevation and proposed garden areas. This strategy is considered to provide a well balanced and proportionate solution that enhances daylight access for future residents while retaining the wider tree belt so that it can continue to provide effective natural screening and contribute positively to the landscape setting.

Open space

5.57 Per the Report of Handling, the proposal is considered to provide a sufficient amount of open space that is proportionate to the constrained nature of the brownfield site. However, it states that while the amount of open space is satisfactory, the quality and useability of on-site open space is not fully compliant with the aspirations and requirements of Policy NE2 of the ALDP and the associated APG on Open Space. This is because the Planning Service consider the open space to be "*compromised somewhat by shading cast by existing trees outwith the site, and by the building itself*" (Report of Handling, pg. 13).

5.58 ALDP Policy NE2 and the associated APG on Open Space both concede that proposals for brownfield sites may not be able to increase the amount of open space, particularly where existing buildings on the site are being retained. In such cases, Policy NE2 advises that appropriate design solutions to deliver on-site amenity will be sought in the first instance. Where necessary and appropriate, this may be supplemented by a financial contribution toward off-site open space provision or the enhancement of existing green infrastructure in the surrounding area.

5.59 In accordance with Policy NE2, the proposal makes effective use of a constrained brownfield site to deliver meaningful improvements to the quality and usability of open space and on-site amenity. As detailed in the Biodiversity Landscaping Plan, the proposal replaces a significant portion of existing hardstanding primarily associated with the former car park, with a combination of wildflower and amenity grassland. This is supported by strengthened boundary treatments and biodiversity enhancements around the building. On the southern side of the building, the proposal incorporates a high quality outdoor communal area, featuring fixed seating and tables, low level sensory planting and a mixture of native trees, shrubs and wildflower grass. On the north-eastern side of the building, further amenity provision is made through a communal drying area (included in response to consultation feedback from the Planning Service) and private gardens associated with the ground floor flats. Additional open spaces and planting areas are integrated around the revised car parking layout, contributing further to the site's open space network.

5.60 ALDP Policy D2 states that residential developments will provide no less than 50% usable amenity space where it is necessary to provide car parking within a private court. The existing building footprint takes up about 1,065m^2 of the site area. This

leaves 2,055m^2 of useable external space. The proposed reduced carpark accounts for 724m^2, with the remaining 1,331m² (or 65% of the usable external area) allocated to open space and landscaping. The majority of this space is designed as usable amenity space. Given that the proposal involves the retention and conversion of an existing building, the delivery of 65% open space and landscaping is considered generous and clearly compliant with the requirements of ALDP Policy D2.

5.61 These landscaping and open space enhancements represent a significant uplift in the quality and functionality of on-site amenity, especially when measured against the site's previous condition. In addition, the development will provide a commuted sum towards improvements to existing public open space in the local area, as noted in the Report of Handling. Taken together, the on-site design interventions and off-site contributions demonstrate a comprehensive and policy-compliant approach to open space delivery in the context of a brownfield site. Accordingly, the proposal is considered to comply with the intent and requirements of ALDP Policy NE2 and the APG on Open Space, particularly in light of the inherent site constraints and the overarching sustainability benefits associated with retaining and repurposing the existing building.

5.62 It is noted that the site is located in proximity to a plethora of open spaces. In fact, as per the Open Space Audit 2024, the site itself immediately adjoins existing natural/semi-natural greenspace (refer to Figure 6 below). The proposed open spaces and landscape scheme will tie in well with these surrounding open spaces and improve their overall quality. Additionally, as noted in section 2 above, the site is located just 250m from Kincorth Hill Local Nature Reserve and 350m from Cat Cairn nature preserve.

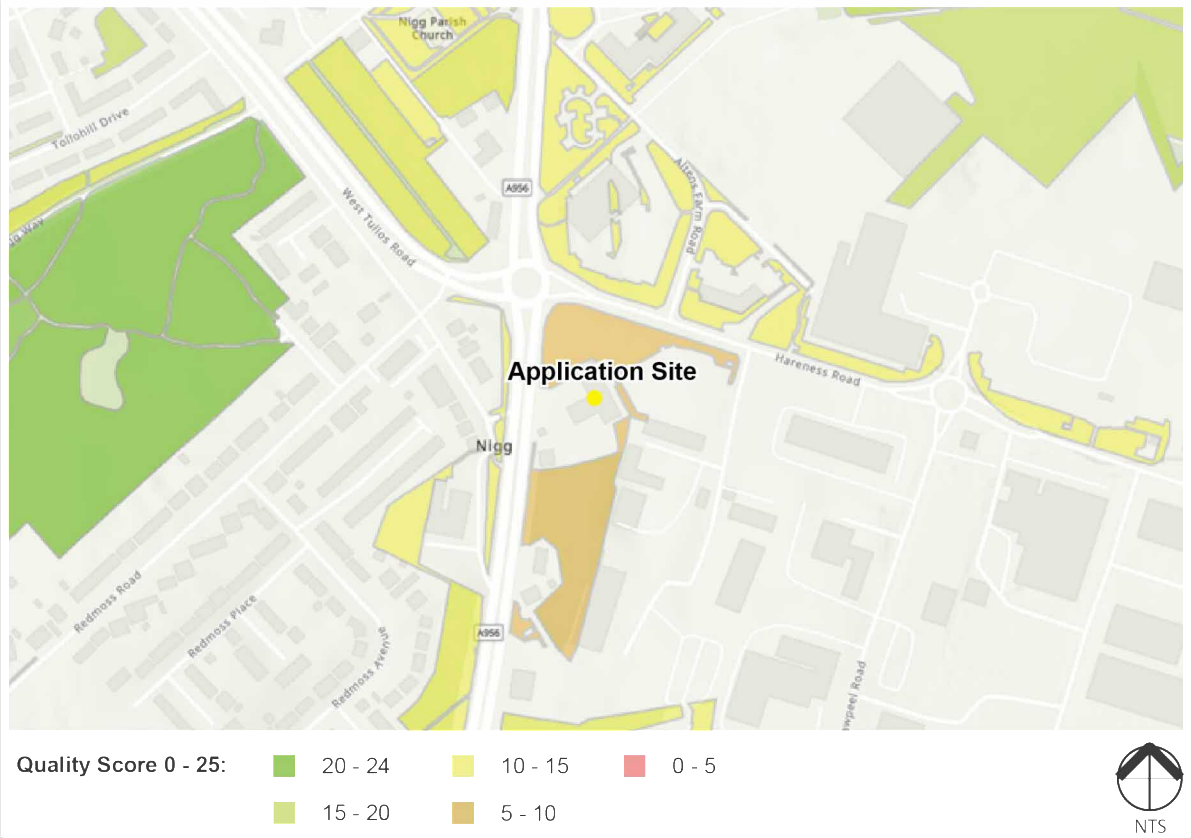

Figure 6: *Open Space Audit 2024 mapping (Source: Aberdeen City Council)*

Noise

5.63 The Planning Service has expressed concern about the closed-window strategy required to achieve satisfactory acoustic performance within the flats. The Report of Handling states that this strategy causes some tension with NPF4 Policy 23, ALDP Policy WB3, and the associated APG on Noise and the Scottish Government's Planning Advice Note 1/2011 (Planning and Noise) (PAN 1/2011).

5.64 While an open window approach is preferred, both the APG on Noise and the Scottish Government's Planning Advice Note 1/2011 (Planning and Noise) acknowledge that closed-window solutions are appropriate under certain circumstances, as follows:

"*Local circumstances, particularly relating to the existing noise character of the area, should influence the approach taken to noise levels with open or closed windows*" (Planning Advice Note 1/2011 (Planning and Noise, pg. 5)

"*In some circumstances however, closed windows with alternative means of ventilation may be unavoidable.*" (Planning Advice Note 1/2011 (Planning and Noise, pg. 5)

"*Alternative ventilation may be required where it is not possible to achieve these criteria with traditional window designs and windows partially open for ventilation.*" (APG on Noise, pg. 8)

5.65 Per the Noise Impact Assessment (NIA), the close-window approach is necessary due to ambient traffic noise from Wellington Road. The NIA confirms that appropriate alternative ventilation systems can maintain a satisfactory internal acoustic environment, consistent with PAN 1/2011 and the APG on Noise. This conclusion is supported by the Council's Environmental Health Service, thus confirming compliance with Policies 23 of NPF4 and WB3 of the ALDP. Given the existing background noise context and brownfield nature of the site, open window solutions are not a viable option, otherwise this would have been proposed in the NIA or requested by the Environmental Health Service.

5.66 It is also relevant to note that a closed-window approach has been accepted on other brownfield sites across the city, for example:

24 affordable and specialist provision flats at the Former Banks O' Dee Nursing Home, Abbotswell Road, Aberdeen, AB12 3AB (application reference: 230685/DPP);
The supported living development at the Former Stoneywood Primary School site, Stoneywood Road, Stoneywood, AB21 9HY (application reference: 230428/DPP); and
Self-build residential plots at Waterton House, Stoneywood, AB21 9HX (application reference: 230428/DPP).

5.67 This demonstrates that the approach is not exceptional, but consistent with precedent across the city.

5.68 In conclusion, while the proposal falls short of some of the criteria of the APG on Amenity & Space Standards, these are very minor in nature and must be considered in the context of the case, which is for the conversion of an existing building on a constrained brownfield site. While the APG provides some flexibility for conversions and brownfield sites, the minor deviations do not materially affect the quality, functionality, or overall residential amenity of the proposed flats. In fact, the internal layout, daylight strategy, open space design, boundary / privacy treatments and acoustic mitigation measures have all been carefully considered and developed to optimise residential amenity and functionality. Moreover, any minor technical shortfalls are clearly and demonstrably outweighed by the significant public benefits associated with the scheme, namely, the delivery of much-needed affordable specialist provision housing and the sustainable reuse of a long-term vacant building.

5.69 On balance, the proposal is consistent with the residential amenity provisions of NPF4 Policies 14 and 23, ALDP Policies D1, D2, NE2, WB1 and WB3, and the aims of the associated APG on Amenity & Space Standards, APG on Noise, and the Scottish Government's Planning Advice Note 1/2011 (Planning and Noise).

Design quality and placemaking

5.70 The Report of Handling acknowledges that the proposed refurbishment and recladding works would deliver a positive visual enhancement to the local streetscape and would not detract from any key views within the wider area. While it accepts that the scheme generally aligns with the six qualities of successful places, it nonetheless concludes that the development is "*not particularly pleasant or easy to move around*" (Report of Handling, pg. 16) and therefore identifies some degree of tension with the aims and aspirations of ALDP Policy D1 and NPF4 Policy 14. It specifically states that the site's location immediately adjacent Wellington Road, Hareness Road and an industrial estate would not provide a pleasant residential environment. Furthermore, it states that it would not be easy to move around the pedestrian footpaths outwith the site.

5.71 It is important to reiterate that the application relates to the conversion and enhancement of a brownfield site containing a long-vacant office building. While the sustainable reuse of an existing building is strongly supported and encouraged under NPF4 Policy 9, it inevitably requires a pragmatic and flexible application of design and residential amenity policies, recognising that some standards intended for new build developments may not be fully achievable for a change of use on brownfield land.

5.72 The assertion that the location of the site adjacent to Wellington Road, Hareness Road and Altens Industrial Estate is unsuitable for creating a pleasant residential environment is not supported by the established mixed use context. As demonstrated in section 2, there are already existing residential uses immediately adjacent the site along Wellington Road, including Kimberley House to the south. Although these properties were constructed some time ago, their continued occupation demonstrates that a satisfactory residential environment can be achieved in this location. The site's mixed use location, coupled with the proposed high-quality boundary treatments, acoustic mitigation measures, and landscape enhancements, will ensure the delivery of a reasonable residential environment that is compatible with the urban setting and consistent with relevant policy expectations of ALDP Policy D1 and NPF4 Policy 14.

5.73 With respect to movement, the Report of Handling outlines that external pedestrian linkages are not ideal given the absence of a formal, signalised pedestrian crossing over Hareness Road. However, it suggests that this could be ameliorated via the imposition of a condition requiring the installation of such a crossing. The appellant is fully committed to enhancing pedestrian connectivity and access in accordance with NPF4 Policy 14 and therefore welcomes this condition.

5.74 In light of the above, the appellant respectfully disagrees with the Planning Service's conclusion that the proposal is not easy to move around and does not create a pleasant residential environment. On the contrary, the proposed design responds positively to the site constraints and surrounding context and delivers appropriate mitigations and enhancements to ensure a pleasant, functional and well-connected

residential environment. It is thus consistent with the placemaking principles of NPF4 and ALDP. The appellant welcomes a condition requiring the installation of a signalised crossing over Hareness Road.

Reason 3: Accessibility

5.75 The third reason for refusal relates to pedestrian safety and accessibility outwith the site. More specifically, the Planning Service is of the opinion that the proposal fails to meet NPF4 Policies 13 and 15 and ALDP Policy T2 because the surrounding pedestrian network is "*not of a particularly high quality, especially for those with mobility issues*" (Report of Handling, pg. 22). It states that access to the majority of amenities "*would involve crossing over Hareness Road and/or Wellington Road, with a lack of safe, signalised crossing points in the immediate vicinity of the development*" (Report of Handling, pg. 22). It is important to highlight that the Planning Service are not concerned with the availability or proximity of amenities and services in the area, but rather with pedestrian accessibility to those facilities.

5.76 The Report of Handling and Decision Notice both confirm that the proposal would be sited within a 20 minute walk of various shops, amenities, public transport routes and employment land. The appellant agrees with this conclusion and maintains that the site is well placed for residents to meet the majority of their daily needs within a reasonable distance of the site. Section 2 of this Statement of Case details the concentration of key amenities and facilities in proximity to the site that people can easily access from the proposed development.

5.77 Per the Report of Handling, the key pedestrian accessibility concern relates to access to the northbound bus stops on Wellington Road, which would involve crossing either Wellington Road or Hareness Road via non-signalised crossing points. As set out earlier, this concern can be effectively resolved through the imposition of a planning condition requiring the delivery of a signalised pedestrian crossing over Hareness Road. This mitigation measure is acknowledged as a viable option within the Report of Handling itself:

"*In the event the application was to be approved, however, a could be attached requiring the installation of such a crossing, in order to provide enhanced pedestrian connectivity to the wider area.*" (Report of Handling, pg. 16)

5.78 The appellant is fully supportive of the proposed condition, recognising that it would meaningfully enhance pedestrian safety and connectivity in accordance with the principles of NPF4 Policies 13 and 15. As the Planning Service itself has acknowledged this condition as an appropriate and deliverable form of mitigation, the issue cited in the refusal is considered to be satisfactorily addressed.

5.79 It is noted that the Council's Roads Development Management Team did not raise any road safety concerns with the pedestrian access arrangements and confirms that the site is well-served by public transport (bus) stops nearby on Wellington Road.

Reason 4: Housing on unallocated land

5.80 The final reason for refusal relates to item (f) of NPF4 Policy 16, which concerns housing on unallocated land. According to the Report of Handling and Decision Notice, the Planning Service do not consider the proposal to meet the criteria for housing on unallocated land under Policy 16(f)(ii) because it is in an unsuitable location for housing "*in terms of both the land use zoning in the ALDP and in terms of the substandard quality of amenity and connectivity*" (Decision Notice). It concludes that the proposal does not satisfy the requirements of Policy 16(f)(ii). This position appears to be a reiteration of the earlier reasons for refusal already addressed above.

5.81 NPF4 Policy 16(f)(ii) states that housing proposals on unallocated land may only be supported where:

"*The proposal is otherwise consistent with the plan spatial strategy and other relevant policies including local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods*" (NPF4 Policy 16(f)(ii))

5.82 The appellant submits that, for the reasons outlined throughout this Statement of Case, the appeal site represents an entirely suitable location for the proposed affordable housing development. To summarise, the site is consistent with the ALDP spatial strategy by virtue of it involving the regeneration of an underutilised brownfield site to increase the much-needed supply of affordable housing (with ancillary specialist provision). The sustainable reuse of an existing long-term vacant building also complies with NPF4 Policies 1, 2, 9 and 12, which collectively prioritise the reuse of vacant brownfield sites over demolition. Furthermore, the proposal is well suited to the existing land use context and supports the NPF4 Policy 15 principles of 20 minute neighbourhoods and local living, being on the transitional periphery of an established employment area, close to existing residential communities and a mix of amenities and facilities. The site also fronts a major arterial road that is serviced by high frequency public transport options into and out of the city centre. As such, the proposed development is entirely consistent with NPF4 Policy 16(f)(ii). The proposal also complies with the remainder of the circumstances under NPF4 Policy 16 (f), as outlined in the Report of Handling.

5.83 As per the Planning for housing: Chief Planner letter (June 2024), the different parts of NPF4 Policy 16 should be weighed up as relevant to the proposal. As such, even though the proposal is considered to comply with the disputed NPF4 Policy 16 (f), the appellant has also provided an assessment against the other relevant parts of NPF4 Policy 16 below, including the overarching intent of the policy. This is to ensure that a balanced planning judgement can be reached in determining the compatibility of the proposal with NPF4 Policy 16.

5.84 NPF4 Policy 16 (c) supports proposals that improve affordability and choice, and address identified gaps in provision, as follows:

Development proposals for new homes that improve affordability and choice by being adaptable to changing and diverse needs, and which address identified gaps in provision, will be supported. This could include:

i. *Self-provided homes;*
ii. *Accessible, adaptable and wheelchair accessible homes;*
iii. *Build to rent;*
iv. *Affordable homes;*
v. *A range of size of homes such as those for larger families;*
vi. *Homes for older people, including supported accommodation, care homes and sheltered housing;*
vii. *Homes for people undertaking further and higher education; and*
viii. *Homes for other specialist groups such as service personnel.*

(NPF4 Policy 16 (c)) *emphasis added

5.85 The proposal fulfils a few of the sub-categories of housing listed under NPF4 Policy 16 (c) above. It delivers 100% affordable housing, including wheelchair-accessible ground floor units and ancillary specialist provision accommodation designed to adapt to the needs of individuals with a disability or long-term health condition, such as those with bariatric and mental health conditions. The site is allocated as a strategic affordable housing site in the SHIP, meaning that it is a committed project under the Council's LHS. Accordingly, the proposal clearly supports diverse needs and an identified gap in provision in accordance with Policy 16 (c).

5.86 The intent of NPF4 Policy 16 is:

"*To encourage, promote and facilitate the delivery of more high quality, affordable and sustainable homes, in the right locations, providing choice across tenures that meet the diverse housing needs of people and communities across Scotland.*"

5.87 Taking a balanced approach in accordance with the Chief Planner letter, the preceding assessment demonstrates that proposal fully complies with the relevant aspects of NPF4 Policy 16. This is because the proposal will enable the timely delivery of high-quality affordable housing in a sustainable and accessible location and will provide a choice of tenure that directly addresses an identified and urgent local housing need. In this context, the proposal clearly advances the overarching intent of NPF4 Policy 16 and this reason for refusal is thus considered to be unfounded.

Other Material Considerations

Energy Transition Zone (ETZ) Masterplan

5.88 The Report of Handling (pg. 23) briefly references the ETZ Masterplan, suggesting that future development associated with the ETZ could intensify impacts on residential amenity, such as through increased traffic. It also suggests that the proposal could undermine the safeguarding of land allocated for business and industrial uses. Specifically, it states:

"*The aforementioned issues relating to the safeguarding of land zoned for business and industrial use, quality of residential amenity and pedestrian connectivity are all also likely to be exacerbated by future proposals for the recently approved Energy Transition Zone (which the site and surrounding land fall within the masterplan area for), and the use of Wellington Road and Hareness Road as the main vehicular route (Aberdeen South Harbour Link Road) serving the Aberdeen South Harbour. As such, there is likely to be an increase in the use of the immediately adjacent roads in the future by heavy goods vehicles and other traffic.*" (Report of Handling, 23)

5.89 The ETZ Masterplan does not identify any planned projects in vicinity of the site. In fact, the majority of planned projects are located either outwith Altens Industrial Estate or on the eastern periphery of the estate. The nearest project is the Innovation Campus development, which was approved on 14 August 2023 (application reference: 230371/DPP). Notably, this project was assessed by ACC Roads Development Management Team and determined to generate fewer vehicle trips than the previous use of the site as the former Trafalgar House office, thereby reducing potential traffic impacts.

5.90 In the absence of any live planning applications or committed ETZ Masterplan projects in the immediate vicinity of the appeal site, the suggestion that future ETZ development could exacerbate impacts on residential amenity or the project could impact on the safeguarding of ETZ land is speculative and unfounded. As outlined earlier in this Statement of Case, the proposal must be assessed against the current land use context or any future developments that are supported by either an extant planning permission or live application. Accordingly, there is no credible basis to suggest that the appeal proposal would prejudice the delivery of the ETZ Masterplan or be adversely affected by it.

6. Conclusion

6.1 In conclusion, the evidence produced within this Statement of Case and the supporting documentation submitted with the planning application (250202/DPP) is considered to sufficiently demonstrate that the proposed change of use will support the strategic direction and policy principles of the development plan. As such, the proposal should be viewed in a positive manner for the following reasons:

Compatible with the mixed use context: NPF4 has moved away from exclusionary monofunctional zoning practices (i.e. large areas zoned for single uses) and instead encourages more a more holistic mixed use and place-based planning approach that aligns with the principles of 20 minute neighbourhoods. The appeal site lies on the periphery of Altens Industrial Estate adjacent the major transport corridor of Wellington Road, where a variety of residential and other non-employment uses already exist within the B1 Business and Industry designation. The proposed use is compatible with this surrounding mixed-use area, and as such, must be considered in relation to this site-specific context. The proposal would not result in any land use conflict with the B1 Business and Industry zone, nor would it inhibit the use of neighbouring plots for Class 4, 5 or 6 operations; the proposed land use is thus entirely appropriate for the zone.

Delivers much-needed affordable specialist provision housing: The development would deliver 100% affordable housing, including wheelchair accessible affordable accommodation at ground floor level. The flats have been designed for ancillary specialist provision use, with the intention of accommodating people with bariatric conditions, mental health conditions and/or learning disabilities. This is not only in line with NPF4 Policy 16 and ALDP Policies H4 and H5, but also responds directly to an urgent, well-documented and unmet housing need in the city. The proposed housing tenure was agreed in collaboration with ACC's Housing Strategy Team and the ACHSCP well in advance of a planning application being lodged, which is evidenced by the fact that this has been a committed project within the SHIP since at least 2024. The wider health and social care benefits of the proposal, including reducing delayed hospital discharges and enabling independent living, must be afforded significant weight in the planning balance.

Reuse and regeneration of long-term vacant building: The proposal involves the sustainable and efficient reuse of a long-term vacant brownfield building. This directly supports NPF4 Policies 9 and 12, as well as the spatial strategy of the ALDP, which collectively place significant emphasis on the reuse of existing buildings / brownfield sites. The proposed change of use is a positive solution to the climate emergency as it will ensure the demolition of the building and consequential loss of embodied carbons is prevented, which and should be given significant weight in accordance with NPF4 Policies 1 and 2. In a context where the market for Class 4 use is evidence to be clearly struggling, retaining the current vacant building for Class 4 use is unviable and would eventually necessitate its demolition in accordance with the existing demolition warrant (reference: 240701).

Creates a high quality residential environment: The internal layout, daylight strategy, open space design, boundary / privacy treatments and acoustic mitigation measures have all been carefully considered and developed by the architect to optimise residential amenity and functionality. The resultant design ensures a high quality place and pleasant residential environment that is proportionate to the challenges of converting a constrained brownfield site and complies with the provisions of NPF4 Policies 14 and 23, ALDP Policies D1, D2, NE2, WB1 and WB3 and the associated planning guidance. Environmental Health raised no objections to the proposed change of use.

Supports accessibility and 20 minute neighbourhoods: The site is well placed for residents to meet the majority of their daily needs within a reasonable distance of the site in accordance with the principles of 20 minute neighbourhoods. The primary concern, regarding the lack of a signalised pedestrian crossing over Hareness Road, can be addressed through the imposition of a planning condition, which is a viable solution acknowledged by the Planning Service itself. The appellant fully supports this mitigation, which would enhance pedestrian connectivity and align with NPF4 Policies 13 and 15. The Council's Roads Development Management Team raised no objections to the proposal and confirmed the area is well-served by public transport.

Suitable location for housing: The proposal fully satisfies the requirements of NPF4 Policy 16(f)(ii), given it supports reusing a long-term vacant brownfield asset, is in proximity to amenities and public transport, and will integrate successfully into the existing mixed use urban environment. Furthermore, the proposal directly supports the aims of Policy 16(c) by delivering 100% affordable and wheelchair-accessible housing, including ancillary specialist provision accommodation that addresses a clear, identified gap in local housing need. In doing so, it advances the overarching purpose of Policy 16, which is to deliver high-quality, affordable, and sustainable homes in the right locations.

Enhances biodiversity: The landscape planting strategy will deliver a significant biodiversity enhancement for the site, particularly given the proposal seeks to reuse rather than demolish and redevelop the existing building. As confirmed by the Report of Handling, the proposed landscape and biodiversity enhancement scheme accords with the requirements of Policies D5 and NE5 of the ALDP and Policies 3 and 6 of NPF4.

6.2 We trust that, from the information set out in this statement, the Local Review Body will be able to agree with the merits of this scheme and allow this appeal under section 43A of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

Appendix 1: Comments from NHS Grampian, Audrey Nicoll MSP and Stephen Flynn MP

The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Audrey Nicoll MSP
Member of the Scottish Parliament for Aberdeen South and North Kincardine constituency

Angela Scott
Chief Executive
Aberdeen City Council

Our Ref: AN3377 11 July 2025

Dear Angela,

Re: Appeal for Planning Application 250202/DPP – Loirston House

I am writing in support of the appeal relating to the above planning application for Loirston House, and to which my accompanying correspondence refers.

The planning application proposes converting a previous office building into specialist provision social housing consisting of nine wheelchair accessible ground floor flats to accommodate bariatric patients, with the remaining flats assigned to tenants with complex cognitive disabilities or conditions.

The reason I am highlighting my support of Planning Application 250202/DPP is due to its strong alignment with key strategies and aims of both local and national policy, which I have detailed below.

Foremost, the inclusion of wheelchair accessible accommodation adheres to the key priorities in the Council's Local Housing Strategy, and further supports the Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) which aims to have wheelchair access in a minimum of 15% of affordable housing. Likewise, the proposals will help address the shortfall in wheelchair accessible housing which had been identified in the 'Still Minding the Step?' report by Horizon Housing. The report estimates that there are approximately 737 households in Aberdeen currently not having their needs met due to a lack of wheelchair accessibility.

Moreover, the proposals further support the Council's Local Housing Strategy through providing sufficient accommodation for people with bariatric care needs, complex mental health problems and/ or learning disabilities. The provision for specialist accommodation further assists the Local Housing Strategy in reducing the discharge times for patients in hospitals who are unable to leave due to a lack of suitable housing. This is echoed in the Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership's (HSCP) Market Position Statement's for 'Mental Health and Learning Disability Services and Complex Care' which identifies 31 individuals with complex care needs who require specialist housing in Aberdeen. Furthermore, the proposals set out are additionally in line with the Scottish Government's 'Coming Home Implementation' report which outlines priorities for reducing inappropriate hospital stays for people with learning disabilities and/ or complex care needs.

Audrey Nicoll MSP | Aberdeen South and North Kincardine
Address: 51 Victoria Road, Aberdeen, AB11 9LS | Telephone: 01224 876743 | Email: audrey.nicoll.msp@parliament.scot
F: @AudreyNicollMSP | I: @Audrey.Nicoll | X: @Audrey4asnk

Lastly, I am conscious that bariatric housing provision is more often than not a significant expense due to the requirements of a reinforced concrete structure. However, as Loirston House already meets these requirements, the overall cost to provide specialist bariatric housing will be significantly lower, particularly when compared to a new housing development. As such, I consider that planning application's proposals present a more timeous and affordable alternative to achieve the outcomes detailed above.

To conclude, the planning application sets forth proposals which adheres to a range of local and national housing policy, and additionally meets a specific and bespoke housing need that is in very short supply. I am also mindful that the provisions within the planning application would be of significant benefit to the tenants who could be housed there, and will improve the social and health outcomes of such individuals. It is for this reason that I am writing in support of Planning Application 250202/DPP, and I would be grateful for the Council's to place their careful consideration behind its appeal.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Kind regards,

Audrey Nicoll MSP
Member of the Scottish Parliament for
Aberdeen South and North Kincardine

The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Audrey Nicoll MSP
Member of the Scottish Parliament for Aberdeen South and North Kincardine constituency

Angela Scott
Chief Executive
Aberdeen City Council

Our Ref: AN3377 11 July 2025

Dear Angela,

Re: Planning Application 250202/DPP – Loirston House

I am writing to you following a meeting I had with Mr Bradley Craig in relation to the planning application listed above.

Mr Craig's client is the owner of Loirston House, which is the site address of the planning application. For your information, the planning application outlines proposals to convert a former office building into 24 residential flats, with an additional view to provide affordable and specialist accommodation. Of the 24 flats, nine would be located on the ground floor with wheelchair access, and would accommodate bariatric patients. The remaining 13 properties, located on the first floor of the building, would further accommodate tenants with complex care needs.

The building is no longer in use and the owner has always been keen to afford an opportunity for the building to be put to good use, in such a way that could address an unmet need within the social housing sector. The proposed development aligns with a number of strategic priorities identified by Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP), and likewise aligns with the policies set out in the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4). In particular, I am mindful that this proposal addresses shortfalls in specialist social housing provision, and further reduces the number of hospital patients remaining in hospital due to a lack of suitable accommodation. Furthermore, I have been advised that repurposing the existing Loirston House building would allow for significant savings to be made due to its already reinforced structure. Thus, providing an affordable alternative to achieving the Council's target of building a further 10 homes to meet the needs of bariatric patients.

Despite successfully adhering to both local and national strategy, the planning application has regrettably been refused due to the site's location on a land zoned in the Local Development Plan for business and industrial use. With this in mind, however, Mr Craig states that the Health and Social Care Partnership had engaged with him positively on these proposals, and had actively encouraged his client to submit the planning application, addressing an important unmet need in the City.

I note delegated powers were used to process the application despite neighbouring properties being residential. There are three detached houses between the property and the Shell filling

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station. The opposite side of the Wellington Road includes the Redmoss Housing estate and to the north the Nigg Kirk Housing estate adjoining West Tullos.

I understand the local Community Councils were aware of the application and had suggested they would welcome the development as it provided an opportunity to reverse a derelict property in a high visibility location falling into disrepair, while providing a much needed health and social care facility.

Given the strength of support for the application, Mr Craig and his client are understandably extremely disappointed and somewhat confused as to why they had received the support of key stakeholders including the HSCP and community councils, despite the site's location within a business and industrial zone.

Lastly, it is worth noting that the planning application has come at considerable cost to Mr Craig's client. In and of itself, Mr Craig's client accepts this situation, however understandably feels some degree of disappointment that the costs incurred to date were based on something of a false premise. Moving forward, any potential appeal will also incur further costs.

Having met Mr Craig and spoken through this matter in some detail, I am extremely perplexed and disappointed that what appears to have been a strong planning application has been rejected simply on the grounds that the location was at odds with the Local Development Plan. I would therefore ask why this information was not conveyed to Mr Craig prior to him proceeding with his application, and request a more comprehensive explanation as to why the application was rejected, given the very clear support and encouragement that was received in advance of the application being submitted.

I look forward to your response.

Kind regards,

Audrey Nicoll MSP
Member of the Scottish Parliament for
Aberdeen South and North Kincardine

From: Kay Diack (NHS Grampian) [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 3:[redacted] PM
To: Bradley Craig <bradley@bradleycraigarchitects.com>
Subject: Loirston House

Dear Bradley

I understand that you are now progressing with a Planning Application for Loirston House.

Given my role as Emergency Pathway Operational Manager, and responsibility for optimising patient flow, as well as my former Senior Responsible Officer role for Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership's Independent Living and Specialist Housing Market Position Statement (2024-2034), I feel that it is very clear that the City is in significant need of the type of accommodation proposed. The aforementioned document details the need for bariatric accommodation with tracking and hoisting, wheelchair accessible units and provision for accommodation for people with brain injury, dementia, mental health and learning disabilities.

We experience first hand the issues surrounding patient outlow, given the lack of accommodation of this nature, which ultimately creates flow pressures within acute hospital settings, with delayed discharge and delayed transfer of care featuring significantly.

I can only wish you every success with this work.

Kind regards

Kay

Kay Diack
Emergency Pathway Operational Manager
NHS Grampian
Aberdeen Royal Infirmary

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HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Our Ref: SF18975

6th August 2025

To whom in may concern,

I am writing to you regarding the application of CTL Estates to renovate Loirston House into social housing.

As you will no doubt be aware, there is significant pressure on the current social housing stock in Aberdeen, with a pressing need to provide considerably more availability.

I understand that the scheme is proposing 24 homes for some of the most vulnerable people in the city, including wheelchair accessible and specialist provision social housing.

Investment into the restoration and renovation of existing buildings, such as Loirston House, would no doubt go some way to relieving the pressure on current stock.

As such, I would be grateful for your serious consideration of the proposals.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Flynn MP
MP for Aberdeen South

Stephen Flynn MP
Member of Parliament for Aberdeen South
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA
Tel: 01224 213 114
Email: stephen.flynn.mp@parliament.uk

Appendix 2: Relevant Correspondence Between Applicant and ACC Housing Strategy Team

From: Dorothy Askew <DAskew@aberdeencity.gov.uk>
Sent: 29 September 2022 15:15
To: Bradley Craig <bradley@bradleycraigarchitects.com>; Mel Booth <MeBooth@aberdeencity.gov.uk>
Cc: Shona Omand-Smith <SOmandSmith@aberdeencity.gov.uk>; Catherine King <CatKing@aberdeencity.gov.uk>; Steven Stark <SStark@aberdeencity.gov.uk>; Katharine Paton <KPaton@aberdeencity.gov.uk>; Nicola McLean <NMcLean@aberdeencity.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Loirston House.

Hello Bradley

I have consulted with colleagues in Health and Social Care. They have confirmed that 'in principle' they would be supportive of the development of Loirston House for specialist provision and would be interested to see indicative plans of what could be provided there.

Look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards
Dorothy

From: bradley@bradleycraigarchitects.com <bradley@bradleycraigarchitects.com>
Sent: 27 September 2022 15:53
To: Dorothy Askew <DAskew@aberdeencity.gov.uk>; Mel Booth <MeBooth@aberdeencity.gov.uk>
Subject: Loirston House.

Dorothy, Mel,

Hillcrest undertook a site visit of Loirston House on Friday, and were happy with the conditions of the site for internal conversion. Since then, David Milton has confirmed that Hillcrest are interested in Loirston House, and will offer RSL assistance for the site if there is a need for this from the local authority. The site does offer potential use for specialist housing.

To move things forward, my client will allow me site access to undertake a survey and develop proposals on the basis that there is a requirement from the council for this site. I would be grateful if this could be confirmed at the earliest juncture.

Mel,

I know you are on holiday, just CC'in you into this for reference only.

Regards,

Bradley Craig RIBA RIAS ARB
Principal

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bradley@bradleycraigarchitects.com

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From: Mel Booth <MeBooth@aberdeencity.gov.uk>
Sent: 30 June 2023 16:11
To: Bradley Craig <bradley@bradleycraigarchitects.com>
Cc: David Milton [redacted]
Subject: Loirston [redacted]

Hi Bradley,

The HSCP met this week and have confirmed they want to take this site forward. We look forward to receiving proposals and we will confirm what our exact requirements are, in due course.

Thanks,

Mel

Mel Booth | Senior Housing Strategy Officer
Aberdeen City Council | Strategic Place Planning | Place
Marischal College | Broad Street | Aberdeen | AB10 1AB

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From: Mel Booth <MeBooth@aberdeencity.gov.uk>
Sent: 05 May 2023 08:44
To: Bradley Craig <bradley@bradleycraigarchitects.com>
Cc: Dorothy Askew <DAskew@aberdeencity.gov.uk>
Subject: Loirston

Morning Bradley,

Hope all is well with you. We have some good news - HSCP have come back and said they're keen to proceed with Loirston. Can we meet w/c 15 May to discuss next steps?

Also, where are you up to with Banks o' Dee planning application?

Thanks,

Mel

Mel Booth | Senior Housing Strategy Officer
Aberdeen City Council | Strategic Place Planning | Place
Marischal College | Broad Street | Aberdeen | AB10 1AB

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From: Mel Booth <MeBooth@aberdeencity.gov.uk>
Sent: 03 May 2023 08:52
To: Bradley Craig <bradley@bradleycraigarchitects.com>; Dorothy Askew <DAskew@aberdeencity.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Loirston House, Aberdeen

Morning Bradley,

I can now confirm that the HSCP are keen to proceed with this development. I'll contact David and ask him to run a financial appraisal so he can give you an offer.

Thanks,

Mel

Mel Booth | Senior Housing Strategy Officer
Aberdeen City Council | Strategic Place Planning | Place
Marischal College | Broad Street | Aberdeen | AB10 1AB

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www.aberdeencity.gov.uk | Twitter: @AberdeenCC | Facebook.com/AberdeenCC

From: bradley@bradleycraigarchitects.com <bradley@bradleycraigarchitects.com>
Sent: Monday, April 17, 2023 1:30 PM
To: Dorothy Askew <DAskew@aberdeencity.gov.uk>; Mel Booth <MeBooth@aberdeencity.gov.uk>
Subject: Loirston House, Aberdeen

Dorothy, Mel,

Thanks for your time during our meeting this morning, it was most helpful.

As discussed during our meeting with the client's agent, we are now at a critical stage where a decision needs to be made regarding whether this project will be greenlit or not. We did advise previously that the charity was vacating the premises in April this year. In order for the owner to consider the conversion to social housing, he needs to have an assurance in place within the next four weeks. This is because a number of options, including demolition and construction of alternative buildings have been proposed for the site. As you will understand, while the existing building remains vacant, it is subject to hefty commercial rates due to the footprint of the unit.

We are confident that we can deliver a cost-effective solution for bariatric and specialist provision accommodation on site, but there now needs to be a firm decision at a strategic and

funding level for this to happen. Otherwise it is likely that this opportunity will be lost.

I look forward to your comments in due course.

Regards,

Bradley Craig RIBA RIAS ARB
Principal

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bradley@bradleycraigarchitects.com

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From: Mel Booth <MeBooth@aberdeencity.gov.uk>
Sent: 05 December 2022 14:21
To: Bradley Craig <bradley@bradleycraigarchitects.com>
Cc: Dorothy Askew <DAskew@aberdeencity.gov.uk>
Subject: Loirston House

Hi Bradley,

Thanks for your call earlier. I can confirm that further to our site visit, we are interested in this site for specialist provision accommodation. There is a particular interest in some units being made suitable for bariatric people, of which there is currently a shortage of in Aberdeen.

The site is not currently identified in the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) but could be presented to committee for approval prior to the next SHIP being finalised. This site would also be prioritised for funding and would be developed in partnership with a RSL. We've had early discussions with Hillcrest Housing Association who have indicated an interest in partnering with us on this. Whilst we are still to agree an appropriate scheme, we are looking forward to progressing this site and look forward to seeing more detailed plans.

Happy to meet over Teams to discuss further with the agent and yourself.

Thanks,

Mel

Mel Booth | Senior Housing Strategy Officer
Aberdeen City Council | Strategic Place Planning | Place
Marischal College | Broad Street | Aberdeen | AB10 1AB

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Appendix 3: Strategic Housing Investment Plans

STRATEGIC HOUSING INVESTMENT PLAN 2025/26 - 2029/30

Table 1 - AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPLY PROGRAMME - Years 1-5 2025/26-2029/30

LOCAL AUTHORITY: Aberdeen City Council

PROJECT	PRIORITY	DEVELOPER	UNITS - TENURE							UNITS - BUILT FORM				UNITS - TYPE				APPROVAL DATE																					
	Low / Medium / High		Social Rent	Mid Market Rent	Shared Equity	LCHO - Shared Ownership	LCHO - Improvement for Sale	PSR	Total Units	Rehab	Off the Shelf	NB	Total Units	GN	Specialist Provision	Type of Specialist Particular Need (If Known)	Total Units by Type	Financial Year (Estimated or Actual)	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	TOTAL SITE STARTS OVER PERIOD OF SHIP	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	TOTAL COMPLETIONS OVER PERIOD OF SHIP	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	TOTAL AHSP FUNDING REQUIRED OVER SHIP PERIOD
Cloverhill	High	Aberdeen City Council	266						266			266	266	226	40	Wheelchair Access	266	2020/21	266					266	179	87				266	13.000	13.000				26.000
Kincorth	High	Aberdeen City Council	212						212			212	212	182	30	Wheelchair Access	212	2019/20			212			212		212				212	3.831					3.831
Craighill	High	Aberdeen City Council	99						99			99	99	86	13	Wheelchair Access	99	2020/21E		99				99		99				99						0.000
City wide Council buy-back	High	Aberdeen City Council	100						100		100		100	100			100	2025/26	20	20	20	20	20	100	20	20	20	20	20	100	0.600	0.600	0.600	0.600	0.600	3.000
Stoneywood	High	Aberdeen City Council	8						8			8	8		8	Specialist Provision	8	2024/25	8					8	8					8	1.200					1.200
Greenferns	Low	TBA	350						350			350	350	298	52	Wheelchair Access	350	2027/28				350		350					350	350				17.500	17.500	35.000
Greenferns Landward	Low	TBA	350						350			350	350	298	52	Wheelchair Access	350	2027/28				350		350					350	350				17.500	17.500	35.000
Balnagask	High	TBA	364						364			364	364	309	55	Wheelchair Access	364	2027/28				364		364					364	364		17.500	17.500			35.000
Pinewood	High	TBA	18						18			18	18	18	0		18	2025/26	18					18	18					18	1.800					1.800
Craibstone Phase 4	Medium	TBA	68	67					135			135	135	120	15		135	2024/25			135			135		30	40	40	25	135	3.000	3.000	3.000	4.500		13.500
Former Cordyce School	High	Grampian Housing	22						22			22	22	18	4	Wheelchair Access	22	2025/26		22				22		22				22	2.200					2.200
Braeside	Medium	Grampian Housing	30						30			30	30	25	5	Wheelchair Access	30	2025/26		30				30			30			30		3.000				3.000
Countesswells	High	Osprey	20						20		20		20	20			20	2025/26		20				20		20				20	2.000					2.000
Beech Court, Constitution Street	High	Osprey	6						6	6			6	6			6	2025/26	6					6		6				6	0.638					0.638
Banks O' Dee Care Home, Abbotswell Road	High	Hillcrest Homes	24						24			24	24	0	24	Specialist Provision	24	2024/25		24				24		24				24	1.200					1.200
Loirston House	Medium	Hillcrest Homes	27						27	27			27		27	Specialist Provision	27	2025/26		27				27			27			27		2.700				2.700
Oscar Road	High	Hillcrest Homes	18						18			18	18	15	3	Wheelchair Access	18	2024/25		18				18		18				18	1.200					1.200
Union Street	High	Hillcrest Homes	15						15	15			15	15			15	2023/24						0	15					15	0.132					0.132
Maberly Street	High	Hillcrest Homes	17						17	17			17	17			17	2023/24						0		17				17		0.845				0.845
Market St, Stoneywood	Medium	Hillcrest Homes	19						19			19	19	16	3	Wheelchair Access	19	2025/26			19			19			19			19		1.900				1.900
Maidencraig	High	Places for People	16	20					36			36	36	36	0		36	2024/25		36				36	36					36	1.847	1.232				3.079
Milltimber	High	Places for People	12	8					20		20		20	17	3	Wheelchair Access	20	2024/25	20					20		20				20		0.980	0.980			1.960
Silverburn	Medium	Places for People	12	4					16			16	16	13	3	Wheelchair Access	16	2024/25	16					16		16				16		0.900	0.900			1.800
Grandhome Phase 1	High	Places for People	43	41					84			84	84	84	0		84	2023/24	84					84		50	34			84	2.767	2.768	2.767			8.302
Grandhome Phase 2	High	Places for People	30	30	12				72			72	72	57	15	Wheelchair Access	72	2025/26	72					72			72			72			1.500	2.000	2.000	5.500
Froghall Road	Low	Places for People	45	25					70			70	70	59	11	Wheelchair Access	70	2022/23	70					70			70			70			1.000	2.000	2.000	5.000
AECC	High	Sanctuary Scotland	82						82			82	82	69	13	Wheelchair Access	82	2025/26			82			82			82			82		4.100	4.100			8.200
LCHO Buybacks	High	Unknown		5					5		5		5	5			5	2025/26	1	1	1	1	1	5	1	1	1	1	1	5	0.030	0.030	0.030	0.030	0.030	0.150
Total			2273	200	12	0	0	0	2485	65	145	2275	2485	2109	376		2485		581	297	469	1085	21	2453	277	642	395	61	1110	2485	35.445	52.555	32.377	44.130	39.630	277.000

STRATEGIC HOUSING INVESTMENT PLAN 2024/25 - 2028/29

Table 1 - AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPLY PROGRAMME - Years 1-5 2024/25-2028/29

LOCAL AUTHORITY: Aberdeen City Council

PROJECT	PRIORITY	GEOGRAPHIC COORDINATES (X:EASTING Y:NORTHING)	GEOGRAPHIC CODE (Numeric Value - from Drop Down Table Below)	DEVELOPER	UNITS - TENURE							UNITS - BUILT FORM				UNITS - TYPE				GREENER	APPROVAL DATE	UNITS SITE STARTS						UNITS - COMPLETIONS						SG AHSP FUNDING REQUIREMENT (£0.000M)					
	Low / Medium / High				Social Rent	Mid Market Rent	LCHO - Shared Equity	LCHO - Shared Ownership	LCHO - Improvement for Sale	PSR	Total Units	Rehab	Off the Shelf	NB	Total Units	GN	Specialist Provision	Type of Specialist Particular Need (If Known)	Total Units by Type	Enter Y or N	Financial Year (Estimated or Actual)	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	TOTAL SITE STARTS OVER PERIOD OF SHIP	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	TOTAL COMPLETIONS OVER PERIOD OF SHIP	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	TOTAL AHSP FUNDING REQUIRED OVER SHIP PERIOD
Cloverhill	High			Aberdeen City Council	471						471			471	471	471	77	Wheelchair Access	548	Y	2020/21						0	94	171	183	23		471	11.871	11.871	11.871			35.613
Kincorth	High			Aberdeen City Council	212						212			212	212	134	78	Wheelchair Access	212	Y	2019/20						0		212				212	1.915	1.916				3.831
Craighill	High			Aberdeen City Council	99						99			99	99	81	18	Wheelchair Access	99	Y	2020/21E						0		99				99	1.012	1.013				2.025
Harris Drive (Tillydrone)	High			Aberdeen City Council	30						30			30	30	22	8	Wheelchair Access	30	Y	2020/21E						0		30				30						0.000
Conningham Terrace (Tillydrone)	High			Aberdeen City Council	40						40			40	40	26	14	Wheelchair Access	40	N	2022/23						0		40				40						0.000
City wide Council buy-back	High			Aberdeen City Council	500						500		500		500	500			500	N	2018/19						0	100	100	100	100	100	400	3.000	3.000	3.000	3.000	3.000	15.000
Greenferns	High			Aberdeen City Council	350						350			350	350	298	52	Wheelchair Access	350	N	2020/21E				350		350					350	350	5.860	5.860	5.860	5.860	5.860	29.300
Greenferns Landward	High			Aberdeen City Council	350						350			350	350	298	52	Wheelchair Access	350	N	2020/21				350		350					350	350	5.860	5.860	5.860	5.860	5.000	28.440
Former Cordyce School	Medium		6	Grampian Housing	22						22			22	22	18	4		22	Y	2022/23	22					22	22					22	2.006					2.006
Braeside	High		6	Grampian Housing	30						30			30	30	30			30	Y	2022/23	30					30	30					30		2.735				2.735
Former Victoria Road School	High		6	Grampian Housing	58						58	58			58	58			58	Y	2021/22						0	58					58	2.539					2.539
15 Maberly Street	High			Hillcrest Homes	17						17	17			17	17			17	Y	2023/24						0	17					17						0.000
181 Union Street	High			Hillcrest Homes	15						15	15			15	15			15	N	2023/24						0	15					15						0.000
Stoneywood Gate, Aberdeen	Med		5	Hillcrest Homes	12						12			12	12	12			12	y	2023/24	12					12	12					12	1.100					1.100
Banks o' Dee Care Home, Abbotswell Road	High			Hillcrest Homes	24						24			24	24		24	Wheelchair Access	24	N	2023/24		24				24		24				24	2.200					2.200
Loirston House	High			Hillcrest Homes	27						27			27	27		27	Specialist provision	27		2023/24		27				27			27			27	1.200	1.200				2.400
Oscar Road	High			Hillcrest Homes	21						21			21	21	21			21		2023/24	21					21			21			21		1.920				1.920
Maidencraig	HIGH			Places for People	16	20					36		36		36	36			36	N	2024/25		36				36						0		3.000				3.000
Don Street (alternative site)	HIGH			Places for People	25						25			25	25		25	Specialist provision	25	Y	2024/25	25					25		25				25	2.200					2.200
Milltimber	HIGH			Places for People	12	8					20		20		20	20			20	N	2024/25	20					20		20				20	0.700	1.900				2.600
Lord Cullen House	LOW			Places for People	19	15					34			34	34	28	6		34	Y	2024/25	34					34		34				34	0.500	2.300				2.800
Craibstone Phase 4	LOW			Places for People	68	67					135			135	135	120	15		135	Y	2024/25	135					135		30	40	40	25	110	3.000	3.000	3.000	3.000		12.000
Grandhome	HIGH			Places for People	43	41					84			84	84	84			84	Y	2023/24	84					84		50	34			84	3.400	3.000	1.000			7.400
Riverside Quarter	High			Places for People	16	14					30			30	30	30			30		2022/23	16					16	16					16	1.628					1.628
Persley Den	High		6	Sanctuary Scotland Housing Association	150						150			150	150	150			150	N	2021/22						0	150					150	0.000					0.000
Ellon Road, Bridge of Don	High			Osprey	10						10	10			10	10			10	N	2021/22						0	10					10	0.000					0.000
Beech Court, Constitution Street	High			Osprey	7						7	7			7	7			7	N	2023/24	7					7	7					7	0.638					0.638
LCHO Buybacks	High	394350 / 801616	8	Unknown		5					5		5		5	5			5	N	2020/21	1	1	1	1	1	5	1	1	1	1	1	4	0.030	0.030	0.030	0.030	0.030	0.150
Total					2644	170	0	0	0	0	2814	107	561	2146	2814	2491	400	0	2891			407	88	1	701	1	1198	532	836	406	164	826	1938	50.659	48.605	30.621	17.750	13.890	161.525

STRATEGIC HOUSING INVESTMENT PLAN 2023/24 - 2027/28

Table 1 - AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPLY PROGRAMME - Years 1-5 2023/24-2027/28

LOCAL AUTHORITY: Aberdeen City Council

PROJECT	PRIORITY	DEVELOPER	UNITS - TENURE							UNITS - BUILT FORM				UNITS - TYPE				GREENER	APPROVAL DATE	UNITS SITE STARTS						UNITS - COMPLETIONS						SG AHSP FUNDING REQUIREMENT (£0.000M)					
	Low / Medium / High		Social Rent	Mid Market Rent	LCHO - Shared Equity	LCHO - Shared Ownership	LCHO - Improvement for Sale	PSR	Total Units	Rehab	Off the Shelf	NB	Total Units	GN	Specialist Provision	Type of Specialist Particular Need (If Known)	Total Units by Type	Enter Y or N	Financial Year (Estimated or Actual)	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2026/28	TOTAL SITE STARTS OVER PERIOD OF SHIP	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	TOTAL COMPLETIONS OVER PERIOD OF SHIP	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	TOTAL AHSP FUNDING REQUIRED OVER SHIP PERIOD
Summerhill	High	Aberdeen City Council	113						113			113	113	113			113	Y	2019/20							113					113						0.000
Kincorth	High	Aberdeen City Council	212						212			212	212	180	32	Wheelchair Access	212	Y	2019/20						0		212				212						0.000
Craighill	High	Aberdeen City Council	99						99			99	99	58	41	Wheelchair Access	99	Y	2020/21E						0		99				99						0.000
Harris Drive (Tillydrone)	High	Aberdeen City Council	30						30			30	30	22	8	Wheelchair Access	30	Y	2020/21E						0		30				30						0.000
Conningham Terrace (Tillydrone)	High	Aberdeen City Council	40						40			40	40	26	14	Wheelchair Access	40	N	2022/23								40				40						0.000
Kaimhill	High	Aberdeen City Council	35						35			35	35	21	14	Wheelchair Access	35	N	2022/23						0		35				35						0.000
City wide Council buy-back	High	Aberdeen City Council	200						200		200		200	200			200	N	2018/19						0	100	100				200	3.000	3.000				6.000
Greenferns	High	Aberdeen City Council	350						350			350	350	298	52	Wheelchair Access	350	N	2020/21E					350	350						0	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	25.000
Greenferns Landward	High	Aberdeen City Council	350						350			350	350	298	52	Wheelchair Access	350	N	2020/21					350							0	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	25.000
Grandhome	High	Aberdeen City Council	95						95			95	95	81	14		95	N	2022/23					95							0			3.420	3.420		6.840
Victoria Road School	High	Grampian Housing	58						58	58			58	58			58	Y	2022/23	58					58		58				58	1.557	1.557				3.114
Oscar Road	High	Grampian Housing	21						21			21	21	18	3		21	Y	2022/23	21					21		21				21	1.000	1.550				2.550
Charleston Crescent, Cove	Medium	Grampian Housing	26						26			26	26	26			26	Y	2023/24		26				26			26			26		1.300	1.300			2.600
Inchbroom, Cove	Medium	Grampian Housing	45						45			45	45	38	7		45	Y	2024/25			45			45				45					2.700	2.700		5.400
15 Maberly Street	High	Hillcrest Homes	17						17			17	17	17			17	Y	2022/23	17					17			17			17	1.326					1.326
181 Union Street	High	Hillcrest Homes	15						15			15	15	15			15	N	2021/22	15					15			15			15	1.255					1.255
City Point, Aberdeen	Med	Hillcrest Homes	23						23	23			23	23			23	TBC	2023/24		23				23				23		23		1.794				1.794
Stoneywood Gate, Aberdeen	Med	Hillcrest Homes	12						12			12	12	12			12	y	2023/24		12				12				12		12		0.936				0.936
Stationfields (Falkland Avenue)	High	Hillcrest Homes	123	44					167			167	167	162	5	Wheelchair Access	167	N	2020/21						0	24					24						0.000
Banks o' Dee Care Home, Abbotswell Road	High	Hillcrest Homes	25						25	25			25	13	12	Wheelchair Access	25	N	2023/24	25					25	25					25	1.800					1.800
Rowett South	Low	Places for People Scotland	140	130					270			270	270	270			270	N	2024/25					270	270						0		7.020	7.020	7.020		21.060
Don Street	High	Places for People Scotland	25						25			25	25		25	Substance Misuse	25	N	2022/23	25					25		25				25	1.950					1.950
Craibstone Phase 4	Medium	Places for People Scotland	68	67					135			135	135	115	20		135	Y	2022/23		135				135			36	72	27	135		3.000	5.000	2.000		10.000
Maidencraig	Medium	Places for People Scotland	16	20					36		36		36	36			36	N	2022/23	36					36		36				36	2.417					2.417
Friarsfield, Cults	Medium	Places for People Scotland		8					8		8		8	8			8	N	2023/24	8					8	8					8	0.466					0.466
Milltimber	Medium	Places for People Scotland	12	8					20		20		20	20			20	N	2023/24	20					20		20				20	1.029					1.029
Lord Cullen House, Fraser Place	High	Places for People Scotland	19	15					34			34	34	28	6	Wheelchair Access	34	Y	2022/23	34					34		34				34	2.647					2.647
North Anderson Drive	High	Sanctuary Scotland Housing Association	118						118			118	118	106	12	3 Wheelchair adapted, 8 supported / 1 carer	118	N	2017/18						0	118					118	0.000	0.000				0.000
Persley Den	High	Cala Homes Eastern Ltd/Sanctuary Scotland	150						150			150	150	150			150	N	2021/22							81	69				150	£1.842					1.842
Ellon Road, Bridge of Don	High	Osprey	10						10	10			10	10			10	N	2021/22							10					10	0.000					0.000
Beech Court, Constitution Street	High	Osprey	7						7	7			7	7			7	N	2023/24	7					7	7					7	0.504					0.504
LCHO Buybacks	High	Unknown		5					5		5		5	5			5	N	2020/21	1	1	1	1	1	5	1	1	1	1	1	5	0.030	0.030	0.030	0.030	0.030	0.150
Total			2454	297	0	0	0	0	2751	123	269	2359	2751	2434	317	0	2751			267	197	46	1	1066	1132	487	780	95	153	28	1498	30.823	30.187	29.470	25.170	10.030	125.680

STRATEGIC HOUSING INVESTMENT PLAN 2022/23 - 2026/27

Table 1 - AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPLY PROGRAMME - Years 1-5 2022/23-2026/27

LOCAL AUTHORITY: Aberdeen City Council

PROJECT	PRIORITY	DEVELOPER	UNITS - TENURE					UNITS - BUILT FORM				UNITS - TYPE				GREENER	APPROVAL DATE	SG AHSP FUNDING REQUIREMENT (£0,000s)					
	Low / Medium / High		Social Rent	Mid Market Rent	LCHO - Shared Equity	LCHO - Shared Ownership	Total Units	Rehab	Off the Shelf	NB	Total Units	GN	Specialis t Provision	Type of Specialist Particular Need (If Known)	Total Units by Type	Enter Y or N	Financial Year (Estimated or Actual)	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	TOTAL AHSP FUNDING REQUIRED OVER SHIP PERIOD
Wellheads	High	Aberdeen City Council	283				283			283	283	283			283	Y	2019/20						0.000
Summerhill	High	Aberdeen City Council	369				369			369	369	369			369	Y	2019/20						0.000
Kincorth	High	Aberdeen City Council	212				212			212	212	180	32	Wheelchair Access	212	Y	2019/20						0.000
Craighill	High	Aberdeen City Council	99				99			99	99	58	41	Wheelchair Access	99	Y	2020/21E						0.000
Harris Drive (Tillydrone)	High	Aberdeen City Council	30				30			30	30	22	8	Wheelchair Access	30	Y	2020/21E	2.145					2.145
Cunningham Terrace (Tillydrone)	High	Aberdeen City Council	40				40			40	40	26	14	Wheelchair Access	40	N	2022/23	2.860					2.860
Kaimhill	High	Aberdeen City Council	35				35			35	35	21	14	Wheelchair Access	35	N	2022/23	2.052					2.052
City wide Council buy-back	High	Aberdeen City Council	200				200		200		200	200			200	N	2018/19	6.000					6.000
Greenferns	Medium	Aberdeen City Council	350				350			350	350	298	52	Wheelchair Access	350	N	2020/21E		19.950				19.950
East Woodcroft	Low	Aberdeen City Council	52				52			52	52	44	8		52	N	2023/24				2.964		2.964
218 Auchmill Road	High	Aberdeen City Council	92				92			92	92	92			92	N	2022/23						0.000
Grandhome	High	Aberdeen City Council	95				95			95	95	81	14		95	N	2022/23		6.792				6.792
Granitehill	High	Aberdeen City Council	300				300			300	300	255	45		300	N	2022/23				10.725	10.725	21.450
Cloverhill	High	Aberdeen City Council	536				536			536	536	456	80		536	N	2022/23			19.162	19.162		38.324
Burnside	High	Grampian Housing Association	43	58			101			101	101	101			101	N	2019/20						0.000
Victoria Road School	High	Grampian Housing Association	50				50	41		9	50	43	7		50	Y	2019/20	3.500					3.500
77-79 Bon Accord Terrace	Medium	Grampian Housing Association	12				12	12			12	12			12	N	2021/22	0.840					0.840
165 Crown Street	Medium	Grampian Housing Association	9				9	9			9	9			9	N	2021/22	0.630					0.630
Marryfield House	Medium	Grampian Housing Association	8				8	8			8	8			8	N	2022/23		0.560				0.560
Froghall site	Medium	Grampian Housing Association	95				95			95	95	86	9	Wheelchair Access	95	N	2022/23		3.325	3.325			6.650
Oscar Road	Medium	Grampian Housing Association	28				28			28	28	24	4		28	N	2022/23		2.160				2.160
The Spires	Low	Grampian Housing Association		20			20		20		20	20			20	N	2022/23	0.880					0.880
15 Maberly Street	High	Hillcrest Homes	17				17			17	17	17			17	Y	2022/23		1.093				1.093
Kingswells	High	Hillcrest Homes	20				20			20	20	18	2		20	N	2020/21						0.000
181 Union Street	High	Hillcrest Homes	17				17			17	17	17			17	N	2021/22	1.136					1.136
267 Union Street	High	Hillcrest Homes	25				25			25	25	25			25	N	2022/23	0.500	1.021				1.521
Stationfields (Falkland Avenue)	High	Hillcrest Homes	123	44			167			167	167	157	10	Wheelchair Access	167	N	2020/21	2.794					2.794
Newton of Charleston	High	Hillcrest Homes	6				6			6	6		6	Supported Accomm	6	Y	2021/22	0.400					0.400
13-15 Auchmill Road	Medium	Hillcrest Homes	17				17			17	17	15	2		17	Y	2023/24		1.326				1.326
Granitehill Road	Low	Hillcrest Homes	TBC	TBC			TBC			TBC	0				0	Y	2023/24						0.000
South Esplanade West	Low	Hillcrest Homes	28	13			41			41	41	39	2	Wheelchair Access	41	N	2023/24			2.879			2.879
Grandholm	Low	Hillcrest Homes	72				72			72	72	62	10	Wheelchair Access	72	Y	2021/22	2.684					2.684
Rowett South	Low	Places for People Scotland/CRE	140	130			270			270	270	270			270	N	2024/25			6.000	6.000	6.000	18.000
Don Street	High	Castle Rock/Edinvar	25				25			25	25		25	Substance Misuse	25	N	2022/23	0.875	0.875				1.750
Craibstone	Medium	Places for People Scotland/CRE	73	60			133			133	133	133			133	N	2022/23	3.000	5.000	1.450			9.450
Maidencraig	Medium	Places for People Scotland/CRE	17	19			36			36	36	36			36	N	2022/23	0.500	1.900				2.400
May Baird Avenue	Medium	Places for People Scotland		8			8			8	8	8			8	N	2022/23	0.500					0.500
Cults	Medium	Places for People Scotland/CRE		8			8			8	8	8			8	N	2023/24		0.400				0.400
Braeside Primary School	High	Places for People Scotland	43				43			43	43	37	6		43	N	2022/23	2.000	1.354				3.354
Buckshaw Primary School	High	Places for People Scotland	63				63			63	63	54	9		63	N	2022/23		3.000	1.914			4.914
Cordyce Primary School	High	Places for People Scotland	69				69			69	69	59	10		69	N	2022/23			3.000	2.382		5.382
Stoneywood Primary School	High	Places for People Scotland	44				44			44	44	37	7		44	N	2022/23				2.000	1.432	3.432
Millstimbar	Low	Castle Rock/Edinvar	20				20			20	20	20			20	N	2023/24		1.600				1.600
North Anderson Drive	High	Sanctuary Scotland Housing Association	118				118			118	118	106	12	3 Wheelchair adapted, 8 supported / 1 carer	118	Y	2017/18 E	4.365	4.681				9.046
Donside Phase 2	High	Sanctuary Scotland Housing Association	61				61			61	61	56	5	Wheelchair Access	61	Y	2017/18 E	2.758	2.000				4.758
Persley Den	High	Sanctuary Scotland Housing Association	150				150			150	150	128	22		150	TBC	2020/21	5.000	5.000	1.557			11.557
Contlaw Road	Low	Castlehill		7			7			7	7	6	1		7	N	2023/24		0.374				0.374
Bridge of Don	Low	Osprey	10				10	10			10	10			10	N	2021/22	0.780					0.780
Silverburn House	Low	Unknown	24				24			24	24	21	3	Wheelchair Access	24	N	2020/21E			1.872			1.872
Aberdeen Exhibition Centre	Low	Unknown	35				35			35	35	30	5	Wheelchair Access	35	N	2021/22E			2.730			2.730
Pittodrie	Low	Unknown			35		35			35	35	30	5		35	N	2024/25				2.730		2.730
Loirston		Unknown	23	31			54			54	54	46	8		54	N	2024/25		1.794	1.658			3.452
Hazlehead Triangle	Medium	Unknown	25				25			25	25	21	4	Wheelchair Access	25	N	2020/21E		1.425				1.425
Granton Place	Low	Unknown	9				9			9	9	9			9	N	2021/22		0.630				0.630
LCHO Buybacks	High	Unknown		1			1		1		1	1			1	N	2020/21	0.030					0.030
152 Don Street	Low	Unknown	86				86			86	86	73	13		86	N	2024/25				3.354	3.354	6.708
North Donside Road	Low	Unknown	167				167			167	167	142	25		167	N	2024/25			6.012	6.012		12.024
Cromarty House AB11 5AR	Low	Unknown	35				35	35			35	30	5	Wheelchair Access	35	N	2022/23	2.730					2.730
Caledonian House AB10 1TN	Low	Unknown	47				47	47			47	40	7	Wheelchair Access	47	N	2022/23	3.666					3.666
Lord Cullen House, Fraser Place AB25 3UB	Low	Unknown	49				49	49			49	42	7	Wheelchair Access	49	N	2022/23	3.822					3.822
Total			4596	399	35	0	5030	211	221	4598	5030	4491	539	0	5030			56.447	66.260	51.559	55.329	21.511	251.106

Appendix 4: Precedent Planning Decision (Former Banks O' Dee Nursing Home)

DECISION NOTICE

The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997

Detailed Planning Permission

Bradley Craig
Bradley Craig Architects
24 Newburgh Crescent
Bridge Of Don
Aberdeen
AB22 8ST

on behalf of **Mosaic Microliving United Kingdom Limited**

Aberdeen City Council in exercise of its powers under the above mentioned Act hereby **grants planning permission** for the development specified below and shown in the approved plans and drawings.

Application Reference Number	230685/DPP
Address of Development	Former Banks O'Dee Nursing Home Abbotswell Road Aberdeen AB12 3AB
Description of Development	Change of use of from class 8 (residential institutions) to form 24no. affordable flats, including formation/replacement of doors and windows; installation of cladding, and alterations to the car park and garden ground with associated works
Date of Decision	25 April 2024

DETAILS OF ANY VARIATION MADE TO THE APPLICATION

In agreement with the applicant, the following variations were made to the application under section 32A of the 1997 act –

Additional information was submitted in relation to drainage, flooding, boundary treatments and pedestrian access

REASON FOR DECISION

The reasons on which the Council has based this decision are as follows –

The proposed change of use of the vacant nursing home building to form affordable residential flats would not result in the loss of any existing business or industrial uses, nor would the development harm the operations of any nearby business or industrial uses, therefore the proposals are not contrary to the aims of Policy B1 (Business and Industrial Land) of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 (ALDP). Although authorised for use as a nursing home (Class 8), the existing building has lain vacant since 2019 without any viable interest in resuming the authorised nursing home use. Furthermore, there is spare capacity in existing nursing / care homes in Aberdeen City, thus the loss of the existing facility has been adequately justified, in accordance with Policy WB4 (Specialist Care Facilities) of the ALDP. The proposed development would not adversely affect the operations or viability of the neighbouring sports centre and football club, in accordance with Policy CF1 (Existing Community Sites and Facilities) of the ALDP.

The provision of affordable housing, on a sustainably accessible site, which is included in the Aberdeen Strategic Housing Investment Plan, is acceptable in accordance with Policy 16 (Quality Homes) of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and the sustainable re-use of a brownfield site, including a vacant building is compliant with the aims of Policies 9 (Brownfield, Vacant and Derelict Land and Empty Buildings) and 12 (Zero Waste) of NPF4.

A satisfactory level of amenity would, on balance, be afforded to the residents of the proposed development, in accordance with the requirements of Policy D2 (Amenity) of the ALDP and sufficient open space would be provided, in accordance with Policy NE2 (Green and Blue Infrastructure) of the ALDP. Subject to the implementation of mitigation measures, the residents of the development would not be significantly affected by any external sources of noise, in accordance with the requirements of Policy 23 (Health and Safety) of NPF4 and Policy WB3 (Noise) of the ALDP.

The development would be of an appropriate design quality for the application site context and would meet the six qualities of successful placemaking as set out in Policy 14 (Design, quality and place) of NPF4 and Policy D1 (Quality Placemaking) of the ALDP. The development would be in a sustainably accessible location, within walking and cycling distance of various amenities and facilities, in accordance with the aims of Policy 15 (Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods) of NPF4. Subject to the delivery of a safe means of pedestrian access to the site via condition, the site would be accessible via sustainable and active modes of transport, in accordance with Policies 13 (Sustainable Transport) of NPF4 and T2 (Sustainable Transport) of the ALDP. Sufficient car parking would be provided for the proposed use, in accordance with Policy T3 (Parking) of the ALDP.

The development would exceed the 25% affordable housing requirement as set out in Policy 16 (Quality Homes) and Policy H5 (Affordable Housing) of the ALDP and developer obligations shall be secured to offset the impact of the development on local healthcare facilities and the core path network, in accordance with Policies 18 (Infrastructure First) of NPF4 and I1 (Infrastructure Delivery and Planning Obligations) of the ALDP.

The proposed development is also generally compliant with all other relevant policies in NPF4 and the ALDP in relation to: density, housing mix, natural heritage, trees, landscaping, climate change, biodiversity, flooding & drainage, waste management, digital infrastructure, suicide risk and healthy developments.

A full evaluation and account of the processing of the application is contained in the report of handling, which is available by entering the application reference number at https://publicaccess.aberdeencity.gov.uk/.

CONDITIONS

This permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

(1) DURATION OF PERMISSION

The development to which this notice relates must be begun not later than the expiration of 3 years beginning with the date of this notice. If development has not begun at the expiration of the 3-year period, the planning permission lapses.

Reason - in accordance with section 58 (duration of planning permission) of the 1997 act.

(2) SCHEME FOR SAFE MEANS OF PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

The development hereby approved shall not be occupied unless a scheme for the safe means of pedestrian and wheelchair access to and from the site from Abbotswell Road has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Planning Authority and thereafter the approved scheme has been implemented in accordance with the agreed details, prior to the occupation of the development.

Reason: In order to ensure that the development can be accessed safely by walking and wheeling.

(3) NOISE MITIGATION

The development hereby approved shall not be occupied unless the critical noise mitigation measures set out in the 'Mitigation' section on Pages 17-20 of the approved Noise Impact Assessment (Couper Acoustics - Ref: 1029212314 - V1, Date: 8 June 2022) have been implemented in full.

Reason: In order to protect the residents of the development from external sources of noise and to protect the operations and viability of neighbouring commercial uses.

(4) SOFT LANDSCAPING AND TREE PLANTING

No works in connection with the development hereby approved shall take place unless a scheme of soft landscaping works has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

Details of the scheme shall include:

(i) Existing landscape features and vegetation to be retained;
(ii) The location of new trees, shrubs, hedges, grassed areas;
(iii) A schedule of planting to comprise species, plant sizes and proposed numbers and density;
(iv) An indication of existing trees, shrubs and hedges to be removed.
(v) A programme for the completion and subsequent maintenance of the proposed landscaping.

All soft landscaping proposals shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme and shall be completed no later than the planting season immediately following the commencement of the development or such other date as may be agreed in writing with the Planning Authority. Any

planting which, within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development, in the opinion of the Planning Authority is dying, being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased, shall be replaced by plants of similar size and species to those originally required to be planted.

In addition, prior to the commencement of the implementation of the approved scheme, detailed proposals for a programme for the long term management and maintenance of all the approved landscaped and open space areas within the development shall be submitted for the further written approval of the Planning Authority. Thereafter, all management and maintenance of the landscaped and open space areas shall be implemented, in perpetuity, in accordance with the approved programme.

Reason: To ensure the implementation of a satisfactory scheme of landscaping which will help to integrate the proposed development into the local landscape in the interests of the visual amenity of the area and to ensure that the landscaping is managed and maintained in perpetuity.

(5) HARD LANDSCAPING MATERIALS

No works in connection with the development hereby approved shall take place unless a scheme of hard landscaping works, including the surface materials to be used for all roads, car parking areas, footpaths and other areas of hard landscaping, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Thereafter no flat shall be occupied unless the works have taken place in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: To ensure the use of satisfactory materials for the hard-landscaped aspects of the development.

(6) CAR PARKING

The development hereby approved shall not be occupied unless the car parking area has been laid out in accordance with the details shown on approved Bradley Craig Architects drawing D(0-)01 Revision H (Proposed Site Plan), or other such drawing as may be agreed in writing with the Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to ensure that sufficient car parking is provided for the development.

(7) BOUNDARIES

The development hereby approved shall not be occupied unless a detailed scheme of site and plot boundary enclosures (including all fences and walls) for the entire development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Thereafter the boundary treatments shall be installed in accordance with the agreed details prior to occupation.

Reason: in order to preserve the character and amenity of the area.

(8) ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POINTS

The development hereby approved shall not be occupied unless details of all electric vehicle charging points to be installed in the car parking area have been submitted to, agreed in writing with, the Planning Authority and the charge points have thereafter been installed in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: In order to ensure that sufficient electric vehicle charging points would be provided, thus encouraging the use of sustainably powered vehicles.

(9) TREE PROTECTION

No development in relation to the extension of the car park shall take place unless a detailed cross-section and construction methodology for the areas of the extended car parking area that would be formed within the root protection areas of trees to be retained, as shown on the approved Tree Survey Site Plan drawing (Struan Dalgleish Arboriculture - March 2023 - Appendix 1), has been submitted to and agreed in writing with the Planning Authority. Thereafter the works shall not take place other than in accordance with the agreed details. All other works within the site shall not take place other than in accordance with the tree protection details set out in sections 4.3 and 4.4 of the approved Tree Survey.

Reason: in order to ensure adequate protection for the trees on site during the construction of the development.

(10) DRAINAGE INFRASTRUCTURE

No development shall take place unless a scheme of all new drainage infrastructure, designed to meet the requirements of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority and thereafter no part of the development shall be occupied unless the drainage has been installed in complete accordance with the agreed scheme.

Reason: in order to safeguard water qualities in adjacent watercourses and to ensure that the development can be adequately drained.

(11) WASTE MANAGEMENT

The development hereby approved shall not be occupied unless the bin store area shown on approved drawings D(0-)01 Revision H (Proposed Site Plan) and D(0-)05 Revision B (Proposed Elevations) has been constructed and the required bins (2 x 1280l general waste, 2 x 1280l mixed recycling and 1 x food waste container) have been installed and are made available for use by residents upon occupation.

Reason: In order to ensure that waste and recyclables generated by the development would be securely and hygienically stored pending collection.

(12) CYCLE PARKING

The development hereby approved shall not be occupied unless details of the cycle racks to be installed within the Ground Floor cycle store have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Thereafter the cycle storage facility shall be provided as shown on approved drawing D(0-)02 Revision G (Proposed Ground Floor Plan) and with the approved racks installed prior to occupation.

Reason: In the interests of encouraging more sustainable and active modes of travel.

(13) RESIDENTIAL TRAVEL PACK

No unit shall be occupied unless a residential travel pack has been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority. Each residential travel pack shall identify details of different travel options available in the area in order to discourage the use of the private car. The approved travel pack shall be supplied to the occupants of every residential unit on occupation.

Reason - In order to reduce dependency on the private car for travel.

(14) BROADBAND CONNECTION

No unit shall be occupied unless a scheme for the provision of a full fibre broadband connection to each flat has been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority. Thereafter the scheme shall be implemented as approved and no flat shall be occupied unless provided with a full fibre broadband connection.

Reason: In order to provide all flats with access to high-speed communications infrastructure, in accordance with the requirements of Policy CI1 (Digital Infrastructure) of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023.

(15) EXTERNAL LIGHTING

The development hereby approved shall not be occupied unless a scheme for all external lighting within the development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority, and thereafter implemented in full accordance with said scheme.

Reason: In the interests of public safety.

APPROVED PLANS AND DRAWINGS

D (0-) 03 C	First Floor Plan (Proposed)
D (0-) 05 B	Multiple Elevations (Proposed)
D (0-) 06	Other Elevation (Proposed)
23136-SK-06A	Site Layout (Other)
230046-000 A	Drainage Assessment
D (0-) 01 H	Site Layout (Proposed)
D (0-) 02 G	Ground Floor Plan (Proposed)
6707	Location Plan
230046-000 Rev 1.2	Drainage Assessment
Tree Survey Appendix 1 - BS 5837:2012	Other Drawing or Plan
Couper Acoustics - Ref 1029212314 - V1 - Date 8 June 2022	Noise Assessment

Signed on behalf of the planning authority

Daniel Lewis
Development Management Manager

IMPORTANT INFORMATION RELATED TO THIS DECISION NOTICE

RIGHT OF APPEAL

If the applicant is aggrieved by the decision of the planning authority –

1 to refuse planning permission for the proposed development;
2 to refuse approval, consent or agreement require by a condition imposed on a grant of planning permissions;
3 to grant planning permission or approval, consent or agreement subject to conditions,

the applicant may appeal to the Scottish Ministers under section 47 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 within three months from the date of this notice.

Information on how to submit an appeal is available at https://www.gov.scot/publications/planning-appeals-forms-guidance-list or from –

Planning and Environmental Appeals Division (DPEA)
Ground Floor
Hadrian House
Callendar Business Park
Callendar Road
Falkirk
FK1 1XR

Telephone: 0300 244 6668
E-mail: DPEA@gov.scot

SERVICE OF PURCHASE NOTICE

If permission to develop land is refused or granted subject to conditions, and the owner of the land claims that the land has become incapable of reasonably beneficial use in its existing state and cannot be rendered capable of reasonably beneficial use by the carrying out of any development which has been permitted, the owners of the land may serve on the planning authority a purchase notice requiring the purchase of the owner of the land's interest in the land in accordance with Part 5 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended).

CONDITIONS

Failure to comply with any condition or limitation subject to which planning permission has been granted is a breach of planning control and may lead to enforcement action being initiated.

A request to discharge a condition which requires the submission and approval of information must be made by submitting the form available at https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/post-decision-submissions.

LEGAL AGREEMENT

This permission is subject to a legal agreement under section 75 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 or section 69 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973. The agreement may be inspected online by entering the application reference number at https://publicaccess.aberdeencity.gov.uk/.

COMMENCEMENT AND COMPLETION OF DEVELOPMENT

Prior to implementing this planning permission, a person intending to do so, must give notice to the Council of the date development is expected to commence, by submitting Form A. Failure to do so is a breach of planning control and may lead to enforcement action being initiated.

Subsequently, as soon as is practicable after completion of the development, notice must be given to the Council of the completion date, by submitting Form B.

Forms can be submitted to pi@aberdeencity.gov.uk.

OTHER CONSENTS

This permission does not provide exemption from obtaining other consents administered by Aberdeen City Council, such as advertisement consent, listed building consent, building warrant, premises license, or roads construction consent. Those carrying out development associated with this permission are responsible for obtaining all relevant consents from the Council and other regulatory bodies.

OTHER ADVISORY NOTES

(1) NOISE FROM CONSTRUCTION WORKS

Operations creating noise which is audible at sensitive receptors should not occur outside the hours of 7am to 7pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 1pm on Saturdays.

(2) BIN PROVISION

The 24 flats will be provided with:

- 2 x 1280l general waste container 128CM W X 145CM H X 100CM D (90cm minimum clearance to manoeuvre bins)
- 2 x 1280l co-mingled recycling container 128CM W X 145CM H X 100CM D (90cm minimum clearance to manoeuvre bins)
- 1 x food waste container for each bin store. 62CM W X 129.8CM H X 74CM D (80CM X 80CM (90cm minimum clearance to remove internal bin from front opening casing)
- 24 x kitchen caddy and caddy liners (for each property)

When planning bin stores, please take these measurements into account to ensure ease of use residents and collection for crew.

The following costs will be charged to the developer:
- Each 1280l bin costs £454.00
- Each food waste container costs £566.00
- Kitchen caddy and caddy liners £0.00
- A delivery of 10 or less bins will incur a £33 delivery fee.

No garden waste will be provided for flat residences as it is assumed grounds will be maintained as part of a service charge for the building and undertaken by a commercial contractor.

It is pertinent to note that these services will be provided taking account of the following:

- No excess should be stored out with the containment provided. This is fly tipping.
- If the bin store will be locked and/ or involve a barrier, 8 keys must be provided for each store, providing access to the different collection crews and Recycling Officer for monitoring contamination. These should be dispatched to the Waste Team.

- Large item collections can be arranged by visiting www.aberdeencity.gov.uk
- Further information can be found in the Waste Supplementary Guidance available at: https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-07/7.1.PolicySG.ResourcesForNewDevelopmentUpdateJuly2020.pdf
- Developers must contact Aberdeen City Council a minimum of ONE month before properties will be occupied this is to ensure that bins are on site prior to residents moving into properties and to give enough time to register addresses on the CAG (Council Address Gazetteer) to allow for the development to be added to the refuse vehicle routes.
- A Purchase Order should be raised with Aberdeen City Council using the above details and we will provide further guidance for purchasing the bins.
- Please submit a PO for the bins you require.

Should you have any further queries or wish to discuss these comments further, please do not hesitate to contact wasteplanning@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Notification of Initiation of Development

Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 – Section 27B

Application reference number: 230685/DPP

Site address: Former Banks O'Dee Nursing Home, Abbotswell Road

Date of decision: 25 April 2024

Person or company intending to carry out the development	
Name and address	
Phone number or e-mail address	
Owner of the land to which the development relates (if different from above)	
Name and address	
Phone number or e-mail address	
Site agent or contractor appointed to oversee development	
Name and address	
Phone number or e-mail address	

Date it is intended to initiate development: DD / MM / YYYY

General Data Protection Regulations – How we use your data

Aberdeen City Council collects, maintains and processes automatically information about you for the purposes of processing and determining planning applications and may be used for consultation purposes where applicable under legislation. Information will be disclosed only in accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 or otherwise as required by law, including disclosure to other agencies (for example Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Police Scotland, NatureScot, Historic Environment Scotland) as required for the purposes of determining this application.

For the purposes of processing this information Aberdeen City Council is the Data Controller. The Information Commissioner Office is the UK's regulator of data protection law (www.ico.org.uk). For further information on how we use, store & protect your data please see our website www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/your-data/privacy-notices/your-data-planning-application

Form B

Notification of Completion of Development

Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 – Section 27B

Application reference number: 230685/DPP

Site address: Former Banks O'Dee Nursing Home, Abbotswell Road

Date of decision: 25 April 2024

Person or company completing development	
Name and address	
Phone number or e-mail address	

Date on which development was completed: DD / MM / YYYY

General Data Protection Regulations – How we use your data

Aberdeen City Council collects, maintains and processes automatically information about you for the purposes of processing and determining planning applications and may be used for consultation purposes where applicable under legislation. Information will be disclosed only in accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 or otherwise as required by law, including disclosure to other agencies (for example Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Police Scotland, NatureScot, Historic Environment Scotland) as required for the purposes of determining this application.

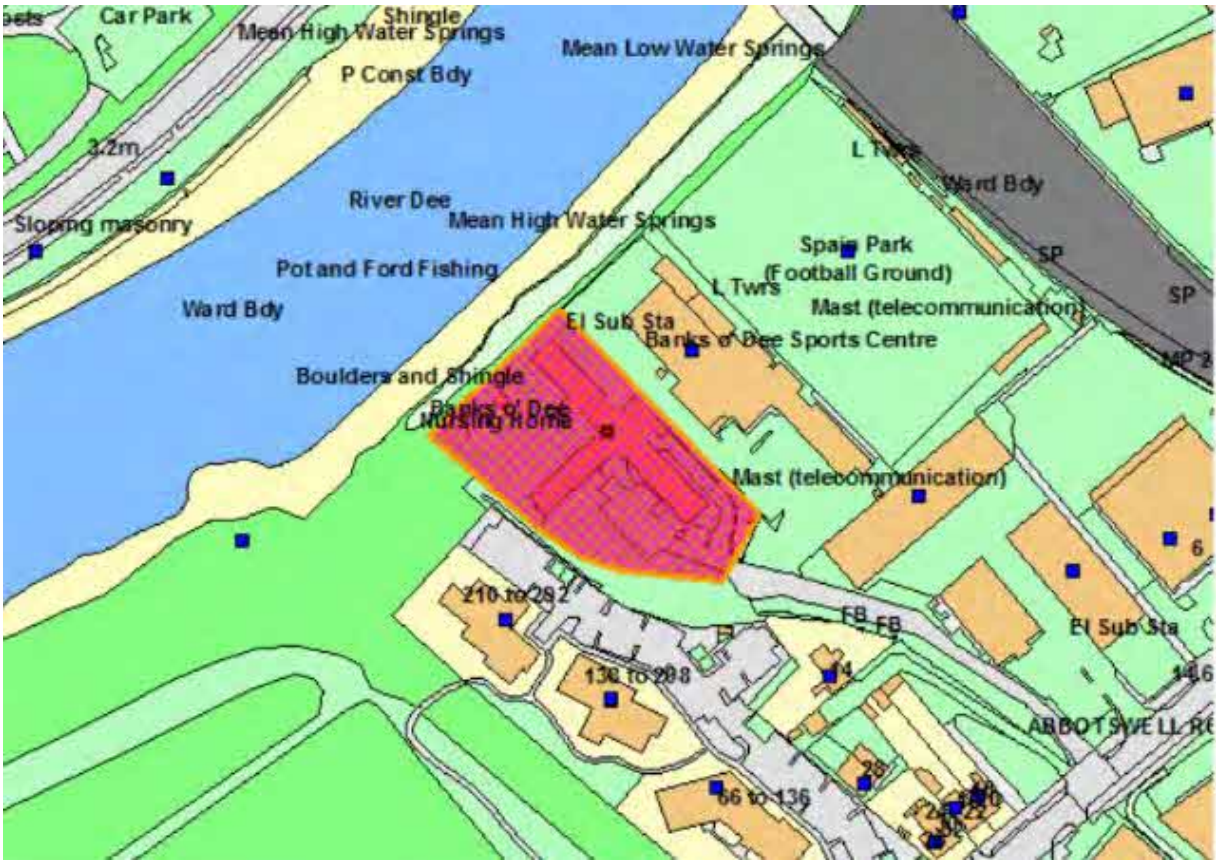
For the purposes of processing this information Aberdeen City Council is the Data Controller. The Information Commissioner Office is the UK's regulator of data protection law (www.ico.org.uk). For further information on how we use, store & protect your data please see our website www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/your-data/privacy-notices/your-data-planning-application

Planning Development Management Committee

Report by Development Management Manager

Committee Date: 2 November 2023

Site Address:	Former Banks O' Dee Nursing Home, Abbotswell Road, Aberdeen, AB12 3AB
Application Description:	Change of use of from class 8 (residential institutions) to form 24no. affordable flats, including formation/replacement of doors and windows; installation of cladding, and alterations to the car park and garden ground with associated works
Application Ref:	230685/DPP
Application Type	Detailed Planning Permission
Application Date:	8 June 2023
Applicant:	Mosaic Microliving United Kingdom Limited
Ward:	Kincorth/Nigg/Cove
Community Council:	Torry
Case Officer:	Alex Ferguson



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RECOMMENDATION

Approve Conditionally & Legal Agreement

APPLICATION BACKGROUND

Site Description

The application site comprises the building and curtilage of the former Banks o' Dee Nursing Home, a 2-storey late 20th Century, pitch-roofed building with an approximately 'T'-shaped footprint, situated within a c. 5,000sqm plot of land 135m to the north-west of Abbotswell Road. The building has lain vacant and boarded up since ceasing to function as a nursing home in 2019. The site is bound to the north-east by the Banks o' Dee Sports Centre, which includes Spain Park - the home of Banks o' Dee Football Club. The River Dee flows to the north-west of the site at a lower level and a small burn which feeds into the Dee runs along the southern and western edges of the site, with a modern flatted housing development beyond to the south west. An unadopted access road serves both the site and the adjacent sports centre from Abbotswell Road. The road incorporates a painted pedestrian route on its north-eastern side. The site and the wider area to the east is zoned in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 as Business and Industrial Land and business and industrial units (a mix of Class 4: Office, 5: General Industrial and 6: Storage and Distribution uses) lie between the site and Abbotswell Road, to the east of the application site.

Relevant Planning History

961356 – Planning permission was approved in 1996 for the erection of a nursing home for the elderly and for a new clubhouse for the adjacent football club.

APPLICATION DESCRIPTION

Description of Proposal

Detailed planning permission is sought to change the use of the former nursing home building to form 24 residential flats, with associated alterations to the external appearance of the building, car parking, bin store, boundary treatments and landscaping.

The physical works to the existing building and its curtilage would involve the following:

- Stripping of the existing building's external walls and the installation of new walls, windows and doors;
- Removal of the existing two storey projection on the building's eastern elevation;
- Extension and alteration of the existing car parking area in the front curtilage to provide a total of 24 parking spaces;
- Installation of new boundary treatments, including timber fencing to delineate private garden areas and a 2.m high close-boarded timber fence along the eastern boundary of the site, to provide an acoustic barrier to the adjacent sports centre;
- Removal of 10no trees and the planting of 10no new trees and other soft landscaping; and
- Formation of a bin store.

Operational Statement

The applicant has submitted an Operational Statement which notes that, once the physical works for which permission is sought have been implemented, the intention would be for the flats to be occupied by individuals with care needs, some complex, and that care would be provided to the residents by members of staff. This application seeks permission for a fallback position to operate the flats as mainstream affordable housing, with no associated care provision, should the care element cease at any point in the future. The Planning Service considers that the intended use of

the building as a care facility does not require planning permission, as that use would fall within the existing authorised use of the property as a care home (Class 8 – Residential Institutions). This application seeks permission for the applicant's 'fallback' position of 24 mainstream residential flats (sui generis) to be operated as affordable housing and the application is thus assessed accordingly in the following evaluation.

Amendments

With the agreement of the applicant, the following amendments were made to the application following the initial submission:

A Transport Statement, Operational Statement and a Statement Justifying the Loss of the Existing Care Home use were all submitted;
An updated Drainage Impact Assessment & Flood Risk Assessment was submitted;
Minor alterations were made to the proposed building's door and window openings, and to boundary treatments, including the installation of a close-boarded timber acoustic-barrier fence along the north-eastern boundary;
An indicative pedestrian bridge link over the burn to the neighbouring residential site was incorporated into the plans, albeit it lies outwith the application site and would be subject to a separate planning application.

Renotification of neighbours was carried out as a result of the amendments made.

Supporting Documents

All drawings and supporting documents listed below can be viewed on the Council's website at:

https://publicaccess.aberdeencity.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=RVS6TZBZK7A00

Design & Access Statement
Drainage Impact Assessment & Flood Risk Assessment
Noise Impact Assessment
Tree Survey
Transport Statement
Operational Statement
Supporting Statement – Justification for loss of existing nursing home

Reason for Referral to Committee

The application has been referred to the Planning Development Management Committee because more than five (sixteen) representations either objecting to, or raising concerns about, the proposed development have been received from third parties.

CONSULTATIONS

ACC - Developer Obligations – In order to mitigate the impact of the proposed development on existing local infrastructure and facilities, the following financial contributions will be required:

Core Path Network - £9,374 (Core Path 85 – Tullos Park & Inverdee Pitches)
Healthcare Facilities – £21,865.54 (Torry Medical Practice)

The application site is within the catchment areas for Kirkhill Primary School and Lochside Academy. Lochside Academy has sufficient capacity to accommodate additional pupils and although Kirkhill Primary School is expected to exceed its working capacity in the near future, on the basis that the proposed development would comprise 100% 1-bed units, no new pupils are expected to be generated.

As a landscaped sensory garden and communal external amenity space would be provided in the development, no off-site open space mitigation or contribution is required. No contributions are required towards Community Facilities or Sports & Recreation.

The proposed development would comprise 100% affordable housing (social housing operated by a Registered Social Landlord). The proposal has been discussed with the Council's Housing Team and is in the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP).

ACC - Schools Estates Team – The site falls within the school catchment areas for Kirkhill School and Lochside Academy. Whilst there is likely to be sufficient capacity at Lochside Academy to accommodate the number of pupils expected to be generated by the proposed development, pupil numbers at Kirkhill School are expected to exceed the school's capacity in the near future, and so a contribution from the developer may be required to assist with the cost of providing additional capacity at the school to accommodate pupils from the development.

ACC - Environmental Health – No objection, subject to the implementation of the mitigation measures recommended in the applicant's Noise Impact Assessment (Reference: 1029212314 – V1, Date: 8 June 2022) including:

External wall construction to meet required acoustic performance;
Roof construction to meet required acoustic performance;
Installation of trickle vents to meet the stipulated acoustic performance;
Application of kitchen extract grilles serving open-plan kitchen/dining or kitchen/living areas to meet the stipulated acoustic performance;
Installation of a 2.2m high close-boarded fence positioned hard against the ground and free from any gaps, located at the top of the eastern site boundary embankment adjacent to the sports centre.

ACC - Structures, Flooding and Coastal Engineering – No objection. The findings of the applicant's Drainage Impact Assessment, Flood Risk Assessment and watercourse cross sections are accepted.

ACC – Housing Strategy – This development is to be 100% affordable housing. It will be owned by Hillcrest Homes and is included in the Strategic Housing Investment Plan and prioritised for funding through the affordable housing supply program.

It will provide specialist provision accommodation including wheelchair accessible homes. The Strategic Housing Investment Plan has a requirement that a minimum of 15% of all affordable housing should be provided as wheelchair accessible. Wheelchair accessible homes means homes suitable for wheelchair users to live in and should as a minimum comply with the design criteria indicated as a 'basic' requirement for wheelchair users, as outlined in Housing for Varying Needs and should include the design criteria indicated as 'desirable' (column 'D' in 'Summary of Design Criteria') wherever possible. Therefore, a minimum of 4 affordable homes should meet this requirement.

Police Scotland – The application site is currently a low/medium crime area. The main types of

crime which have been reported over the last 12 months are drugs, theft, vandalism, shoplifting, road traffic and fraud. Due consideration should be given to crime reduction measures during the construction phase. It is recommended that the architect liaises with the Police Scotland Architectural Liaison Officer for the purposes of designing out crime and the applicant is encouraged to attain a 'Secured by Design' award.

ACC - Roads Development Management Team – No objection, subject to conditions including the provision of the indicatively proposed pedestrian access bridge to the neighbouring residential development, which would allow use of the existing pedestrian facilities to access the public road and address existing issues of poor pedestrian connectivity to the site. The Roads Development Management team also advise the following:

Sustainable and active travel

There are existing pedestrian facilities (footpaths and crossings) which allow access to a variety of amenities in the surrounding area, including shops, a pharmacy and public transport stops;
Cycling around and into the site would be on the existing road carriageway. The applicant has provided a cycling isochrone map which shows that the city centre can be accessed within a 10 minute cycle from the site;
The site is generally well served by public transport;
One secure and covered cycle parking space is proposed per unit, with an additional two spaces for visitors. This exceeds the Council's guidelines and is acceptable.

Car Parking

The site lies in an Outer City area and is not in a controlled parking zone;
The applicant notes that there are 60 single bedrooms in the existing building, thus a capacity of 60 nursing home residents is assumed. An online news article noted 55 staff members at the nursing home in 2019 – therefore there is a shortfall in car parking for the current authorised use, with only 20 spaces on the site at present;
19 car parking spaces are required for the 24 affordable flats proposed (0.8 spaces per unit). 24 spaces would be provided, including 2 disabled bays, which is a slight overprovision as per the Council's guidelines;
On balance the number of car parking spaces proposed can be accepted and it is has been confirmed that they would meet the minimum dimensions;
One passive EV space is proposed per unit but more active EV charge points will be required in order to meet recent changes to Building Standards requirements. Should EV charge points be required the position of these should be agreed with the RDM team;

Vehicular access and trip numbers

Vehicular access to the site is via the existing unadopted road shared with the sports centre and football club. As this is an existing situation which cannot be enhanced, there would be no net detriment and the vehicular access is acceptable;
A comparison of the proposed use with the existing authorised Class 8 (nursing home) use shows that the proposed development would have a very similar amount of vehicle trips to and from the site at peak times as the authorised use;

Residential Travel Pack

A Residential Travel Pack should be agreed with the Council and issued to the occupants

of the flats upon entry;

Waste Management

A swept path analysis drawing has been submitted which demonstrates that bins could be adequately and safely collected within the site by refuse vehicles.

Drainage

Where there is new hard standing (car parking) the proposal is for this to drain via sheet flow to new porous paving. Water will then filter through the subbase, where it will be attenuated and treated before being conveyed to the outfall pipes discharging into the existing surface water drainage system. The applicant has shown this mitigation measure outweighs the pollution indices. This is acceptable.

Scottish Water – No objection, however the applicant should be aware that this does not confirm the proposed development can currently be serviced. Scottish Water is unable to confirm capacity currently in the Invercannie Water Treatment Works therefore the developer should submit a Pre-Development Enquiry to Scottish Water. There is currently sufficient capacity in the Nigg Waste Water Treatment Works to service the development.

ACC - Waste And Recycling – No objection. The proposed development would be provided with:

2 x 1280l general waste bins (128cm x 145cm x 100cm)
2 x 1280l co-mingled recycling bins (128cm x 145cm x 100cm)
1 x food waste container for each bin store
24 x kitchen caddies and caddy liners (one for each property)

The aforementioned bins shall be purchased by the developer and made available for residents upon occupation.

Torry Community Council – No response received.

REPRESENTATIONS

A total of sixteen representations have been received, all objecting to the application. Four representations were received following renotification, three of which were additional comments from parties who had already objected. The matters raised in the representations received are summarised as follows:

Improper development of land zoned for business and industry
The proposed development is contrary to Policy B1 (Business and Industrial Land) of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP) as residential use would be out of character with the area and conflict with the adjacent Banks o' Dee sports facility.

Impact on the operations and viability of on neighbouring uses
The application site lies within an employment area and the proposed residential development would be noise-sensitive, thus increasing the potential for complaints related to noise emissions from the adjacent sports facility (which operates gym classes and other activities, including football matches, from 5:30am to 11pm, 7 days a week) to harm its operations and viability, contrary to Policy CF1 (Existing Community Sites and Facilities) of the ALDP.

Impact on amenity of future residents
Noise emissions from the adjacent sports facility would harm the amenity of residents in the proposed development, contrary to Policies 23(e) (Health and Safety) of NPF4 and WB3 (Noise) of the ALDP.

Traffic generation, road and pedestrian safety
The access road to the site from Abbotswell Road is already at capacity and would be insufficient as a pedestrian connection to a residential development, particularly given its narrow width and already heavy use by the adjacent sports facility. The proposed development would thus increase traffic above the capacity of the access road and result in road and pedestrian safety issues

Car parking
There is insufficient car parking proposed, which would lead to overspill car parking by residents in the adjacent sports facility's car park, to the detriment of their operations

Impact on character of the area
The proposed development would adversely affect the character of the area and would not meet the six qualities of successful places – contrary to Policy 14 (Design Quality and Place) of NPF4 and Policy D1 (Quality Placemaking) of the ALDP.

Loss of existing nursing home facility
There is a shortage of care / nursing homes and similar facilities in Aberdeen, therefore the change of use should not be granted and no supporting evidence has been provided to justify the loss of the existing facility, contrary to Policy WB4 (Specialist Care Facilities) of the ALDP.

Security, health and safety
The proposed development would cause security issues and would have a negative impact on the wellbeing of young people and children using the adjacent sports facility.

Noise Impact Assessment limitations
The applicant's Noise Impact Assessment does not include football (Banks o' Dee) matchdays and with the club having in excess of 7 teams in the Scottish Highland League, noise from the stadium will adversely affect residents.

Impact on trees
Several trees would be felled in order to accommodate car parking – contrary to net-zero ambitions. The existing trees should be retained.

Wheelchair access
There is nothing on the plans about wheelchair accessible homes and the current access road is unsuitable for wheelchair access.

Lack of consultation with neighbours
The lack of consultation with neighbours in the pre-application and planning process is rude and disrespectful.

Maintenance of the communal access road
The communal access road has been maintained and improved at the expense of the sports facility and the owner of the former nursing home has not contributed in any way, nor

entered into any dialogue in relation to the maintenance of the road.

Impact on fundraising for the adjacent sports facility
The redevelopment of the application site for residential use would result in donors and sponsors of the adjacent sports facility withdrawing their financial support which is heavily relied upon for the maintenance and enhancement of the facility.

Burden on permitted use
There is a burden on the use of the property as a nursing home which should be honoured by the Council.

Fire risk of external cladding
The cladding to be applied to the renovated building would pose a fire risk.

Pedestrian bridge link to neighbouring residential site
The proposed pedestrian bridge link would exacerbate existing parking issues (with residents parking at the sports centre) and increase anti-social behaviour, with the Police already attending the neighbouring flatted development on a regular basis. Despite the bridge, the reality is that many people will continue to access the proposed development site by car and traffic congestion will be made worse overall.

Pedestrian bridge – procedure
The proposed pedestrian access bridge would require a separate planning application and it would be premature to approve the current application on the basis of a bridge link which may or may not obtain consent. As such, no weight should be attached to the proposed pedestrian access as a solution to the issues highlighted by the Roads Development Management team.

Pedestrian bridge – Land ownership
The Banks o' Dee Football Club claim to own the land between the proposed development site and the burn over which the applicant proposes to construct a bridge and it is their intention to use that land for parking and a turning facility for buses. The bridge would require development on land the applicant does not own and which is not under its control. Should the Council be minded to approve the application, a negative suspensive condition should be attached requiring the applicant to acquire the necessary property rights over the land in question before commencing development.

MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Legislative Requirements

Sections 25 and 37(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 require that where making any determination under the planning acts, regard is to be had to the provisions of the Development Plan; and, that any determination shall be made in accordance with the plan, so far as material to the application, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Development Plan

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) is the long-term spatial strategy for Scotland and contains

a comprehensive set of national planning policies that form part of the statutory development plan. The relevant provisions of NPF4 that require consideration in terms of this application are –

Policy 1 (Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises)
Policy 2 (Climate Mitigation and Adaptation)
Policy 3 (Biodiversity)
Policy 4 (Natural Places)
Policy 6 (Forestry, Woodland and Trees)
Policy 9 (Brownfield, Vacant and Derelict Land and Empty Buildings)
Policy 12 (Zero Waste)
Policy 13 (Sustainable Transport)
Policy 14 (Design, Quality and Place)
Policy 15 (Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods)
Policy 16 (Quality Homes)
Policy 18 (Infrastructure First)
Policy 19 (Heat and Cooling)
Policy 22 (Flood Risk and Water Management)
Policy 23 (Health and Safety)

Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 (ALDP)

The following policies are relevant –

Policy B1 (Business and Industrial Land)
Policy CF1 (Existing Community Sites and Facilities)
Policy CI1 (Digital Infrastructure)
Policy D1 (Quality Placemaking)
Policy D2 (Amenity)
Policy D5 (Landscape Design)
Policy H3 (Density)
Policy H4 (Housing Mix and Need)
Policy H5 (Affordable Housing)
Policy I1 (Infrastructure Delivery and Planning Obligations)
Policy NE2 (Green and Blue Infrastructure)
Policy NE3 (Our Natural Heritage)
Policy NE4 (Our Water Environment)
Policy NE5 (Trees and Woodland)
Policy R5 (Waste Management Requirements for New Developments)
Policy R6 (Low and Zero Carbon Buildings and Water Efficiency)
Policy R8 (Heat Networks)
Policy T2 (Sustainable Transport)
Policy T3 (Parking)
Policy WB3 (Noise)
Policy WB4 (Specialist Care Facilities)

Interim Aberdeen Planning Guidance

Aberdeen Planning Guidance is Interim Planning Guidance. The documents hold limited weight until they are adopted by the Council. The weight to be given to Interim Planning Guidance prior to its adoption is a matter for the decision maker. The following guidance is relevant –

Affordable Housing
Amenity
Open Space and Green Infrastructure
Space Standards
Transport and Accessibility
Trees and Woodland

Supplementary Guidance

Planning Obligations

EVALUATION

Principle of Development

Business and Industrial Land zoning

The application site lies within Business and Industrial Area, as zoned in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 (ALDP). Policy B1 (Business and Industrial Land) of the ALDP states:

'Land zoned for business and industrial uses on the Proposals Map, including already developed land, shall be retained for Class 4 (Business), Class 5 (General Industrial) and Class 6 (Storage and Distribution) uses and safeguarded from other conflicting development types. Other uses which may be suited to a business and industrial location, such as car showrooms and bus depots, shall be treated on their own merits. The expansion of existing uses within these locations will be permitted in principle.

Where business and industrial areas are located beside residential areas, we will restrict new planning permissions to Class 4 (Business). Buffer zones, which are appropriately sized and landscaped, may be required to separate these uses and safeguard residential amenity. Low amenity 'bad neighbour' uses must have regard to surrounding uses and their potential impact on the environment and existing amenity. In all cases, conditions may be imposed restricting levels of noise, hours of operation and external storage'

Although the site lies within a Business and Industrial Area and the building is currently vacant, its authorised use is as a nursing home (Class 8 – Residential Institutions). Therefore, the Policy B1 presumption in favour of the retention of Class 4, 5 and 6 uses is not applicable to this application. Furthermore, the immediately neighbouring property to the north-east, comprising Spain Park (home of Banks o' Dee Football Club) and the Banks o' Dee Sports Centre, comprises a mix of uses within Class 11 (Assembly and Leisure), including indoor and outdoor sports and recreation. As such, the neighbouring site is also not in Class 4, 5 or 6 use therefore the Policy B1 presumption against development of conflicting types that could harm the operations of such uses is also not applicable in this instance.

The nearest business and industrial uses (Classes 4, 5 or 6) comprise a cluster of business and industrial units situated at least 30m to the east of the site, between it and Abbotswell Road. These units face away from the application site however and due to their orientation relative to the application site, the separation distance and the segregated accesses from Abbotswell Road, it is considered that the amenity of the proposed new residential use of the application site would not be adversely affected by the operations of those uses, and in turn, those uses would be adequately safeguarded from the noise-sensitive nature of the proposed new residential use.

The Planning Service thus considers that although new residential development will often not be appropriate within a business and industrial land zoning, there is nothing within Policy B1 of the ALDP which explicitly precludes residential use, provided no existing business and industrial uses would either be lost or adversely affected. The specific context of the application site, its authorised Class 8 use and the Class 11 use of the neighbouring site are such that the proposed residential use of the application site is not contrary to Policy B1.

Whilst Class 11 uses (and other non-Class 4, 5 or 6 uses) are not specifically afforded protection by Policy B1, the safeguarding of the operations of the adjacent sports centre is nevertheless a material consideration that is assessed later in the evaluation.

Loss of an existing specialist care facility

Policy WB4 (Specialist Care Facilities) of the ALDP states:

'Proposals for new residential care facilities (such as Care Homes, Nursing Homes, Sheltered Living) should;

1. *Be well-connected; located close to public transport links and community amenities for residents and staff, and provide visitor parking; and*

2. *Meet design and amenity standards in line with other types of 'residential' developments.*

Proposals for the redevelopment, or Change of Use, of an existing development of this nature should be accompanied by sufficient supporting evidence justifying the loss of such a facility.'

As per the requirements of Policy WB4, the applicant has submitted a supporting statement to justify the loss of the existing nursing home. Although authorised for use as a nursing home (Class 8 – Residential Institutions), the property has lain vacant since 2019, therefore the proposal would not result in the loss of an operational specialist care facility, but rather a building authorised, in Planning terms, for continued / reinstated Class 8 use.

Furthermore, the applicant's statement notes that since the closure of the nursing home in 2019, no care operator has been willing to take over operation of the site and to resume a nursing / care home business. Upon the closure of the nursing home, all the tenants were re-homed in nearby care homes which has a significant number of spare rooms. The applicant advises that other nursing homes operating in the region remain under capacity, with data taken from the 'Care Home Census for Adults in Scotland' published in 2021 detailing the 56 care homes in Aberdeen City operating at 81% occupancy.

The Planning Service is satisfied that not only would an existing nursing home facility not be lost, with the building having lain vacant for over four years, but that there has been no interest from any parties in reinstating care/nursing home use in the meantime and that there is spare capacity in the existing care homes in Aberdeen City, therefore the 'loss' of the existing facility has been adequately justified and the proposals are not contrary to the intentions of Policy WB4.

Policy CF1 (Existing Community Sites and Facilities) of the ALDP states:

This policy applies to both land zoned as CF1 and to health, education and other community facilities located within other Local Development Plan zonings. The following existing uses shall be used primarily for that use and/ or related purposes;

Healthcare sites;

Nursery, primary, secondary and special school land and properties;
Further education and research institute sites;
Community buildings such as libraries, community halls, and recreational centres

Where land or buildings become surplus to current or anticipated future requirements, alternative uses which are compatible with adjoining uses and any remaining community uses, will be permitted in principle.

Specialist care facilities are not specifically defined as comprising 'Existing Community Sites and Facilities' either within Policy CF1 or in the supporting text within the ALDP. As such, it is considered that the redevelopment of the vacant nursing home building would not be contrary to Policy CF1.

Housing on land not allocated for housing in the LDP

Policy 16 (Quality Homes) of NPF4 states:

f) Development proposals for new homes on land not allocated for housing in the LDP will only be supported in limited circumstances where:

i. the proposal is supported by an agreed timescale for build-out; and
ii. the proposal is otherwise consistent with the plan spatial strategy and other relevant policies including local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods;
iii. and either: ·

delivery of sites is happening earlier than identified in the deliverable housing land pipeline. This will be determined by reference to two consecutive years of the Housing Land Audit evidencing substantial delivery earlier than pipeline timescales and that general trend being sustained; or
the proposal is consistent with policy on rural homes; or
the proposal is for smaller scale opportunities within an existing settlement boundary; or
the proposal is for the delivery of less than 50 affordable homes as part of a local authority supported affordable housing plan.

In relation to criterion (i), the applicant has advised that, should planning permission be granted, the intention is to commence development as soon as possible.

In relation to criterion (ii), as noted above the proposed development is not contrary to Policy B1 of the ALDP due to the site-specific context. The site lies in a relatively accessible location, within 20 minutes' walking distance of amenities including Kincorth Community Centre and nearby shops (including food retailers Tesco and Lidl on Wellington Road) and further local amenities in the Torry area. The site also lies within 400m of the nearest bus stop on Wellington Road which is served by regular bus services to the city centre. As such, whilst not comprising a site specifically allocated for housing in the ALDP, the application site is considered to be otherwise consistent with the plan spatial strategy and other relevant policies including local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods.

In relation to criterion (iii) of Policy 16, the proposal is both for a small-scale opportunity within an existing settlement boundary and would also deliver less than 50 affordable homes, included within the Aberdeen Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP).

The proposed development is therefore considered to be compliant with the requirements of Policy

16 of NPF4.

Re-use of brownfield land and empty buildings

Policy 9 (Brownfield, Vacant and Derelict Land and Empty Buildings) of NPF4 states:

'a) Development proposals that will result in the sustainable reuse of brownfield land including vacant and derelict land and buildings, whether permanent or temporary, will be supported. In determining whether the reuse is sustainable, the biodiversity value of brownfield land which has naturalised should be taken into account.' and

d) Development proposals for the reuse of existing buildings will be supported, taking into account their suitability for conversion to other uses. Given the need to conserve embodied energy, demolition will be regarded as the least preferred option.

Policy 12 (Zero Waste) of NPF4 states that development proposals will be supported where they reuse existing buildings and infrastructure.

The proposed development would re-use an existing building which has lain vacant since 2019. Although the façades of the existing building would be stripped, with new external walls, windows and doors installed, the works would not involve a wholesale demolition and rebuild approach, nor would any extensions to the existing building be required, therefore the proposals are considered to be inherently sustainable and generally compliant with the aims of Policies 9 and 12 of NPF4.

Impact on existing community facilities

Although the vacant nursing home is not considered to comprise an existing community site or facility, as per the definitions set out within Policy CF1 it is considered that the adjacent sports centre comprises a recreational centre (albeit a privately owned one, rather than a public facility) that could be considered to be afforded some protection by Policy CF1, which states:

'Where land or buildings become surplus to current or anticipated future requirements, alternative uses which are compatible with adjoining uses and any remaining community uses, will be permitted in principle.'

It is therefore necessary to ensure that the proposed redevelopment of the vacant nursing home site would be compatible with (not adversely affect the operations of) the adjacent sports centre and football ground.

The Planning Service considers that the main aspect of the proposed development which could affect the viability of the neighbouring sports centre and football ground is the noise-sensitive nature of the proposed residential use. With the sports centre and football ground hosting noise generating uses, such noise emissions could lead to noise complaints from future residents of the proposed development that could, in-turn, affect the operations and viability of the sports centre and football club.

The potential impact of noise emissions from the sports centre and football club on the amenity of the residents of the proposed development is set out in the 'Amenity for residents' section of the evaluation below but to summarise, the applicant has submitted a Noise Impact Assessment which concludes that subject to the implementation of various mitigation measures, the noise emissions from the sports centre and football club would not adversely affect the amenity of the residents of the proposed development. Therefore, it is considered that noise complaints that could affect the operations and viability of those uses are not likely to arise.

The sports centre and football club have also raised concerns in relation to the impact that the proposed use would have on car parking, with the potential for increased usage of the sports centre & football club car park by residents or visitors not attending the sports centre or football ground. An assessment of the implications of the proposed development on car parking is made in the 'Transport and Accessibility' section of the evaluation below but to summarise, additional parking spaces are proposed within the application site and the new use would likely have less onerous parking requirements than the existing authorised use of the site as a 60-bed nursing home (with associated staff and visitors). As such, the impact of the proposed use on car parking demand, and the associated potential for indiscriminate overspill parking, is not considered to be an issue when taking into consideration the existing authorised use of the site and the relatively small-scale nature of the development proposal (24 flats). The amount of car parking to be provided is also in excess of the guideline amount for affordable flats as set out in the Council's Interim Transport & Accessibility Aberdeen Planning Guidance.

There are no other factors related to the proposed development which the Planning Service considers would harm the viability or operations of the neighbouring sports centre and football club, therefore the redevelopment of the vacant nursing home building for mainstream residential use would not be contrary to Policy CF1.

Amenity for residents

Space standards, daylight receipt, outlook and privacy

Policy D2 (Amenity) of the ALDP sets out various criteria which new residential development should meet, in order to ensure that its occupants would benefit from a satisfactory quality of residential amenity. These criteria include:

Residential developments will also:

> *ensure that occupiers are afforded adequate levels of privacy;*
> *ensure minimum standards for internal floor space and private external amenity space in terms of quantity and quality;*
> *provide no less than 50% usable amenity space where it is necessary to provide car-parking within a private court. Underground and/or decked parking will be expected in higher density schemes;*
> *ensure minimal shading of external private and public spaces;*
> *ensure all residents have access to usable private/ semi-private open spaces and sitting-out areas provided by way of balconies, terraces, private or communal gardens;*
> *have a private face to an enclosed garden or court to ensure a sense of safety and enclosure.*

In terms of privacy, all of the ground floor level flats would be dual aspect and privacy buffer planting strips would be placed in front of all 'front' elevation windows onto communally accessible areas, in order to maximise privacy for occupants, whilst all ground floor units would also have access to, and overlook, their own private garden areas to the rear. None of the flats would be overlooked from any neighbouring properties, including the adjacent sports centre, as a 2.2m high acoustic barrier timber fence to the eastern boundary would prevent any overlooking into windows and garden areas from the sports centre car park.

The Council's Interim Aberdeen Planning Guidance (APG) on Space Standards generally seeks a minimum internal floor area of 52sqm for a one-bedroom dwelling. However, the APG also notes

that reusing and converting existing building stock is encouraged, as a more sustainable approach than demolition and rebuild, and advises that the Council may need to take a flexible approach to space standards due to the often constrained nature of converting existing buildings. The ground floor flats would all meet the minimum space standard expected by the APG, with unit sizes ranging between 57sqm and 72sqm. On the first floor level however, the majority of the flats would be smaller than the guideline minimum, with most of the flats ranging between 45sqm and 49sqm in size. Albeit lower than the guideline minimum floor size of 52sqm, the first floor level flats would not be significantly smaller than the guideline minimum and their size is dictated, to an extent, by the existing floorplates and position of stairwells in the building. Given the sustainable re-use of the existing building, the relatively minor deficit in internal floor areas for the majority of the first floor level flats is considered to be acceptable.

Whilst the ground floor flats would all benefit from a dual aspect outlook, all of the flats at first floor level would have a single-aspect outlook. Whilst desirable for all residential units to be dual aspect, the single aspect layout at first floor level is largely dictated by the existing floorplates and the position of stairwells. The provision of access to multiple stairwells for all first floor flats for escape purposes, combined with the limited width of the building, necessitates a single-aspect layout, with a communal corridor running along one side of each of the three wings. Whilst single-aspect, the first floor level layout has been designed to maximise the amenity of the occupants, with flats only facing either south or west (not north), thus they would all receive direct sunlight at varying times of the day.

The outlook of all the flats would also be acceptable, with a mix of dual aspect flats at ground floor level, with their own private gardens, and single aspect flats at first floor level with elevated outlooks over the front and rear curtilages. In addition to the private garden areas for the ground floor flats, there would also be a communal garden area of a reasonable size within the sheltered rear curtilage which could be used by all residents for sitting out. All of the flats would either have their own private access door or they would be accessed via the communal main entrance, lobby and stairwell. Both the front and rear curtilages would be overlooked by windows of flats and communal hallways, thus ensuring an adequate sense of safety and enclosure.

It is therefore considered that, on balance, the occupants of the proposed flats would benefit from a satisfactory level of amenity and the proposals are thus considered to be acceptable and generally in accordance with the criteria set out in Policy D2 of the ALDP and the associated interim APG.

Open Space

Policy NE2 (Green and Blue Infrastructure) notes that biodiverse, useable and appropriate open space will be required in new developments, including on brownfield sites, although the potentially constrained nature of brownfield sites will be taken into consideration if it is not possible to meet the on-site open space standards set out in the Council's interim Aberdeen Planning Guidance on Open Space and Green Infrastructure. The Open Space and Green Infrastructure interim APG seeks a minimum of 2.8 hectares of open space per 1,000 people in new residential developments. With 24 one-bedroom flats proposed, the number of people estimated to be likely to live in the development would be 31 (24 x 1.3), thus equating to an open space requirement of 868sqm of open space. The useable area of open space to the rear of the building would be approximately 900sqm in size, with further unusable areas of tree and shrub planting also to be provided within the development. The proposed development would thus provide sufficient useable open space, in accordance with Policy NE2 of the ALDP and the associated interim APG. The site is also within walking distance of a large area of public open space in the nearby Tullos Park on Abbotswell Road, close to the River Dee.

Noise

Policy 23 (Health and Safety), paragraph (e) of NPF4 and Policy WB3 (Noise) of the ALDP both seek to ensure that noise sensitive developments, such as new housing, would be adequately protected from noise emissions generated by neighbouring noisy uses, with paragraph (e) of Policy 23 noting that the 'agent of change' principle applies to noise sensitive development. The adjacent sports centre and football club are operational for large parts of the day, seven days a week, (5.45am to 10pm, Monday to Thursday, with similar albeit slightly reduced hours Friday to Sunday - according to the sports centre's website) and the nature of the various uses of the facility (including gym classes with amplified music, indoor sports, outdoor football practice and competitive matches) is such that there is a level of noise emissions from the site that could be harmful to the amenity of the future occupants of the proposed residential development. A Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) was submitted and its findings demonstrate that, without mitigation, some of the properties in the new development (those with windows facing towards the sports centre) would suffer an adverse amenity impact as a result of noise emissions from the adjacent sports facility.

However, the NIA recommends that, subject to the implementation of various mitigation measures, including: the installation of a 2.2m high close-boarded timber acoustic fence along the mutual boundary between the application site and sports centre, and new external wall construction and window specifications in the proposed conversion to meet minimum sound reduction criteria, any noise emitted from the sports facility would be sufficiently reduced at the nearest new residential properties such that they would not be adversely affected to any significant degree. The Council's Environmental Health Service have reviewed, and accept, the findings of the applicant's NIA. A condition is attached requiring all of the noise mitigation measures to be implemented prior to the occupation of any units.

In addition to the aforementioned noise mitigation measures, the building's internal layout has also been designed to minimise any noise disturbance from the adjacent sports centre and football stadium, with no first floor flats proposed to have any outlook or windows on the building's eastern elevation, whilst the ground floor level flats with windows on the eastern elevation would be set on lower ground than the sports centre, and would thus be afforded a level of noise protection by the acoustic fencing to be installed along the raised mutual boundary. The site is bound to the northwest by the River Dee and to the south-west by a tree belt, with housing beyond, therefore no adverse noise emissions are expected from those directions. Whilst there are industrial units situated in relatively close proximity to the east of the site (c. 45m from building to building), the buildings face the opposite direction to the application site (south-east) and with no openings on the side or rear walls of the nearest industrial building, no significant noise emissions are anticipated from that direction.

The Planning Service is therefore satisfied that, subject to the implementation of the mitigation measures recommended in the NIA via condition, the proposed residential flats would all benefit from a satisfactory level of amenity in terms of protection from external sources of noise, in accordance with the requirements of Policies 23 of NPF4 and WB3 of the ALDP.

Summary

The Planning Service considers that, taking into consideration the benefits and constraints of re-using and converting the existing building, as opposed to a less sustainable demolition and rebuild approach, all of the proposed flats would benefit from a satisfactory quality of residential amenity, in accordance with the requirements of Policies D2, NE2 and WB3 of the ALDP, as well as Policy 23 of NPF4.

Design Quality and Placemaking

Policy 14 (Design, quality and place) of NPF4 requires development proposals to be designed to improve the quality of an area whether in urban or rural locations and regardless of scale. Policy 14 of NPF4 and Policy D1 (Quality Placemaking) of the ALDP require all new development to comply with the six qualities of successful places. The qualities of successful placemaking differ slightly between NPF4 and the ALDP, therefore as the ALDP was adopted more recently, it takes precedence in the event of any difference in policy between the two documents. The proposed development can therefore be assessed against each of the six qualities of successful placemaking as defined in Policy D1 of the ALDP as follows:

Distinctive

The proposed development would retain and re-use the existing building, with a modern wall cladding system to be applied to enhance the building's appearance. The absence of any new-build elements would ensure that the development would not have any adverse impacts on the streetscape or wider cityscape, including on key views along the River Dee. Most existing trees within the site would be retained and supplemented with new tree planting and soft landscaping, proportionate to the scale and nature of the development.

Welcoming

The building would incorporate new windows and doors, and it would have attractive and clearly defined entrances, thus giving the building an appropriate frontage and providing legible wayfinding throughout the site.

Safe and pleasant

The internal layout of the building has been designed to ensure that all public areas would be sufficiently overlooked, thus maximising natural surveillance and active frontages at ground floor level, and minimising opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour. Private gardens would be provided for all ground floor flats and all residents would have access to a large and sheltered communal lawn area to the rear. The new boundary treatments would all be of a domestic scale and appearance, such that they would not detract from the character or visual amenity of the area.

Easy to move around

It is acknowledged in the following sections of the evaluation that the unadopted access road serving the site from Abbotswell Road does not meet current guidelines for pedestrian footway width and segregation from the road carriageway, nor is there a satisfactory means of safe pedestrian crossing over the road between the painted pedestrian walkway and the entrance to the application site. However, and subject to an acceptable scheme being granted permission separately and subsequently implemented, the Roads Development Management team considers that an indicatively proposed pedestrian bridge link between the site and the neighbouring residential development to the south-west, over the unnamed burn, would provide a satisfactory safe means of pedestrian access between the site and Abbotswell Road. The proposed development itself would be easy to move around, with external pedestrian footpaths and access to both private and communal garden areas.

Adaptable

The proposed development has been designed so that the ground floor units would all be wheelchair accessible, if required.

Resource efficient

The proposed development would convert and re-use an existing building and brownfield site to provide new affordable housing in a sustainable and accessible location, within walking, wheeling and cycling distance of public transport and various other amenities such as shops, open space and employment land.

To summarise, the proposed development would re-purpose an existing vacant building to provide affordable housing in a sustainable and accessible location. The existing building is not of any particular architectural merit and the refurbishment and recladding of the building would represent a visual enhancement to the localised streetscape, without harming any key views in the wider surrounding area. The development is considered to be generally compatible with the six qualities of successful placemaking, as set out in Policy D1 of the ALDP, and it would improve the quality of the area, in accordance with Policy 14 of NPF4.

20-minute neighbourhoods

Policy 15 (Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods) of NPF4 requires development proposals to contribute to local living including, where relevant to 20-minute neighbourhoods. Facilities and amenities outlined in Policy 15 as contributing towards successful 20-minute neighbourhoods include: public transport and safe walking, wheeling and cycling networks, employment, shopping, health facilities, schools, open space and affordable housing.

The application site lies within 400m of bus stops on Wellington Road which serve the city centre. Within 20 minutes' walking distance of the application site there are shops (including two food retailers: Tesco and Lidl), cafés, Torry Medical Practice and Tullos Park, amongst other facilities and amenities. It is thus considered that the proposed development would be sufficiently connected to, and within relatively easy reach of, various facilities and amenities, in accordance with the aims of Policy 15 of NPF4.

Transport & Accessibility

Policies 13 (Sustainable Transport) of NPF4 and T2 (Sustainable Transport) of the ALDP require developments to demonstrate that sufficient measures have been taken to minimise traffic generated and to maximise opportunities for sustainable and active travel. Policy T3 (Parking) states that low and zero car developments will be supported in suitable locations where there is adequate access to sustainable and active travel. Where this is not possible, development shall be required to comply with the parking standards set out in Aberdeen Planning Guidance: Transport and Accessibility.

Public transport, pedestrian safety and accessibility

The application site lies approximately 140m from Abbotswell Road and 275m walking distance from Wellington Road, where there are bus stops served by regular bus services to and from the city centre and the south of the city. The site is accessed from Abbotswell Road via an unadopted private road which also serves the adjacent sports centre and football ground. The road does not meet current guidelines for adopted road carriageway and pavement widths however, with the pedestrian walkway comprising a narrow strip painted along the north-eastern edge of the carriageway. Although the road is not particularly heavily trafficked, it does see a reasonable volume of traffic throughout the day due to the nature and opening hours of the sports centre and

Spain Park. As such and combined with the lack of an appropriate means of pedestrian crossing over the road at the entrance to the application site, the Council's Roads Development Management (RDM) team consider that the site would not be appropriately and safely accessible to and from Abbotswell Road on foot by future residents if only using the existing pedestrian access. Following the concerns raised by the RDM team, the applicant submitted indicative proposals to demonstrate how a new pedestrian bridge link could be installed over the burn adjacent to the entrance to the application site, linking it with the existing residential development (owned and operated by Hillcrest Homes) to the south. As the indicatively proposed bridge link and associated works to the car park area of the neighbouring development to the south fall outwith the current application site boundary, those works would require a separate planning permission. The RDM team are satisfied that, subject to further details of the indicative bridge link as part of a separate application and its subsequent installation if approved, the bridge would enable a satisfactory and safe means of pedestrian access (including for disabled users) to the application site from Abbotswell Road. The Planning Service is therefore satisfied that, subject to a 'Grampian' condition prohibiting the occupation of the proposed development until such time as an appropriate bridge link (or such other safe means of pedestrian access as may be deemed acceptable) has been formed, the development would be capable of being accessed safely by walking, wheeling and cycling. 100% secure and covered cycle parking would be provided within the building at ground floor level.

Therefore, as the site lies within walking distance of public transport and the wider adopted pedestrian footpath networks, it would be sufficiently accessible by sustainable and active modes of transport, in accordance with Policies 13 of NPF4 and T2 of the ALDP.

Car Parking

The application site lies in an Outer City Area, as defined in the Council's Transport & Accessibility Interim Aberdeen Planning Guidance (Interim Transport & Accessibility APG). Although the site lies within walking distance of public transport services and various facilities and amenities, it is acknowledged that residents of the proposed development may be likely to own cars and the provision of dedicated off-street parking is thus desirable. The Interim Transport & Accessibility APG incorporates a guideline figure of 0.8 car parking spaces per unit for housing association / social rented housing developments in the Outer City. The car parking requirement for the 24 housing association flats therefore equates to 20 spaces (rounded up from 19.2). The proposed development would incorporate 24 car parking spaces, including two disabled bays. As such there would be a slight overprovision as per the Interim APG guidance but the small amount of additional spaces is minimal and would facilitate one space per unit.

At present there are 20 car parking spaces within the application site and although the building has lain vacant for several years its authorised use is as a nursing home. The vacant nursing home is understood to incorporate approximately 60 bed spaces and shortly before it closed in 2019, the nursing home had 37 residents and 55 permanent staff. The Planning Service is therefore satisfied that not only does the site lie within walking distance of public transport services and various other facilities and amenities, but that the proposed development would incorporate sufficient car parking for the number of flats proposed, in excess of the guideline requirements of the Interim Transport & Accessibility APG, and also the amount of parking required for 24 affordable flats is likely to be less (potentially significantly so) than the authorised use of the building as a nursing home, which could be resumed / reinstated without permission. It is thus considered that sufficient car parking would be provided for the proposed development and that there would not likely be any significant impacts on parking supply for neighbouring uses, particularly the adjacent sports centre and football ground. The proposals are therefore compliant with Policy T3 (Parking) of the ALDP.

Planning Obligations

Policy 18 (Infrastructure First) of NPF4 and Policy I1 (Infrastructure Delivery and Planning Obligations) of the ALDP both require any deficiencies in local public facilities or infrastructure that would arise as a result of a proposed new development to be addressed via the payment of financial contributions, where necessary. The Council's Developer Obligations team has reviewed the proposals in line with the Council's Planning Obligations Interim Supplementary Guidance and in consultation with various stakeholders, and they advise that financial contributions are required in order to offset the impact of the proposed development on local healthcare facilities (Torry Medical Practice) and the core path network (Core Path 85: Tullos Park and Inverdee Pitches). The applicant is agreeable to paying the required contributions, which would be secured via a Section 75 legal agreement, should Committee resolve to approve the application.

In terms of Education, the application site is within the catchment areas for Kirkhill Primary School and Lochside Academy. Lochside Academy has sufficient capacity to accommodate additional pupils and although Kirkhill Primary School is expected to exceed its working capacity in the near future, on the basis that the proposed development would comprise 100% 1-bed units, no new pupils are expected to be generated, therefore no education contribution is sought.

As a landscaped garden and communal external amenity space would be provided in the development, no off-site open space mitigation or contribution is required and no contributions are required towards Community Facilities or Sports & Recreation.

Therefore, subject to the conclusion of a legal agreement to secure the aforementioned healthcare facilities and core path contributions, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in accordance with the requirements of Policies 18 of NPF4 and I1 of the ALDP.

Affordable Housing

Policy 16 (Quality Homes) of NPF4 and Policy H5 (Affordable Housing) of the ALDP require 25% of all housing developments of 5 or more units to be provided as affordable housing. The proposed development would comprise 100% affordable housing (social housing operated by a Registered Social Landlord - Hillcrest). The proposal has been discussed with the Council's Housing Team and is in the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP), therefore the proposed development would significantly exceed the minimum 25% affordable housing requirement as set out in Policies 16 and H5. Due to the housing mix of the development being entirely 1-bed flats, and thus not fully in accordance with the requirements of Policy H3 (Housing Mix) of the ALDP (see below), all of the units shall be secured as affordable housing in perpetuity, via the Section 75 legal agreement.

Density

Policy H3 (Density) of the ALDP states that: *'The Council will seek an appropriate net density of development on all housing allocations and windfall sites. Net dwelling density includes those areas which will be developed for housing and directly associated uses, including access roads within the site, garden ground and incidental open space.'*

Policy H3 doesn't specify a minimum density for residential developments on sites under one hectare in size, but notes that sites over one hectare in size should have a minimum density of 50 dwellings per hectare, with higher densities expected within the city centre, on public transport nodes and on brownfield sites.

The site is approximately 5,000sqm in size and with 24 flats proposed, that equates to a density of

approximately 48 dwellings per hectare. Such a density is considered to be compatible with the Policy H3 minimum density sought for larger sites and would represent the efficient and sustainable re-use of the existing building on an accessible brownfield site. Given the development would comprise 100% 1-bed flats, it would not be possible to increase the density further without new-build elements. The proposals are thus considered to be of a satisfactory density considering the context of the site and the surrounding area, in accordance with Policy H3.

Housing Mix

Policy 16 (Quality Homes) of NPF states:

c) Development proposals for new homes that improve affordability and choice by being adaptable to changing and diverse needs, and which address identified gaps in provision, will be supported. This could include:

i. self-provided homes;
ii. accessible, adaptable and wheelchair accessible homes;
iii. build to rent;
iv. affordable homes;
v. a range of size of homes such as those for larger families;
vi. homes for older people, including supported accommodation, care homes and sheltered housing;
vii. homes for people undertaking further and higher education; and
viii. homes for other specialist groups such as service personnel.

Policy H4 (Housing Mix and Need) states:

'An appropriate housing mix is expected in housing developments to reflect the diverse housing need in the area; this includes older people and disabled people. Where possible, housing units should demonstrate a design with accessibility and future adaptability in mind.

For smaller developments (fewer than 50 units), a suitable mix of dwelling types and tenure will be provided in the interests of placemaking and local housing need and demand.'

Although the flats would all be 1-bed units, they would include a large number (50%) of wheelchair accessible units and the proposed development would comprise 100% affordable flats, to be operated by Registered Social Landlord, Hillcrest. The Council's Housing Strategy team have advised that the proposed development is included within the Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) and that there is demand for 1-bed flats in the city, with two and three-bed flats in low demand for social rent. Therefore, based on the current need for 1-bed social-rented flats in the city, the lack of a mix of dwelling types and tenure for the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in the instance, in accordance with Policy 16 of NPF4 and despite some minor conflict with the aims of Policy H4 of the ALDP.

Natural Heritage

Policy 4 (Natural Places) of NPF4 and Policy NE3 (Our Natural Heritage) of the ALDP both require new developments which would be likely to have a significant effect on an existing European site (Special Area of Conservation - SAC) to be subject to an "appropriate assessment" in order to identify the implications of the development for the conservation objectives of the SAC.

The River Dee is a European Special Area of Conservation (River Dee SAC) and it flows west to east adjacent to the north-western boundary of the application site, with a small unnamed burn, a

tributary to the Dee, running along the southern and western edges of the site. As such, a Habitat Regulations Appraisal screening exercise was undertaken in order to ascertain the potential impacts of the proposed development on the qualifying features of the River Dee (salmon, otter and freshwater pearl mussel). The HRA screening identified that as the application site is a brownfield site and the proposed development would comprise the refurbishment and conversion of the existing building, with no new-build elements, it would not be likely to have any significant effects on the qualifying features of the River Dee SAC. As such, no Appropriate Assessment was required. Any potential impacts of the indicatively proposed pedestrian bridge link would be assessed separately as part of any future planning application for the bridge.

Therefore, given the brownfield nature of the site, no protected species are considered likely to be present on the application site and the proposals are therefore compliant with Policies 4 and NE3.

Trees

Policy 6 (Forestry, Woodland and Trees) of NPF4 states that development proposals will not be supported where they will result in:

i) any loss of ancient woodlands, ancient or veteran trees, or adverse impact on their ecological condition; and
ii) adverse impacts on native woodlands, hedgerows and individual trees of high biodiversity value, or identified for protection in the Forestry and Woodland Strategy.

Policy NE5 (Trees and Woodland) of the ALDP states that: *'development should not result in the loss of, or damage to, trees and woodlands… Where tree removal takes place or is necessary for good arboricultural reasons, replacement planting will be required to ensure an overall net gain in tree cover. Development that does not achieve this will not be supported.'*

The site is not covered by a Tree Protection Order but nevertheless, it is preferable to retain as many existing trees within and bordering the site as possible, as per the aims of Policies 6 and NE5. A total of 10 trees are proposed to be felled. However, all of the trees are noted in the applicant's Tree Survey as being semi-mature, with two category 'B' trees (moderate quality and value), four category 'C' trees (low quality and value) and four category 'U' trees (any existing value would be lost within 10 years, therefore could be removed for arboricultural management reasons).

The removal of the existing trees is required either in order to facilitate the development (by removing blockages to internal daylight receipt and facilitating the enlargement of the existing carpark), or because some of the existing trees are of a low quality and value. As part of the development it is proposed to plant ten new replacement trees (two Cherry, three Whitebeam, four Crab Apple and one Holly Oak) in the rear curtilage, adjacent to the unnamed burn that runs along the western edge of the site. The requirement to remove the existing trees is justified and considered to be acceptable on the basis of the proposed indicative replacement planting scheme, further details of which can be secured by condition. Therefore the Planning Service is satisfied that, subject to the submission of a detailed soft landscaping scheme, including the planting of additional trees within the site, the proposals would be acceptable in accordance with Policies 6 and NE5.

The area of proposed expansion of the existing car park to the front of the building would result in new development taking place within portions of the root protection areas of some trees along the southern edge of the site, adjacent to the unnamed burn. This tree belt forms an important localised landscape feature which helps to visually soften and break-up the streetscape of the surrounding area which is otherwise relatively built-up and hard-landscaped. The applicant has

provided details of a ‘no-dig’ construction method for the partial excavation of the existing area of topsoil that would be required in order to facilitate the expansion of the car park. Further, precise details of the construction works are required by condition, in order to ensure that there would not be any significant adverse impacts to the roots of the adjacent trees which could harm their longevity, either in terms of direct damage or compaction. The use of a geo-grid system with porous paviours should enable the car park area to be enlarged without causing significant harm to the existing trees. Therefore, subject to approval of further details secured via condition, the proposals are acceptable in accordance with Policies 6 and NE5.

Landscaping

Policy D5 (Landscape Design) of the ALDP requires development proposals to be designed with an effective, functional and attractive landscape framework supported by clear design objectives, with the level of detail appropriate to the scale of development.

The vast majority of the existing established tree belt that runs along the southern and west edges of the site would be retained and whilst some existing trees would require to be felled, they are not generally of any significant quality or value. The proposed development would also incorporate new shrub and meadow-mix flower planting to both the front of the building and within privacy buffer shrub margins in front of ground-floor level front-elevation windows. Given the relatively constrained, brownfield nature of the site, and the need for useable areas of communal open space, it is not possible to incorporate a significant amount of new landscaping but nevertheless, the Planning Service is satisfied that, subject to further details in a detailed soft landscaping scheme via condition, the development could be appropriately landscaped, in accordance with the requirements of Policy D5 of the ALDP.

Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises, Climate mitigation and Biodiversity

Policy 1 (Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises) of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) requires significant weight to be given to the global climate and nature crises in the consideration of all development proposals. Policy 2 (Climate mitigation and adaptation) requires development proposals to be designed and sited to minimise lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions as far as possible, and to adapt to current and future risks from climate change.

The proposed development is relatively small-scale such that it would not, in itself, make any significant direct difference to the global climate and nature crises, nor to climate mitigation and adaptation. However, the proposed development would repurpose an existing building in an accessible location within the existing Aberdeen settlement boundary for a reasonable number of affordable residential flats, which would make a contribution towards addressing housing need in the city and reducing future pressure on the release of further greenfield land elsewhere within the city for housing in less sustainable locations. Furthermore, the existing building’s walls and roof would be upgraded to meet current building regulations in terms of energy efficiency and it is therefore considered that the development would be inherently sustainable and could indirectly help to tackle the climate crisis and present opportunities to minimise greenhouse gas emissions and the proposals are therefore compliant with Policies 1 and 2 of NPF4.

Policy 3 (Biodiversity) of NPF4 requires proposals for local development *‘to include appropriate measures to conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity, in accordance with national and local guidance. Measures should be proportionate to the nature and scale of development.’* The proposed works predominantly relate to the conversion of the existing building but as part of the proposals, new private garden ground areas would be formed, along with a communal garden area within the rear curtilage. Although some trees would be felled to facilitate the development, they would be replaced with new trees in the rear curtilage, along with associated hedge and

shrub planting. The proposals would thus likely provide a minor biodiversity gain for the site compared to the existing situation and it is therefore considered that the proposals are acceptable in accordance with Policy 3 of NPF4.

Flooding and drainage

Policy 22 (Flood Risk and Water Management) of NPF4 and Policy NE4 (Our Water Environment) of the ALDP both require new development to not be at risk of flooding and be adequately drained, thereby not increasing the risk of flooding to any neighbouring properties. The policies also require new developments to connect to the public sewer for foul drainage and for surface water to be drained sustainably on-site, without connecting into the public combined sewer network.

The applicant has submitted a Drainage Impact Assessment document which advises that the proposed development would be drained as at present, with additional car parking areas to be surfaced with porous paviours that would allow an attenuated discharge rate of surface water into the existing surface water sewer. The existing building drainage would remain in place, therefore the development would be adequately drained and would not pose a floor risk to any neighbouring properties. Scottish Water have confirmed to the applicant that there is sufficient capacity in both the Invercannie Water Treatment Works and the Nigg Waste Water Treatment Works to service the proposed development.

Although bordering the River Dee, the application site sits on higher ground and is not at risk of flooding from the Dee. The small, unnamed burn which runs along the southern and western edges of the site is occasionally prone to some flooding but as with the Dee, the application site lies on higher ground and is not affected by any flooding of the burn. The applicant has submitted a Flood Risk Assessment which concludes that the application site is not at risk of flooding, nor would the proposed development heighten the risk of flooding to either the application site or any neighbouring properties. The findings of the applicants Drainage Impact and Flood Risk Assessments are accepted by the Council's Flooding team.

Subject to a condition requiring further details of the proposed underground drainage network to attenuate and dispose of surface water falling on new areas of hardstanding within the site, it is considered that the proposed development would not be at risk of flooding and would be adequately drained, ensuring no increased risk of flooding to any neighbouring uses – all in accordance with Policy 22 of NPF4 and NE4 of the ALDP.

Waste Management

Policies 12 (Zero Waste) of NPF4 and R5 (Waste Management Requirements for New Development) of the ALDP require all new developments to have sufficient space for the storage of general waste, recyclable materials and compostable wastes where appropriate.

The Council's Waste Strategy team have advised that the development would require to accommodate 2 x general waste bins, 2 x general waste bins (all 1280l) and one food waste container. A bin store large enough to accommodate the aforementioned bins is proposed to be erected towards the front of the site and a swept path analysis drawing demonstrates that a bin lorry would be able to enter and exit the site in a forward gear. As such, the proposals are compliant with Policies 12 and R5.

Low & Zero Carbon buildings, and water efficiency

Policy 19 (Heat and Cooling) of NPF4 states:

(f) Development proposals for buildings that will be occupied by people will be supported where they are designed to promote sustainable temperature management, for example by prioritising natural or passive solutions such as siting, orientation, and materials.

The proposed development would see dual aspect flats created on the ground floor, all of which would have appropriate sustainable temperature management by virtue of their orientation and ability to naturally cross ventilate. The first-floor level flats, whilst single aspect, would all face either to the south-east or south-west and as such, they would all receive direct sunlight at some point during the day. Due to their orientation, they would benefit from passive solar gain, which would help to reduce heating demand and associated lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions. The proposals are thus considered to be compliant with the requirements of Policy 19 of NPF4.

Policy R6 (Low and Zero Carbon Buildings and Water Efficiency) of the ALDP requires new buildings to demonstrate that a proportion of the carbon emissions reduction target set by Scottish Building Standards is met through the installation and operation of low and zero carbon generating technologies and to reduce pressure on water abstraction from the River Dee through the incorporation of water saving technologies. The low & zero carbon and water efficiency technologies are not applicable to changes of use or the conversion of existing buildings however, thus the proposed development is acceptable, in accordance with Policy R6.

Policy R8 (Heat Networks) of the ALDP requires developments (including conversions exceeding 1,000sqm floorspace) within the city centre and/or within an identified heat network zone to connect to an existing heat network provide an alternative form of on-site sustainable heating or cooling. Although the building exceeds 1,000sqm in floor area, the site does not lie within the city centre and at the time of writing no Aberdeen Planning Guidance has yet been produced in relation to Heat Networks, therefore Policy R8 is not applicable to the proposed development.

Digital Infrastructure

Policy CI1 (Digital Infrastructure) of the ALDP requires all new residential and commercial development to have access to modern, up-to-date high-speed communications infrastructure. The application site lies in an area of the city where high-speed broadband is known to be readily available. A condition is attached requiring all of the flats to have the ability to access to high-speed internet upon occupation, thus the proposals are acceptable in accordance with Policy CI1.

Suicide Risk

Policy 23 (Health and Safety), paragraph (f) of NPF4 requires development proposals to be designed to take into account suicide risk. The proposed development would not incorporate any particular features that would increase the risk of suicide, being a low-rise residential development with appropriate associated landscaping and boundary treatments. The proposals are thus considered to be generally acceptable and in accordance with Policy 23(f) of NPF4.

Healthy Developments

Policy 23 of NPF4 states that development proposals that will have positive effects on health will be supported, whilst Policy WB1 (Healthy Developments) of the ALDP states that: '*Developments are required to provide healthy environments, reduce environmental stresses, facilitate physical activity and promote physical and mental wellbeing.'*

The proposed development would create 100% affordable housing, the ground floor flats of which would each have access to their own private garden areas, whilst all flats would also have access to the large, sheltered communal garden area to the rear of the building. The development would

have an outlook onto an established tree belt to the south and west, and over the River Dee to the north-west, and the natural setting of the expansive Tullos Park would be short distance away by foot. The Banks o' Dee sports facility adjacent to the site could also be easily utilised and accessed by occupants of the proposed flats for physical activity and sports participation, should they wish. The proposals are thus considered to be generally compliant with the requirements of Policy 23 of NPF4 and Policy WB1 of the ALDP.

Matters raised in representations

The majority of the matters raised in representations received from third parties are addressed in the foregoing evaluation. The remaining matters not addressed above, are each addressed, in turn, as follows:

Improper development of land zoned for business and industry

The proposed development is contrary to Policy B1 (Business and Industrial Land) of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP) as residential use would be out of character with the area and conflict with the adjacent Banks o' Dee sports facility.

Response: As noted above, the proposed development is not contrary to the requirements of Policy B1 of the ALDP, which does not specifically exclude residential development, nor any other form of development, provided existing Class 4, 5 and 6 uses would neither be lost or adversely affected by proposed development. The adjacent Banks o' Dee sports facility does not incorporate any Class 4, 5 or 6 uses, therefore Policy B1 is not applicable in terms of the impact of the proposed development on its operations.

Traffic generation, road and pedestrian safety

The access road to the site from Abbotswell Road is already at capacity and would be insufficient as a pedestrian connection to a residential development, particularly given its narrow width and already heavy use by the adjacent sports facility. The proposed development would thus increase traffic above the capacity of the access road and result in road and pedestrian safety issues

Response: Subject to the granting of a separate permission for the indicatively proposed pedestrian bridge link, residents would be able to use the bridge link to the neighbouring residential development, which would then provide a safe pedestrian route to Abbotswell Road and the surrounding adopted footpath network. The amount of vehicle trips generated by the proposed development is considered likely to be broadly similar to that of the authorised nursing home use for the site, therefore it is considered that there would not likely be any significant impacts on traffic and road safety.

Impact on character of the area

The proposed development would adversely affect the character of the area and would not meet the six qualities of successful places – contrary to Policy 14 (Design Quality and Place) of NPF4 and Policy D1 (Quality Placemaking) of the ALDP.

Response: The character of the surrounding area is mixed, with a mix of uses, building sizes and designs. The proposed works would enhance the localised visual amenity of the area and the proposed new use would not affect the character of the area. The proposals are considered to be compliant with the six qualities of successful places for the reasons set out in the foregoing evaluation.

Security, health and safety

The proposed development would cause security issues and would have a negative impact on the wellbeing of young people and children using the adjacent sports facility.

Response: The Planning Service does not consider that the proposed development would cause security issues or have a negative impact on the wellbeing of any persons, including children. The proposed development would reoccupy a long-term vacant building that is currently boarded up and has the potential to attract anti-social behaviour in its current form. The conversion of the building for residential use would reintroduce natural surveillance which would be a deterrent to anti-social behaviour.

Noise Impact Assessment limitations

The applicant's Noise Impact Assessment does not include football (Banks o' Dee) matchdays and with the club having in excess of 7 teams in the Scottish Highland League, noise from the stadium will adversely affect residents.

Response: The applicant's Noise Impact Assessment includes noise data taken in conjunction with input from the adjacent sports centre, with amplified music played in two studios and the gym simultaneously with all windows wide open for ventilation purposes, to give a 'worst case' scenario for noise from the sports centre.

Whilst the NIA does not include noise data taken from football matchdays, including Banks o' Dee who play competitive fixtures in the Highland League, the Planning Service considers that any such noise produced by football practice and fixtures would be unlikely to exceed the 'worst case' scenario of noise generated by amplified music and activity from the gym, sports hall and studios, whose windows and some doors face towards the application site. The football pitch is situated on the opposite side (north-east) of the Spain Park main stand and the sports centre building. Therefore the risk of noise leakage from the football pitch (and spectators) towards the application site is not considered to be significant.

Wheelchair access

There is nothing on the plans about wheelchair accessible homes and the current access road is unsuitable for wheelchair access.

Response: The ground floor flats have all been designed to be wheelchair accessible. Subject to the granting of a separate permission for the indicatively proposed pedestrian bridge link, residents with wheelchairs would be able to use the bridge link to the neighbouring residential development, which would then provide a safe pedestrian & wheelchair route to Abbotswell Road and the surrounding adopted footpath network.

Lack of consultation with neighbours

The lack of consultation with neighbours in the pre-application and planning process is rude and disrespectful

Response: The proposed development is a local, rather than a major development and there is no statutory requirement for applicants to either engage with neighbours during the

pre-application process, nor is there a requirement for pre-application consultation for local developments.

Maintenance of the communal access road

The communal access road has been maintained and improved at the expense of the sports facility and the owner of the former nursing home has not contributed in any way, nor entered into any dialogue in relation to the maintenance of the road.

Response: Land ownership and shared maintenance liabilities are not material planning considerations.

Impact on fundraising for the adjacent sports facility

The redevelopment of the application site for residential use would result in donors and sponsors of the adjacent sports facility withdrawing their financial support which is heavily relied upon for the maintenance and enhancement of the facility.

Response: Such matters are not material planning considerations.

Burden on permitted use

There is a burden on the use of the property as a nursing home which should be honoured by the Council.

Response: Title deed and similar burdens are not material planning considerations.

Fire risk of external cladding

Response: The alleged safety implications of the use of building materials and cladding are not material planning considerations and would instead be assessed by the Council's Building Standards team as part of any Building Warrant application.

Pedestrian bridge link to neighbouring residential site

Response: The pedestrian bridge link over the adjacent burn, to the neighbouring residential development, would be sited outwith the application site and would therefore require a separate planning permission. Its presence on the plans for the current application are therefore for indicative purposes only. The merits of the indicatively proposed bridge link would be assessed fully in any separate planning application and a Grampian condition attached to the current permission, if approved, would prevent the development from being occupied unless the bridge link is installed.

Pedestrian bridge – procedure

Response: The Planning Service is aware that the indicatively proposed pedestrian access bridge does not form part of the current application and will require a separate application. Condition 2 (Scheme for Safe Means of Pedestrian Access) prevents the development from being occupied until such time as an appropriate scheme for a safe means of pedestrian access to the site, agreed with the Planning Authority, has been implemented.

Pedestrian bridge – Land ownership

Response: Land ownership is not a material consideration and any disputes over ownership and access rights would be a matter between the various parties involved. A negative suspensive condition is attached (Condition 2).

Heads of Terms of Legal Agreement

Should the Planning Development Management Committee resolve to approve the application, a Section 75 legal agreement shall first require to be concluded in order to secure the aforementioned financial developer obligations towards healthcare facilities and core paths, as well as securing all of the flats as affordable housing in perpetuity.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve Conditionally & Legal Agreement

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

The proposed change of use of the vacant nursing home building to form affordable residential flats would not result in the loss of any existing business or industrial uses, nor would the development harm the operations of any nearby business or industrial uses, therefore the proposals are not contrary to the aims of Policy B1 (Business and Industrial Land) of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 (ALDP). Although authorised for use as a nursing home (Class 8), the existing building has lain vacant since 2019 without any viable interest in resuming the authorised nursing home use. Furthermore, there is spare capacity in existing nursing / care homes in Aberdeen City, thus the loss of the existing facility has been adequately justified, in accordance with Policy WB4 (Specialist Care Facilities) of the ALDP. The proposed development would not adversely affect the operations or viability of the neighbouring sports centre and football club, in accordance with Policy CF1 (Existing Community Sites and Facilities) of the ALDP.

The provision of affordable housing, on a sustainably accessible site, which is included in the Aberdeen Strategic Housing Investment Plan, is acceptable in accordance with Policy 16 (Quality Homes) of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and the sustainable re-use of a brownfield site, including a vacant building is compliant with the aims of Policies 9 (Brownfield, Vacant and Derelict Land and Empty Buildings) and 12 (Zero Waste) of NPF4.

A satisfactory level of amenity would, on balance, be afforded to the residents of the proposed development, in accordance with the requirements of Policy D2 (Amenity) of the ALDP and sufficient open space would be provided, in accordance with Policy NE2 (Green and Blue Infrastructure) of the ALDP. Subject to the implementation of mitigation measures, the residents of the development would not be significantly affected by any external sources of noise, in accordance with the requirements of Policy 23 (Health and Safety) of NPF4 and Policy WB3 (Noise) of the ALDP.

The development would be of an appropriate design quality for the application site context and would meet the six qualities of successful placemaking as set out in Policy 14 (Design, quality and place) of NPF4 and Policy D1 (Quality Placemaking) of the ALDP. The development would be in a sustainably accessible location, within walking and cycling distance of various amenities and facilities, in accordance with the aims of Policy 15 (Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods) of NPF4. Subject to the delivery of a safe means of pedestrian access to the site via condition, the site would be accessible via sustainable and active modes of transport, in accordance with Policies 13 (Sustainable Transport) of NPF4 and T2 (Sustainable Transport) of the ALDP. Sufficient car parking would be provided for the proposed use, in accordance with Policy T3

(Parking) of the ALDP.

The development would exceed the 25% affordable housing requirement as set out in Policy 16 (Quality Homes) and Policy H5 (Affordable Housing) of the ALDP and developer obligations shall be secured to offset the impact of the development on local healthcare facilities and the core path network, in accordance with Policies 18 (Infrastructure First) of NPF4 and I1 (Infrastructure Delivery and Planning Obligations) of the ALDP.

The proposed development is also generally compliant with all other relevant policies in NPF4 and the ALDP in relation to: density, housing mix, natural heritage, trees, landscaping, climate change, biodiversity, flooding & drainage, waste management, digital infrastructure, suicide risk and healthy developments.

CONDITIONS

(1) DURATION OF PERMISSION

The development to which this notice relates must be begun not later than the expiration of 3 years beginning with the date of this notice. If development has not begun at the expiration of the 3-year period, the planning permission lapses.

Reason - in accordance with section 58 (duration of planning permission) of the 1997 act.

(2) SCHEME FOR SAFE MEANS OF PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

The development hereby approved shall not be occupied unless a scheme for the safe means of pedestrian and wheelchair access to and from the site from Abbotswell Road has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Planning Authority and thereafter the approved scheme has been implemented in accordance with the agreed details, prior to the occupation of the development.

Reason: In order to ensure that the development can be accessed safely by walking and wheeling.

(3) NOISE MITIGATION

The development hereby approved shall not be occupied unless the critical noise mitigation measures set out in the ‘Mitigation’ section on Pages 17-20 of the approved Noise Impact Assessment (Couper Acoustics - Ref: 1029212314 – V1, Date: 8 June 2022) have been implemented in full.

Reason: In order to protect the residents of the development from external sources of noise and to protect the operations and viability of neighbouring commercial uses.

(3) EXTERNAL FINISHING MATERIALS

No development shall take place unless a scheme detailing all external finishing materials to the roof and walls of the development hereby approved has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the planning authority and thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the details so agreed.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

(4) SOFT LANDSCAPING AND TREE PLANTING

No works in connection with the development hereby approved shall take place unless a scheme of soft landscaping works has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

Details of the scheme shall include:

(i) Existing landscape features and vegetation to be retained;
(ii) The location of new trees, shrubs, hedges, grassed areas;
(iii) A schedule of planting to comprise species, plant sizes and proposed numbers and density;
(iv) An indication of existing trees, shrubs and hedges to be removed.
(v) A programme for the completion and subsequent maintenance of the proposed landscaping.

All soft landscaping proposals shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme and shall be completed no later than the planting season immediately following the commencement of the development or such other date as may be agreed in writing with the Planning Authority. Any planting which, within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development, in the opinion of the Planning Authority is dying, being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased, shall be replaced by plants of similar size and species to those originally required to be planted.

In addition, prior to the commencement of the implementation of the approved scheme, detailed proposals for a programme for the long term management and maintenance of all the approved landscaped and open space areas within the development shall be submitted for the further written approval of the Planning Authority. Thereafter, all management and maintenance of the landscaped and open space areas shall be implemented, in perpetuity, in accordance with the approved programme.

Reason: To ensure the implementation of a satisfactory scheme of landscaping which will help to integrate the proposed development into the local landscape in the interests of the visual amenity of the area and to ensure that the landscaping is managed and maintained in perpetuity.

(5) HARD LANDSCAPING MATERIALS

No works in connection with the development hereby approved shall take place unless a scheme of hard landscaping works, including the surface materials to be used for all roads, car parking areas, footpaths and other areas of hard landscaping, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Thereafter no flat shall be occupied unless the works have taken place in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: To ensure the use of satisfactory materials for the hard-landscaped aspects of the development.

(6) CAR PARKING

The development hereby approved shall not be occupied unless the car parking area has been laid out in accordance with the details shown on approved Bradley Craig Architects drawing D(0-)01 Revision H (Proposed Site Plan), or other such drawing as may be agreed in writing with the Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to ensure that sufficient car parking is provided for the development.

(7) BOUNDARIES

The development hereby approved shall not be occupied unless a detailed scheme of site and plot boundary enclosures (including all fences and walls) for the entire development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Thereafter the boundary treatments shall be installed in accordance with the agreed details prior to occupation.

Reason: in order to preserve the character and amenity of the area.

(8) ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POINTS

The development hereby approved shall not be occupied unless details of all electric vehicle charging points to be installed in the car parking area have been submitted to, agreed in writing with, the Planning Authority and the charge points have thereafter been installed in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: In order to ensure that sufficient electric vehicle charging points would be provided, thus encouraging the use of sustainably powered vehicles.

(9) TREE PROTECTION

No development in relation to the extension of the car park shall take place unless a detailed cross-section and construction methodology for the areas of the extended car parking area that would be formed within the root protection areas of trees to be retained, as shown on the approved Tree Survey Site Plan drawing (Struan Dalgleish Arboriculture – March 2023 - Appendix 1), has been submitted to and agreed in writing with the Planning Authority. Thereafter the works shall not take place other than in accordance with the agreed details. All other works within the site shall not take place other than in accordance with the tree protection details set out in sections 4.3 and 4.4 of the approved Tree Survey.

Reason: in order to ensure adequate protection for the trees on site during the construction of the development.

(10) DRAINAGE INFRASTRUCTURE

No development shall take place unless a scheme of all new drainage infrastructure, designed to meet the requirements of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority and thereafter no part of the development shall be occupied unless the drainage has been installed in complete accordance with the agreed scheme.

Reason: in order to safeguard water qualities in adjacent watercourses and to ensure that the development can be adequately drained.

(11) WASTE MANAGEMENT

The development hereby approved shall not be occupied unless the bin store area shown on approved drawings D(0-)01 Revision H (Proposed Site Plan) and D(0-)05 Revision B (Proposed Elevations) has been constructed and the required bins (2 x 1280l general waste, 2 x 1280l mixed recycling and 1 x food waste container) have been installed and are made available for use by residents upon occupation.

Reason: In order to ensure that waste and recyclables generated by the development would be securely and hygienically stored pending collection.

(12) CYCLE PARKING

The development hereby approved shall not be occupied unless details of the cycle racks to be installed within the Ground Floor cycle store have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Thereafter the cycle storage facility shall be provided as shown on approved drawing D(0-)02 Revision G (Proposed Ground Floor Plan) and with the approved racks installed prior to occupation.

Reason: In the interests of encouraging more sustainable and active modes of travel.

(13) RESIDENTIAL TRAVEL PACK

No unit shall be occupied unless a residential travel pack has been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority. Each residential travel pack shall identify details of different travel options available in the area in order to discourage the use of the private car. The approved travel pack shall be supplied to the occupants of every residential unit on occupation.

Reason - In order to reduce dependency on the private car for travel.

(14) BROADBAND CONNECTION

No unit shall be occupied unless a scheme for the provision of a full fibre broadband connection to each flat has been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority. Thereafter the scheme shall be implemented as approved and no flat shall be occupied unless provided with a full fibre broadband connection.

Reason: In order to provide all flats with access to high-speed communications infrastructure, in accordance with the requirements of Policy CI1 (Digital Infrastructure) of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023.

(15) EXTERNAL LIGHTING

The development hereby approved shall not be occupied unless a scheme for all external lighting within the development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority, and thereafter implemented in full accordance with said scheme.

Reason: In the interests of public safety.

ADVISORY NOTES FOR APPLICANT

(1) NOISE FROM CONSTRUCTION WORKS

Operations creating noise which is audible at sensitive receptors should not occur outside the hours of 7am to 7pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 1pm on Saturdays.

(2) BIN PROVISION

The 24 flats will be provided with:

2 x 1280l general waste container 128CM W X 145CM H X 100CM D (90cm minimum clearance to manoeuvre bins)
2 x 1280l co-mingled recycling container 128CM W X 145CM H X 100CM D (90cm minimum clearance to manoeuvre bins)

1 x food waste container for each bin store. 62CM W X 129.8CM H X 74CM D (80CM X 80CM (90cm minimum clearance to remove internal bin from front opening casing)
24 x kitchen caddy and caddy liners (for each property)

When planning bin stores, please take these measurements into account to ensure ease of use residents and collection for crew.

The following costs will be charged to the developer:

Each 1280l bin costs £454.00
Each food waste container costs £566.00
Kitchen caddy and caddy liners £0.00
A delivery of 10 or less bins will incur a £33 delivery fee.

No garden waste will be provided for flat residences as it is assumed grounds will be maintained as part of a service charge for the building and undertaken by a commercial contractor.

It is pertinent to note that these services will be provided taking account of the following:

No excess should be stored out with the containment provided. This is fly tipping.
If the bin store will be locked and/ or involve a barrier, 8 keys must be provided for each store, providing access to the different collection crews and Recycling Officer for monitoring contamination. These should be dispatched to the Waste Team.
Large item collections can be arranged by visiting www.aberdeencity.gov.uk
Further information can be found in the Waste Supplementary Guidance available at: https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-07/7.1.PolicySG.ResourcesForNewDevelopmentUpdateJuly2020.pdf
Developers must contact Aberdeen City Council a minimum of ONE month before properties will be occupied this is to ensure that bins are on site prior to residents moving into properties and to give enough time to register addresses on the CAG (Council Address Gazetteer) to allow for the development to be added to the refuse vehicle routes.
A Purchase Order should be raised with Aberdeen City Council using the above details and we will provide further guidance for purchasing the bins.
Please submit a PO for the bins you require.

Should you have any further queries or wish to discuss these comments further, please do not hesitate to contact wasteplanning@aberdeencity.gov.uk

LAND REGISTER OF SCOTLAND	Officer's ID / Date	TITLE NUMBER
	6707 21/10/2015	**KNC2813**
ORDNANCE SURVEY NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE		70m
NJ9303NE NJ9403NW NJ9403NE NJ9304SE		Survey Scale 1/1250

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OUTLINE TREE SPECIES SCHEDULE

The following description is a guide only for the delivery of tree species planting, which will be reviewed by Hillcrest Homes during the ongoing operation and maintenance of the site. Detailed proposals for the landscaping to be agreed between Hillcrest Housing and Aberdeen City Council.

C — **Cherry:** Quantity: 2.

W — **Whitebeam:** Quantity: 3.

CA — **Crab Apple (Malus sylvestris):** Quantity: 4.

HO — **Holly Oak (Quercus ilex):** Quantity: 1.

Proposed Site Plan
Scale 1:500 at A3

scale bar (metres)
5 0 5 10 15 20 25m

PROPOSAL SUMMARY (BASED ON ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2017)

Car Parking:
For this residential development, 24 total parking spaces are proposed. Of this allocation, accessible spaces should be 1 per 20 spaces, providing a minimum of 2 accessible spaces. 1 EV charging point will be provided, designed to current best practices described in PAS 1899-2022 - Electric vehicles - Accessible charging - specification, BS 7671, IET 'Code of Practice: Electric Vehicle Charging Equipment Installation', and BS EN 61851 - 'Electric vehicle conductive charging system'.

Bicycle Storage:
1 space is required per dwelling, plus 2 spaces for visitor use. A minimum of 26 new secure bicycle spaces will be provided for this residential development.

Waste & Recycling:
Provision for the 24 properties to be as follows:
2 x 1280 litre bin for General Waste,
2 x 1280 litre bin for Mixed Recycling,
1 x communal container for Food Waste.

New containers require to be EN 840 compliant (BS EN840-1:2012/ BS EN 840-2:2012).

OUTLINE LANDSCAPE SURFACE FINISHES

Porous paviours (Parking Spaces): Specification to engineer's details

Paving (Access Paths): Marshall Textured Utility Paving 600x600x32mm, colour charcoal

Tar surface: Existing surface made good and renewed as required.

Amenity Lawn: Maintained grass (refer to below maintenance schedule)

Meadow Mix: (refer to below maintenance schedule)

Low-level Sensory Garden Planting: Low maintenance plants to specification provided by Hillcrest Homes

OUTLINE LANDSCAPING MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE (TO BE DETERMINED BY HILLCREST HOMES)

The following description is a guide only for the delivery of planting, which will be reviewed by Hillcrest Homes during the ongoing operation and maintenance of the site. Detailed proposals for the landscaping to be agreed between Hillcrest Housing and Aberdeen City Council.

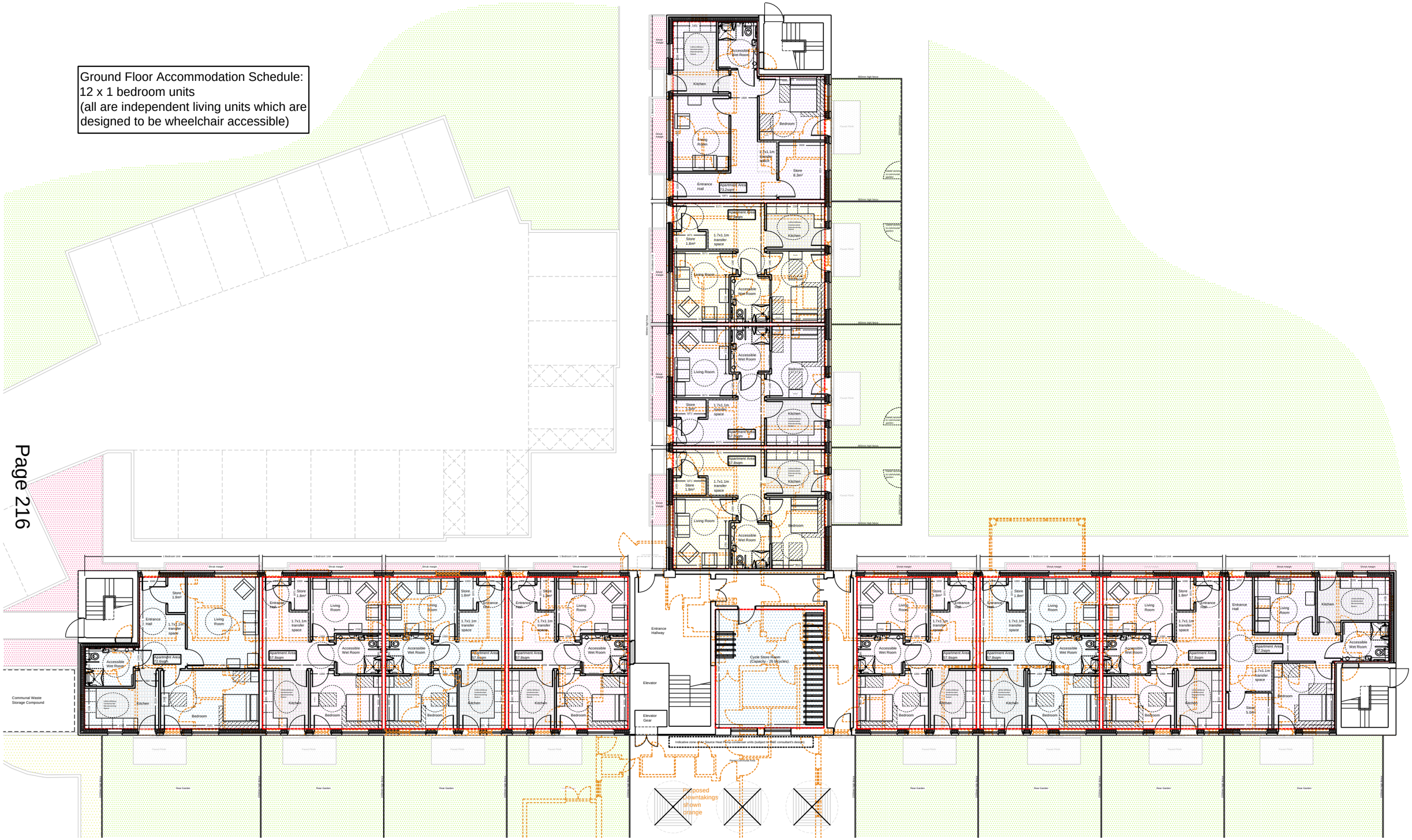
Amenity Lawn:
Establishment:
Minimum 150mm consolidated depth clean, free draining approved topsoil ameliorated with 25mm coarse/medium sand nominal 10mm depth horticultural sand worked into topsoil surface and raked off to running levels over clean, ripped subsoil. Approved turf laid stretching lap all joints close butted, dressed with sand soil mix and brushed. Slow release fertiliser applied at 70gm/m2, 3 cuts sward established and weed free at completion. Topsoil to be multipurpose grade in accordance with 'BS 3882-2007 Topsoil'. Subsoil to be multipurpose grade in accordance with 'BS 8601-2013. Specification for subsoil and requirements for use'. Minimum combined depth of topsoil and subsoil to be 450mm. Turf to be in accordance with BS3969-1998: Recommendations for Turf.
Inspections:
Weekly or monthly checks for litter, depending on level of littering on site. Regular inspections to check for divots/ holes or other potential health and safety risks.
January-March:
All mowers and any other machinery/tools are to be serviced in readiness for new growing season.
April:
Once established, lawns to be mowed fortnightly or as further directed once growth begins. Lightly roll Autumn sown lawns then cylinder cut to 25mm once growth attains 50mm in height.
May-August:
Lawn to be fortnightly mowed or as further directed to maintain a maximum height of 50mm. New lawns are to be watered twice weekly during dry weather conditions.
September:
Lawn to be mowed on a fortnightly basis or as further directed. Re-sow worn or bare patches and sow new lawns. Rake out dead grass to prevent thatch from forming.
October:
Lawn to be mowed on a fortnightly basis or as further directed until growth stops.
November-Decemeber:
Fallen leaves to be raked off and removed.

Meadow Mix:
Establishment:
Scotia seed Urban Pollinator Mix or equal approved, sown at 3g/m2. Remove top 100mm of existing soil and rotovate or harrow to remove weeds and existing grass. Leave for 3-4 weeks to allow unwanted weed seeds to germinate. Any weed seedlings can then be destroyed by rotovating. Do not add fertilizer. Site-won topsoil 100mm, on top of 150mm site-won sub-soil. Seeds should either be broadcast by hand or using a seeder suitable for meadow seed. If sowing by hand, sawdust or sand may be mixed in to make the seed easier to handle. Aftersowing, the site should be rolled or given a light harrowing to improve seed contact with the soil. For spring-sown meadows, cut twice in the first growing season to 10 cm. For autumn-sown meadows, cut first in April or May.
Inspections:
Weekly or monthly checks for litter, depending on level of littering on site.
January-March:
All mowers and any other machinery/tools are to be serviced in readiness for new growing season. Measures to be taken to prevent trampling of ground, if possible.
April:
Cut in the first year after sowing if there is an appearance of any unwanted annual weeds. Trim to an approximate height of 10cm. Remove cuttings to an approved composting facility.
May-August:
Monthly checks for perennial weeds, extract by hand and remove from site.
September-October:
Strim entire area and remove cuttings from site. Overseed to supplement bare bare patches where required.
November-December:
Measures to be taken to prevent trampling of ground, if possible.

Bradley Craig Architects

Conversion of Banks O' Dee care home for Hillcrest Homes (Scotland) Ltd
Drawing Number: D (0-) 01 Revision H

Ground Floor Accommodation Schedule:
12 x 1 bedroom units
(all are independent living units which are designed to be wheelchair accessible)

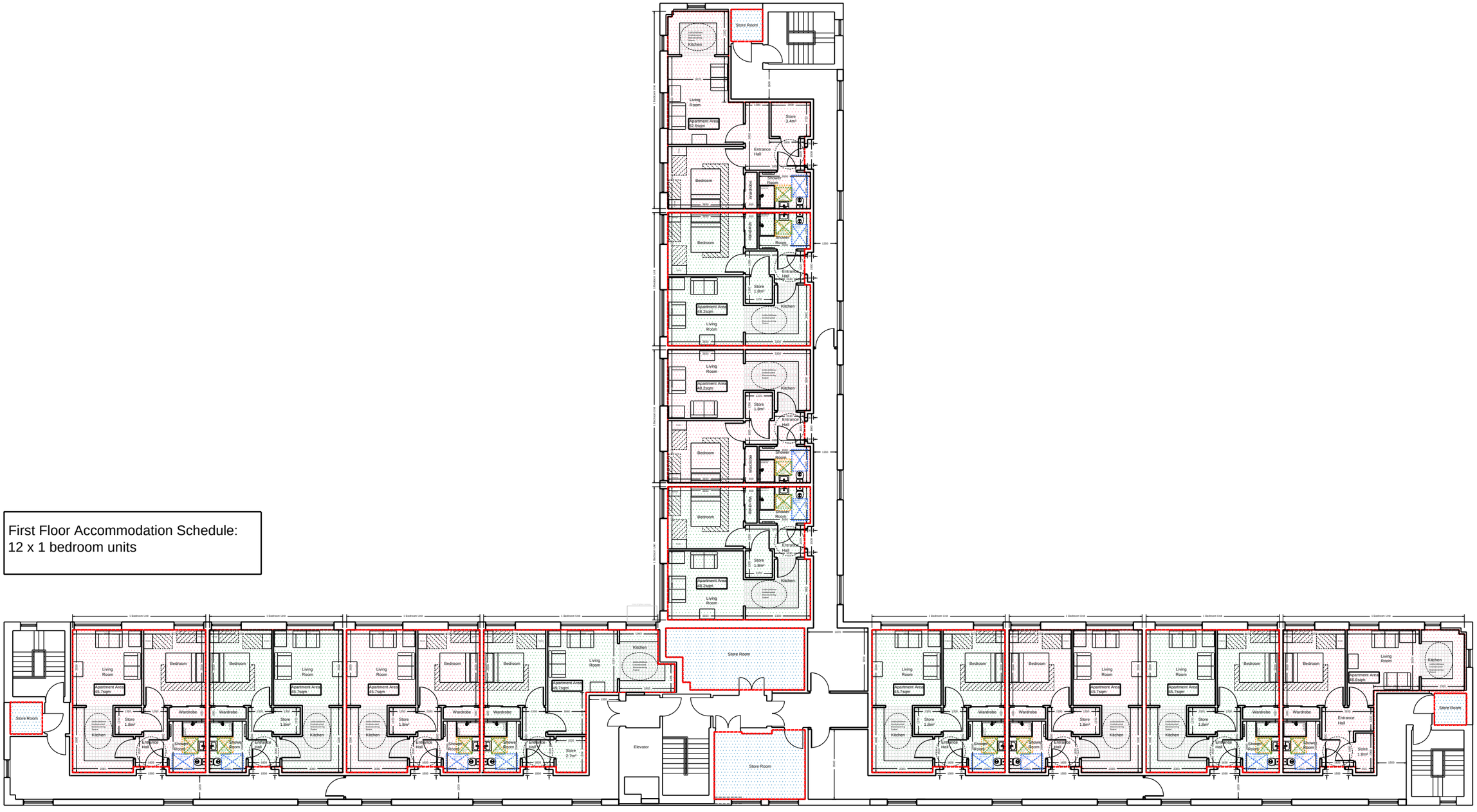


Proposed Ground Floor Plan
Scale 1:200 at A3

Bradley Craig Architects

Conversion of Banks O' Dee care home
for Hillcrest Homes (Scotland) Ltd
Drawing Number: D (0-) 02 Revision G

First Floor Accommodation Schedule:
12 x 1 bedroom units



Proposed First Floor Plan
Scale 1:200 at A3

Bradley Craig Architects

Conversion of Banks O' Dee care home
for Hillcrest Homes (Scotland) Ltd
Drawing Number: D (0-) 03 Revision C

Proposed Northeast Elevation
Scale 1:200 at A3

Proposed Southwest Elevation
Scale 1:200 at A3

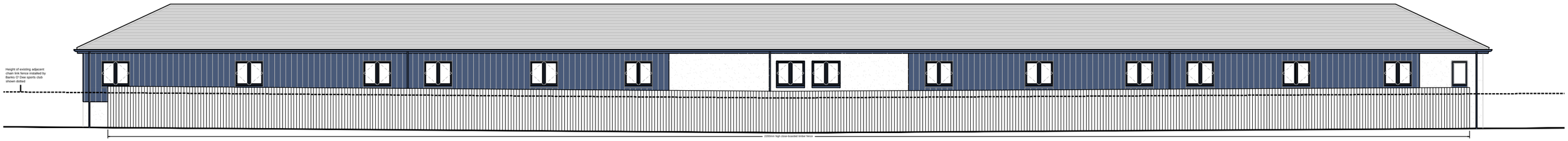
Proposed Northwest Elevation
Scale 1:200 at A3

Proposed Southeast Elevation
Scale 1:200 at A3

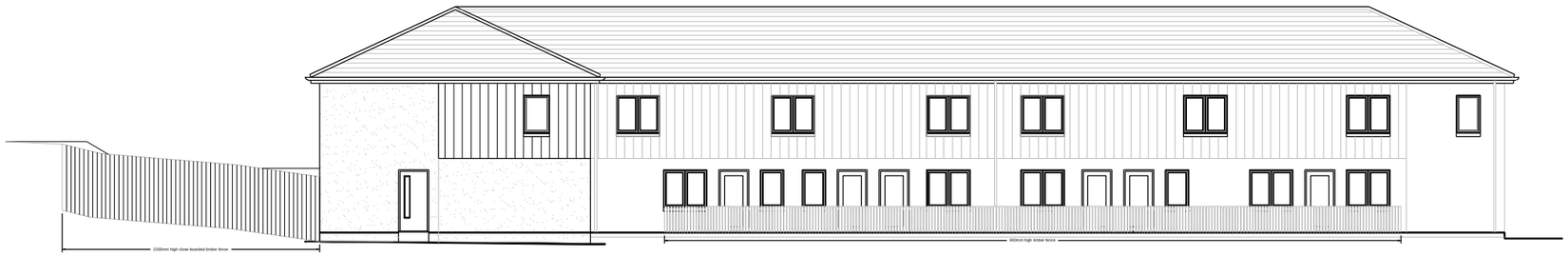
PROPOSED MATERIALS:
ROOF: EXISTING ROOF TILES RETAINED WITH INFILLED SECTIONS TO MATCH EXISTING.
WALLS (GROUND FLOOR LEVEL AND CORNER ESCAPE STAIRWELLS): WHITE DRYDASH FINISH TO BLOCKWORK.
WALLS (FIRST FLOOR LEVEL): ROCKPANEL COLOURS FS-XTRA 9mm PANELS TO BLOCKWORK (COLOUR RAL 7016).
CONCEALED BLOCKWORK BASECOURSE.
uPVC WINDOWS, DOORS AND ROOF FASCIA TRIM (COLOUR RAL 7016).
uPVC RAINWATER GOODS (COLOUR RAL 7016).
GLASS ENTRANCE CANOPY

Bradley Craig Architects

Conversion of Banks O' Dee care home
for Hillcrest Homes (Scotland) Ltd
Drawing Number: D (0-) 05 Revision B



Proposed Northeast Elevation - boundary fence treatments
Scale 1:200 at A3



Proposed Northwest Elevation - boundary fence treatments
Scale 1:200 at A3

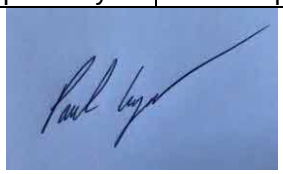
Proposed Southeast Elevation - boundary fence treatments
Scale 1:200 at A3

Bradley Craig Architects

Conversion of Banks O' Dee care home
for Hillcrest Homes (Scotland) Ltd
Drawing Number: D (0-) 06

Noise Impact Assessment

Proposed Residential Conversion at Banks O Dee Care Home, Abbotswell Rd, Aberdeen AB12 3AB

Prepared By:	Paul Couper
 BSc (Hons) PGDip MREHIS AMIOA	
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Contents

		Page No
1.0	Introduction, Site Location, and Proposal	Page 3
2.0	Methodology	Page 4
3.0	Noise Impact Assessment Criteria	Page 5
4.0	Road Traffic Noise Survey and Results	Page 6
5.0	Noise Rating Curve Assessment Survey and Results	Page 8
6.0	BS4142+A1:2019 Assessment and Results	Page 11
7.0	Other Noise Sources Assessment and Results Page	Page 15
8.0	Mitigation	Page 17
9.0	Conclusion	Page 21
	Appendix A Floor Plans and Elevations of Proposed Residential Dwellings	Page 22
	Appendix B Instruments Used and Calibration Certificates	Page 25
	Appendix C Fixed Plant Manufacturers Noise Data	Page 34
	Appendix D Information for BS8233:2014 Rigorous Calculation	Page 37
	Appendix E Mitigation at Building	Page 38

Introduction, Site Location, and Proposal

1.01 A planning application is to be submitted to Aberdeen City Council for a proposed conversion of the former Banks O Dee Care Home to residential properties.

1.02 A consultation response has been received from Environmental Health advising that a noise impact assessment will be required. This has been requested due to the potential impact of noise from Riverside Drive Road traffic and amplified music/fixed plant equipment of nearby premises on the proposed residential properties.

1.03 This report measures and predicts the noise levels from some of these sources at the proposed development and compares with established noise criteria. It also recommends mitigation where needed.

1.04 The former care home is located immediately south of the River Dee and adjacent to the Banks O Dee Sports Club. The building is currently not occupied, and the site appears to have not been used for some time. The location is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Site Location Plan of Proposed Conversion of Banks O Dee Care Home

1.05 The building is two storeys, and the proposal is to develop the site into 1-bedroom apartments with external amenity spaces. Layout plans and elevations showing the proposed first and second floor layout as well as external amenity areas is shown in Appendix A.

Methodology

2.01 Consultation with Environmental Health (EH) took place, and it was advised that a noise impact assessment should be conducted that measures and predicts the noise level of road traffic from Riverside Drive and amplified music/fixed plant from the adjacent Banks O Dee Sports Club.

2.02 Due to roadworks on Riverside Drive, it was agreed that a broadband figure could be used from noise modelling for an adjacent development. Amplified music from Banks O Dee Sports Club would be measured and predicted to meet NR15 inside the proposed residential conversion. Banks O Dee Sports Club fixed plant would also be considered and an internal noise criterion of NR25 was agreed.

2.03 Although not specifically mentioned in pre-app discussions a BS4142+A1:2019 has been undertaken for fixed plant potentially affecting external amenity spaces adjacent to the Banks O Dee Sports Club. Additionally, an assessment of sports hall use has also been undertaken following discussions with the sports club.

2.04 All noise parameters measured are in dB re 2×10^{-5} Pa.

Noise Impact Assessment Criteria

3.01 BS 8233:2014 – Guidance on Sound Insulation and Noise Reduction for Buildings establishes basic noise criteria for dwellings and is shown in Table 1.

Activity	Location	07:00 to 23:00 (Daytime)	23:00 to 07:00 (Night Time)
Resting	Living Room	35dB, $L_{Aeq, 16hrs}$	N/A
Dining	Dining Room/Area	40dB, $L_{Aeq, 16hrs}$	N/A
Sleeping (Daytime Resting)	Bedroom	35dB, $L_{Aeq, 16hrs}$	30dB, $L_{Aeq, 8hrs}$
Outdoor Activity	Outdoor Amenity	50-55dB, $L_{Aeq, 16hrs}$	N/A

Table 1 BS8233:2014 – Indoor and Outdoor Ambient Noise Levels for Dwellings

3.02 Noise Rating (NR) Curves are a graphical method for assigning a single-number rating to a noise spectrum. They are a linear based octave band frequency spectrum and generally used for rating steady state noise such as mechanical services. They ensure that the sound is within a set level for each frequency band (31.5Hz- 8kHz). This ensures that the character of the noise can be controlled.

3.03 NR Curves are based on the equal loudness contours in the superseded versions of ISO226 where its application is for pure tones. What is shown is that pure tones in lower frequencies tend to have higher sound pressure levels for them to be perceived to have equal loudness compared to mid to high frequencies. Very high frequencies are an exception to this.

3.04 BS4142+A1:2019 assesses the impact of sound from a source based on a comparison of the 'rating level' and 'background sound level'. The rating level is determined by applying appropriate character corrections to a source 'specific sound level' at relevant sensitive receptor locations. The 'background sound level' is the representative L_{A90} of the 'residual sound' at these locations. The greater the rating level exceeds the background sound level, the greater the significance of adverse impact at the assessment location.

3.05 The BS4142+A1:2019 assessment of impact of the sound is produced by subtracting the 'background sound level' from the 'Rating level'. A difference of around +10dB or more is likely to indicate a significant adverse impact (depending on the context). A difference of around +5dB is likely to indicate an adverse impact (depending on the context). No exceedance indicates a low impact (depending on the context).

Road Traffic Noise Survey and Results

4.01 Due to planned roadworks taking place on Riverside Drive the road was closed and a noise measurement survey could not take place. Environmental Health was contacted, and it was agreed that an alternative methodology could be used.

4.02 The methodology would be based on using a single broadband figure for the $L_{Aeq16hr}$ & L_{Aeq8hr} derived from publicly available modelling[1]. The modelling shows that the external amenity area at the care home would not exceed daytime outdoor amenity noise criteria in Table 1. However, there is likely to be exceedances of internal amenity noise standards. For ease of reference the external amenity area, facades, and gable ends of the building have been highlighted and numbered and shown in Figure 2. Facades 5 & 6 also have individual external amenity spaces.

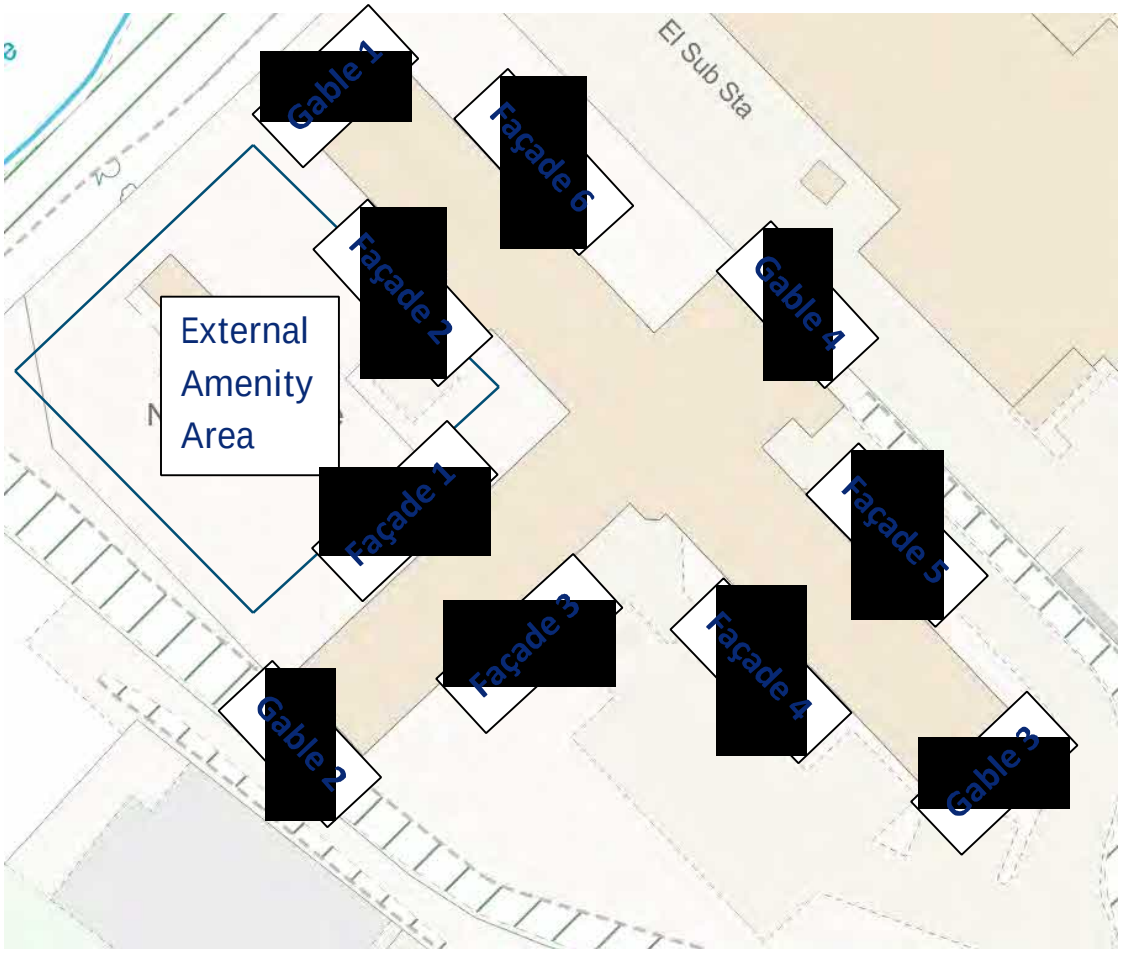


Figure 2 Labelled Facades, Gables, and main External Amenity Area of Existing Care Home Layout

4.03 The predicted external single figure noise levels derived from the modelling have been predicted to the internal spaces and shown in Table 2. The predicted internal figures assume the modelling has not arithmetically added a façade correction and therefore 3dB is added. It is assumed that a slightly open window provides 15dB attenuation.

[1] CSP Acoustics Noise Impact Assessment Ref 1262 001PR V1

Façade/Gable	Room	Internal $L_{Aeq16hour}$	Internal $L_{Aeq8hour}$
Gable 1	Living Room	48dB	N/A
Gable 2	Living Room	43dB	N/A
Gable 3	N/A	N/A	N/A
Gable 4	N/A	N/A	N/A
Façade 1	Bedroom	43dB	38dB
Façade 2	Living Room/Bedroom	43dB	38dB
Façade 3	Living Room/Bedroom	43dB	33dB
Façade 4	Living Room/Bedroom	38dB	33dB
Façade 5	Bedroom	38dB	33dB
Façade 6	Bedroom	43dB	38dB

Table 2 Predicted Road Traffic Internal Noise Levels

4.04 Table 2 shows that the internal daytime and night time noise criteria shown in Table 1 for bedrooms and open plan living rooms will be exceeded with a slightly open window. Therefore, mitigation is required which is detailed in the 'mitigation' section of this report. Gables 3 & 4 do not have any bedroom or living areas, hence have not been included in Table 2.

Noise Rating Curve Assessment Survey and Results

5.01 Noise associated with amplified music and fixed plant from Banks O Dee Sports and Fitness was agreed to be investigated and assessed. Couper Acoustics contacted Iain Watson the general manager of the facility and it was agreed that noise measurements could take place of 'worst case' amplified music scenario.

5.02 Couper Acoustics attended to take noise measurements on the 23 March 2023. To represent a 'worst case' scenario two studios and the gym were playing amplified music simultaneously and all windows were open very wide for ventilation purposes.

5.03 The sound level meter microphone was positioned 1.3 metres high and 1m from four façades of the proposed development building. Calibration took place before and after the measurement and no significant drift was detected. Information on the sound level meter, calibrator, and calibration certificates can be found in Appendix B.

5.04 The weather conditions were monitored using a Kestrel 5500 and were dry throughout. Average wind speed was 0.7m/s. The temperature was 10 degrees Celsius. Cloud Cover was approx. on average 10-20%.

5.05 The results of the amplified music noise monitoring are shown in Table 3.

Octave Bands	63Hz	125Hz	250Hz	500Hz	1KHz	2KHz	4KHz	8KHz
Façade 5 $L_{eq5mins}$ (dB)	70.8	63.2	53.4	51.9	52.3	47.5	42.2	37.3
Façade 6 $L_{eq5mins}$ (dB)	59.4	50.7	44.9	46.5	46	38.9	33.8	30
Façade 4 L_{eq5min} (dB)	56.1	52.4	49	45.4	47.2	41.6	46.2	38.8
Façade 3 L_{eq5min} (dB)	61.9	55.4	47.5	47.3	47.4	41.9	42.5	38

Table 3 Measured Amplified Music Noise Levels from Banks O Dee Sports and Fitness

5.06 For the purposes of the assessment, it is assumed that Gables 1 & 2 and Facades 1 & 2 receive the same measured amplified music noise levels as Façade 3. This is because the proposed residential building itself will act as a significant barrier to these areas of the building and they are at a greater distance from source. Gables 3 and 4 do not have any bedrooms or living area windows and are therefore screened out of this section of the assessment.

5.07 The measured amplified music noise levels are to be compared with NR15 internally at the proposed receptors. NR 15 is a linear spectrum-based criteria which requires that the maximum noise level at a range of frequencies should not be exceeded as shown in Table 4.

Octave Bands	63Hz	125Hz	250Hz	500Hz	1KHz	2KHz	4KHz	8KHz
NR15 (dB)	47.3	35	25.9	19.4	15	11.7	9.3	7.4

Table 4 NR15 Noise Rating Curve Octave Band Centre Frequencies

5.08 Assuming an open window provides 15dB attenuation across the octave bands frequency spectrum, NR15 will be exceeded with a slightly open window at all facades and gable ends of the building. Therefore, further mitigation is required which is detailed in the 'mitigation' section of this report.

5.09 Fixed plant was to be assessed and compared with an internal noise criterion of NR25. The Banks O Dee Sports Club had three in situ Daiken fixed plant units that were positioned on the wall of the building adjacent to Gable 4 and Façade 5 of the proposed residential building. The fixed plant position is shown in Figure 3 with a yellow star. The units in situ are one Daiken RZAG125N2V1B Unit, one Daiken RZQSG140L7Y1B Unit, and one Daiken RYP125B7W1 Unit.

Figure 3 Existing Fixed Plant Position on Sports Centre Building Relative to Care Home Building

5.10 The sound power level data for each unit is appended in Appendix C. Daiken could not provide sound power level data for the RYP125B7W1 unit therefore indicative sound power levels have been calculated based on the sound pressure levels being measured at 1m from the unit and in free field conditions. The noise levels have been predicted internally at the nearest receptor window on façade 5 with a comparison with NR25. This is shown in Table 5.

Octave Bands	63Hz	125Hz	250Hz	500Hz	1KHz	2KHz	4KHz	8KHz
L_w (dB) RZQSG140L7Y1B Unit	68.2*	69	70	68	62	60	59	50
L_w (dB) RYP125B7W1 Unit	68.2	67.6	63.6	59.2	54	48.3	45	42
L_w (dB) RZAG125N2V1B Unit	72	71	69	70.5	62	57	52	48
Total L_W (dB)	74.6	74.2	73	72.6	65.3	62	59.9	52.5
Distance Attenuation (dB)**	-30	-30	-30	-30	-30	-30	-30	-30
Façade Reflection (dB)	+3	+3	+3	+3	+3	+3	+3	+3
Slightly Open Window Attenuation (dB)	-15	-15	-15	-15	-15	-15	-15	-15
Internal L_{eq} (dB)	32.6	32.2	31	30.6	23.3	20	17.9	10.5
NR25 (dB)	55.2	43.7	35.2	29.2	25	21.9	19.5	17.7
Exceedance (dB)	None	None	None	1.4	None	None	None	None
*63Hz Figure not available so it is assumed it is the same figure as RYP125B7W1 Unit **17m to receptor façade 5 and two reflecting planes								

Table 5 Predicted Internal L_{eq} (dB) from Existing Fixed Plant and Comparison with NR25

5.11 Table 5 shows that NR25 will be slightly exceeded internally at the receptor, therefore further mitigation is required which is detailed in the 'mitigation' section of this report.

BS4142+A1:2019 Assessment and Results

6.01 Couper Acoustics attended the proposed residential building between 20:00 and 22:00 on the 5 June 2023 to carry out a background monitoring survey. The time was chosen as no gym classes playing amplified music were scheduled and there would be reduced level of traffic on surrounding road networks. The location of the background monitoring position is shown by an orange arrow in Figure 4 to represent the external amenity areas at façade 5 and 6. This position was chosen to avoid any influence of the existing fixed plant on the measurement.

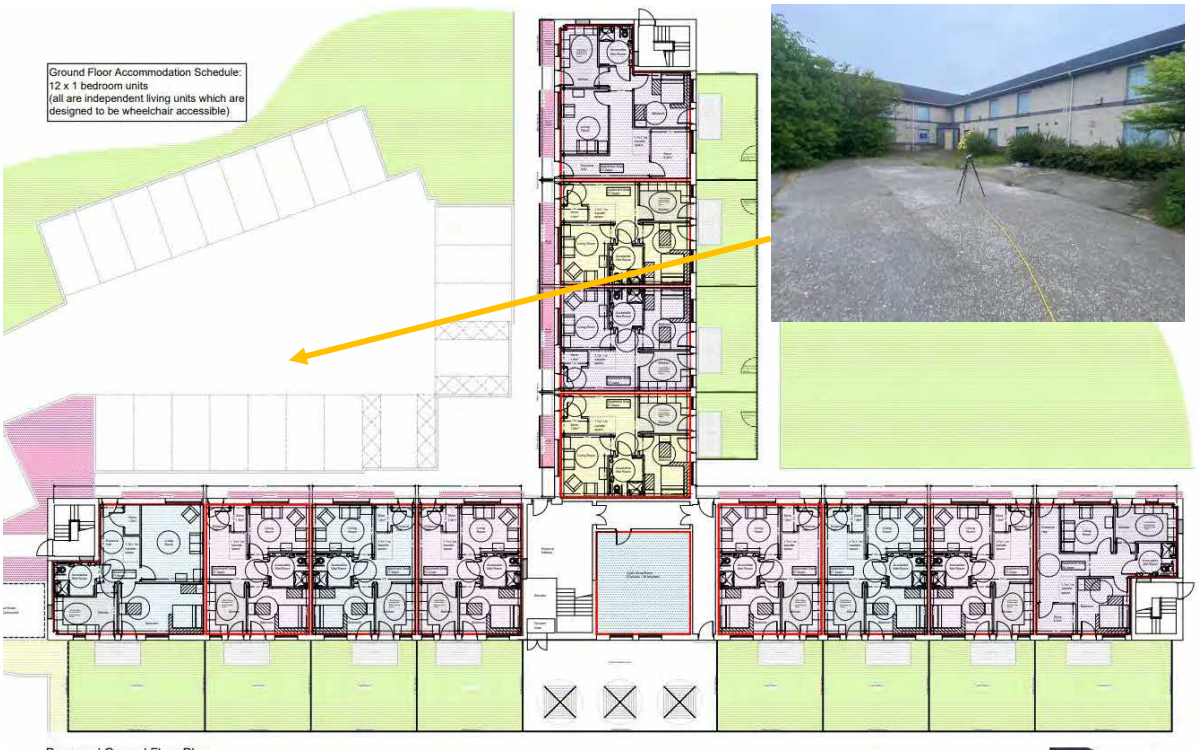


Figure 4 Background Monitoring Location Highlighted with Orange Arrow

6.02 The sound level meter was positioned 1.3 metres high and in free field conditions. A windshield was fitted to the sound level meter microphone. Measurement instrumentation conformed to a Class 1 integrating sound level meter specification in accordance with BS EN 61672-1: 2003. Full instrument information is provided in Appendix B.

6.03 Calibration took place before and after the measurement and no significant drift was detected. Information on the sound level meter, calibrator, and calibration certificates can be found in Appendix C.

6.04 The weather conditions were monitored using a Kestrel 5500 and were dry throughout. Wind speed was on average 0.1m/s, the temperature was 11 degrees centigrade, and cloud cover was 100%.

6.05 The results of the daytime background monitoring survey are shown in Table 6.

Time Period	L_{A90} dB	L_{Aeq} dB	L_{A10} dB	L_{Amax} dB	Commentary
20:00 – 20:15	43.4	46.1	48.2	61.8	Soundscape consisted of local and distant road traffic, seagull and small bird calls, distant fixed wing aircraft, members of the sports centre leaving and entering the premises. No amplified music was heard. L_{A90} mode: 42dB L_{A90} median: 41dB L_{A90} linear mean: 41dB L_{A90} log mean: 41.5 L_{A90} range: 40 – 43dB
20:15 – 20:30	42.4	47.5	50.8	62.2	
20:30 – 20:45	41.8	45.3	47.4	58.8	
20:45 – 21:00	42	46.4	47.7	67.2	
21:00 – 21:15	41	45.1	47.5	63.3	
21:15 – 21:30	40.8	54.7	57.2	75.1	
21:30 – 21:45	40	48.9	53.8	64	
21:45 – 22:00	39.5	48.8	48.3	78.8	

Table 6 Daytime Background Survey Results at Monitoring Location

6.06 Noise from the fixed plant outlets has been predicted to the geometric centre of the nearest external amenity area at façade 5 and façade 6 on Figure 3. The predicted noise figures are shown in Table 7 and 8 respectively.

Octave Bands	63Hz	125Hz	250Hz	500Hz	1KHz	2KHz	4KHz	8KHz
L_w (dB) RZQSG140L7Y1B Unit	68.2	69	70	68	62	60	59	50
L_w (dB) RYP125B7W1 Unit	68.2	67.6	63.6	59.2	54	48.3	45	42
L_w (dB) RZAG125N2V1B Unit	72	71	69	70.5	62	57	52	48
Total L_W (dB)	74.6	74.2	73	72.6	65.3	62	59.9	52.5
Distance Attenuation* (dB)	-27	-27	-27	-27	-27	-27	-27	-27
A-weighting (dB)	-26.2	-16.1	-8.6	-3.2	0	+1.2	+1	-1.1
L_{Aeq} (dB)**	21.4	31.1	37.4	42.4	38.3	36.2	33.9	24.4
*13m and two reflecting planes **Broadband L_{Aeq} is 45.7dB.								

Table 7 Predicted L_{Aeq} (dB) at Centre of Façade 5 Nearest External Amenity Area

Octave Bands	63Hz	125Hz	250Hz	500Hz	1KHz	2KHz	4KHz	8KHz
L_w (dB) RZQSG140L7Y1B Unit	68.2	69	70	68	62	60	59	50
L_w (dB) RYP125B7W1 Unit	68.2	67.6	63.6	59.2	54	48.3	45	42
L_w (dB) RZAG125N2V1B Unit	72	71	69	70.5	62	57	52	48
Total L_W (dB)	74.6	74.2	73	72.6	65.3	62	59.9	52.5
Distance Attenuation* (dB)	-34	-34	-34	-34	-34	-34	-34	-34
A-weighting	-26.2	-16.1	-8.6	-3.2	0	+1.2	+1	-1.1
L_{Aeq} (dB)**	14.4	24.1	30.4	35.2	31.3	29.2	26.9	17.4
*27m and two reflecting planes **Broadband L_{Aeq} is 38.7dB.								

Table 8 Predicted L_{Aeq} (dB) at Centre of Façade 6 Nearest External Amenity Area

6.07 It is assumed that the noise sources will be in operation for the full 1-hour reference period. The broadband L_{Aeq1hr} (dB) figure at façade 5 and 6's external amenity spaces from noise from the fixed plant is predicted and calculated to be 46dB and 39dB respectively. The background measurement results and the calculated L_{Aeq1hr} (dB) at the external amenity areas have been used to carry out a BS4142:2014+A1:2019 assessment. The specific noise level has been rated in accordance with BS4142:2014+A1:2019 and a comparison made with the background measurement to give an excess over the rating level. The BS4142:2014+A1:2019 assessment is shown in Table 9.

Results	BS4142 Assessment Results	Commentary
Specific sound level L_{Aeq1hr} facade 5 Specific sound level L_{Aeq1hr} façade 6	46dB 39dB	Derived from Table 7 and 8
Acoustic feature correction	+2dB	Although not strictly tonal a very faint hum was just perceptible against residual environment.
Rating Levels	Façade 5 - (46 + 2) dB = 48dB Façade 6 - (39 + 2) = 41dB	
Background sound level L_{A90} (15min)	$L_{A90\ (15min)}$ = 41dB	Table 3 – median and linear mean of one of quietest periods of operating
Excess of rating over the background sound level	(48 - 41) dB = 7dB (41- 41) = 0dB	
BS4142 Noise Criteria	Rated level is 7dB above background	At Façade 5 external amenity areas only

Table 9 BS4142:2014+A1:2019 Rated Noise Level Assessment

6.08 The rated level is 7dB above the background sound level at Façade 5's external amenity areas. BS4142:2014+A1:2019 states that where the rating level exceeds the background sound level by around 5dB this is an indication of an adverse impact depending on the context. Mitigation is required which is further detailed in the mitigation section of this report.

Other Noise Sources Assessment and Results

7.01 During the site visits and noise survey of Banks O Dee Sports and Fitness, General Manager Iain Watson advised that there is noise produced from the use of the sports hall that may impact on the proposal. The sports hall opens a door at the rear for ventilation which can lead to noise break out from users shouting and balls being used. The location of the door is shown in Figure 5 with a yellow star.

Figure 5 Sports Hall Door Position Relative to Existing Care Home Building

7.02 Due to the location of the door, subjectively façade 6 was the only area of the proposed building that was impacted by sports hall use. During the site visit, it was being used by schoolchildren playing basketball. Noise from the hall varied considerably during it's use and was dependent on the position of children in the hall and what game was being played. There were also breaks in the activity for teacher instruction. A noise measurement took place at the façade of Façade 6 directly in line with the open door to the sports hall when children were using the North end of the hall which is closest to the door. The noise measurement result is shown in Table 10.

Octave Bands	63Hz	125Hz	250Hz	500Hz	1KHz	2KHz	4KHz	8KHz		Total $L_{Aeq5min}$ (dB)
$L_{eq(5min)}$ (dB)	57.8	60.9	48.9	49.3	52.6	50.7	44.2	33.9		56.6

Table 10 Sports Hall Noise Levels Measured at Façade 6

7.03 To assess this type of noise, an internal criterion of NR15 has been used as well as the external criterion of L_{AeqT} 50-55dB displayed in Table 1. Using a slightly open window scenario affording 15dB for attenuation NR15 will not be met internally in façade 6 ground floor bedrooms. The broadband $L_{Aeq5min}$ 56dB figure shown in Table 10 would exceed the external amenity criteria shown in Table 1 of 50-55dB. Therefore, further mitigation is required which is detailed in the mitigation section of this report.

Mitigation

8.01 The amplified music noise measurement and predictions to internal amenity spaces have shown that NR15 will not be met with an open window for ventilation. In addition to this, internal amenity spaces will also exceed noise amenity standards from road traffic noise, existing fixed plant, and the use of the sports hall. To achieve the internal amenity noise criteria's, mitigation in the form acoustic glazing, doors and trickle ventilation will be required based on a closed window scenario.

8.02 Aberdeen City Supplementary Guidance on Noise has been reviewed. It is noted that it states in the context of the internal noise levels criterion:

> Alternative ventilation may be required where it is not possible to achieve these criteria with traditional window designs and windows partially open for ventilation.
>
> And
>
> Where the above values cannot be met, mitigation solutions should be explored, taking into account their impact on the built environment. Design solutions may be possible, such as locating living rooms and bedrooms on the opposite side of a building to the source of the noise or using windows with improved sound reduction.

8.03 It is therefore assumed that a 'closed window' scenario can be used in these circumstances. To determine the internal noise levels the bedroom and open plan living areas with the largest surface area glazing have been used. It is assumed there will be one trickle vent per room.

8.04 The internal break noise levels have been determined using the BS8233:2014 rigorous calculation:

$$L_{eq,2} = L_{eq,ff} + 10\log_{10}\left(\frac{A_0}{S}10^{\frac{-D_{nw}}{10}} + \frac{S_{wi}}{S}10^{\frac{-R_{wi}}{10}} + \frac{S_{ew}}{S}10^{\frac{-R_{ew}}{10}} + \frac{S_{rr}}{S}10^{\frac{-R_{rr}}{10}}\right) + 10\log_{10}\left(\frac{S}{A}\right) + 3$$

8.05 Additional acoustic information for use in the calculation is shown in Appendix D Table 16. The architect has confirmed the wall construction as the following: Timber kit inner leaf separated from inner face of brickwork outer leaf by a continuous 50mm ventilated cavity. Timber panel to comprise Proctor Frameshield 100 breather membrane on 9mm exterior quality OSB sheathing fixed to 140x38mm CLS timber studs at 600mm centres, 140mm PIR insulation between studs. Wall lined internally with Proctors Procheck Premier 500 bonded to 12.5mm plasterboard and overlaid with 15mm Gyproc Fireline board to inside face. The roof construction is as follows: Existing tiles inspected and any replacements securely fixed using galvanised nails on 25x38mm tile battens (or size as recommended by tile manufacturer) on 12x50mm counter battens on Proctor Roofshield vapour permeable roof membrane, or equal and

approved, on 18mm thick butt[1]jointed treated softwood sarking boards (2mm nominal gap between boards). Rolled lead sheet ridge and verges under coping stones to be securely fixed. 190mm PIR insulation to be laid between joists on netlon support. Ceiling to be lined internally with 25mm Reflactatherm Plus bonded to 12.5mm Plasterboard securely fixed to face of rafters and lined with 15mm Gyproc Fireline board.

8.06 The surface areas of glazing, façade, ceiling, walls, and floor of the bedroom and open plan living area with the largest glazing surface area has been supplied by the architect.

8.07 Based on the measured noise levels at the facades, the dimensions of the rooms, the construction of the buildings, and the acoustic information in Appendix D, the break in noise levels have been determined. To achieve NR15 from amplified music the acoustic window and trickle vent specification required is shown in Table 11. Appendix D Table 17 shows an example of the window and trickle vent used for Façade 5. It is noted that Bedrooms on Facades 5 and 1 contain external doors. The area of the external doors has been included in the calculation as part of the window specification.

Façade/Gable and Room	Floor	Acoustic Window Specification R_W (dB)	Acoustic Trickle Vent Specification $D_{n,e,w}$ (dB)	Acoustic External Door Specification R_w (dB)
Façade 5 Bedroom	Ground	44	48	44
Façade 4 Living Room	Ground & 1st	35	38	N/A
Façade 4 Bedroom	1st	35	38	N/A
Facade 3 Living Room	Ground & 1st	35	38	N/A
Façade 3 Bedroom	1st	35	38	N/A
Façade 1 Bedroom	Ground	35	38	35
Façade 2 Living Room	Ground & 1st	35	38	N/A
Façade 2 Bedroom	1st	35	38	N/A
Gable 2 Living Room	1st	35	38	N/A

Table 11 Window, Trickle Vent, and External Door Acoustic Specifications

8.08 Gables 3 and 4 do not have any bedrooms or living area windows so have been screened out for assessment purposes. Gable 1 1st floor living area will be subject to elevated levels of road traffic noise and therefore will require separate consideration – see below. Based on the information in Table 11 noise

from fixed plant is predicted to achieve NR25 and noise from road traffic is predicted to achieve the internal Table 1 criterion.

8.09 As the windows and trickle vents already have acoustic specifications, the break in calculations for amplified music has been used for the modelled road traffic noise levels. To do this, the broadband road traffic noise figure at each façade and gable has been applied across the whole 1/1 octave band spectrum and has been unweighted. It is predicted that the internal noise criterion shown in Table 1 will be achieved with the acoustic specification in Table 11 except at Gable 1 where the acoustic specification will need to be upgraded for one 1st floor open plan living area. To achieve the daytime noise criteria shown in Table 1 for this room the acoustic window and trickle vent specification required is shown in Table 12.

Façade/Gable and Room	Floor	Acoustic Window Specification R_{w+ctr} (dB)	Acoustic Trickle Vent specification $D_{n,e,w}$ (dB)
Gable 1 Living Room	1st	38	40

Table 12 Gable 1 Living Room Window and Trickle Vent Acoustic Specification

8.10 The BS4142+A1:2019 assessment and results showed that there is a potential 'adverse impact' in the nearest residential external amenity area at façade 5. In addition, the external amenity areas at façade 6 will exceed the outdoor amenity standards in Table 1. To effectively screen noise from the fixed plant and the sports hall a 2.2m high closed boarded fence must be positioned at the top of the site boundary embankment where the existing fence resides. The fence should be at least 10-15kgm^2 surface density and be positioned hard against the ground and free from any gaps or breaks. The proposed barrier layout is shown in yellow in Figure 6. This is based on a 1.5m high receptor at the geometric centre between the façade and the barrier position.

Figure 6 Position of Proposed Acoustic Barrier

8.11 At this position, the barrier will break the line of sight between receptor and source, and it is assumed this will achieve 10dB attenuation. This would reduce the BS4142+A1:2019 impact descriptor to a 'low impact' in in the external amenity areas at façade 5. It would also be predicted to reduce the sports hall noise levels to L_{AeqT} 46.6dB at façade 6's external amenity areas which achieves the external amenity noise criteria shown in Table 1.

8.12 The 'other noise survey results' has predicted that NR15 will not be met in ground floor bedrooms on façade 6 from sports hall noise. To achieve a NR15 criterion, mitigation in the form acoustic glazing, acoustic doors, and trickle ventilation will be required. The break in calculations for amplified music has been used for the sports all noise. To achieve NR15 the acoustic window and trickle vent specification required is shown in Table 13. This specification is also predicted to achieve NR15 from amplified music noise and the road traffic internal noise criterion in Table 1.

Façade/Gable and Room	Floor	Acoustic Window Specification R_W (dB)	Acoustic Trickle Vent Specification $D_{n,e,w}$ (dB)	Acoustic External Door Specification R_w (dB)
Façade 6 Bedroom	Ground	40	40	40

Table 13 Façade 6 Bedrooms Acoustic Window, Trickle Vent, and External Door Specifications

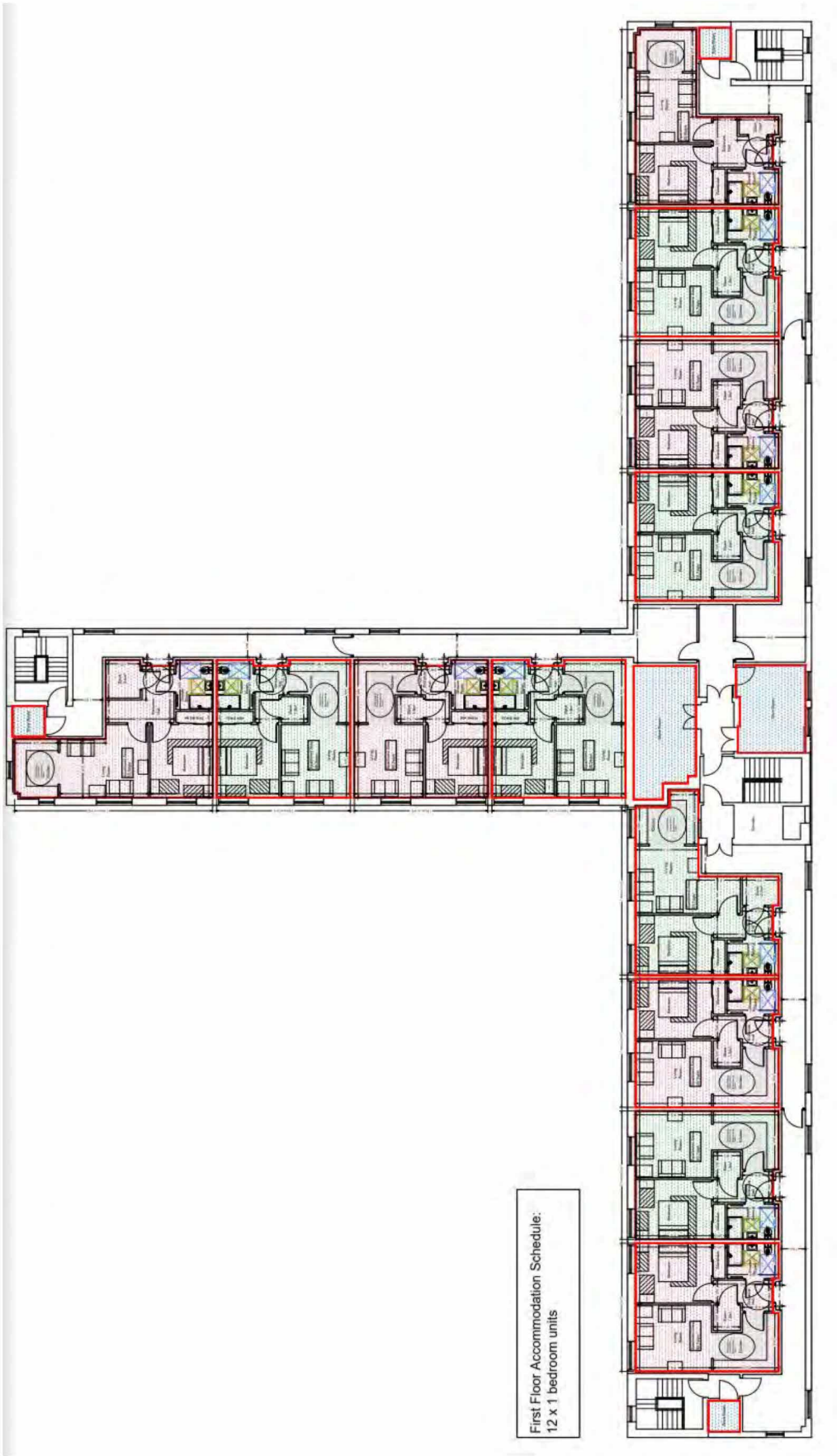
8.13 For ease of reference, Tables 11, 12, and 13 as well as Figure 2 are displayed together in Appendix E.

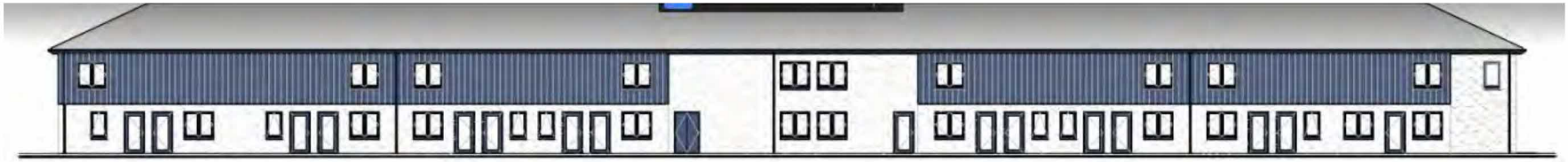
Conclusion

9.01 Couper Acoustics has been hired to carry out a noise impact assessment for a proposed residential development at Banks O Dee Care Home, Abbotswell Rd, Aberdeen AB12 3AB. Measurements of amplified music, recreational sports hall noise, and background noise have been undertaken. Existing road traffic and fixed plant noise data has been utilised. Predictions have been made of these sources at the proposed residential development.

9.02 To meet the internal noise level criteria recommendations regarding suitable glazing, trickle ventilation, external doors, and an acoustic barrier have been detailed in the 'Mitigation' section which must be installed. With this mitigation in place the noise criterions detailed in this report are predicted to be achieved.

Appendix A Floor Plans and Elevations of Proposed Residential Dwellings

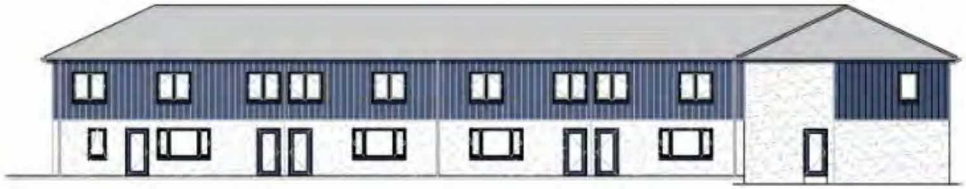

First Floor Accommodation Schedule:
12 x 1 bedroom units



Proposed Northwest Elevation
Scale 1:200 at A3

Proposed Southeast Elevation
Scale 1:200 at A3

Proposed Northeast Elevation
Scale 1:200 at A3



PROPOSED MATERIALS:
ROOF: EXISTING ROOF TILES RETAINED WITH INFILLED SECTIONS TO MATCH EXISTING.
WALLS (GROUND FLOOR LEVEL AND CORNER ESCAPE STAIRWELLS): WHITE DRYDASH FINISH TO BLOCKWORK.
WALLS (FIRST FLOOR LEVEL): ROCKPANEL COLOURS FS-XTRA 9mm PANELS TO BLOCKWORK (COLOUR RAL 7016).
CONCEALED BLOCKWORK BASECOURSE.
uPVC WINDOWS, DOORS AND ROOF FASCIA TRIM (COLOUR RAL 7016).
uPVC RAINWATER GOODS (COLOUR RAL 7016).

Bradley Craig Architects

Appendix B Instruments Used and Calibration Certificates

Equipment	Make & Model	Serial Number	Calibration Date
Sound Level Meter	B & K 2250	2506359	6 January 2023
Microphone	B & K 4189	2523684	6 January 2023
Calibrator	B & K 4231	2384975	6 January 2023
Preamp	B & K ZC 0032	20915	6 January 2023

Table 14 Instruments and Equipment Used, Serial Numbers, and Calibration Dates – Sports Centre Monitoring

Equipment	Make & Model	Serial Number	Calibration Date
Sound Level Meter	RION NL-52	01121102	5 April 2023
Microphone	RION UC-59	22499	5 April 2023
Calibrator	RION NC-75	34334831	5 April 2023
Preamp	RION NH25	22398	5 April 2023

Table 15 Instruments and Equipment Used, Serial Numbers, and Calibration Dates – Background Monitoring

CERTIFICATE OF CONFORMANCE

ISSUED BY	Gracey & Associates	BSI CERTIFICATE	FS 25913
DATE OF ISSUE	10 January 2023	CERTIFICATE NUMBER	2023-0149
DATE OF CALIBRATION	06 January 2023		
CALIBRATION INTERVAL	12 months	PAGE 1 OF 1	

Gracey & Associates
Barn Court Shelton Road
Upper Dean PE28 0NQ
Tel: 01234 708835
www.gracey.co.uk

TEST ENGINEER
Jamie Bishop
[redacted]

APPROVING SIGNATORY
Greg Rice
[redacted]

Equipment **B&K ZC 0032, s/n: 20915**
Description Preamplifier - 1/2" - B&K 2250, Hottinger Bruel & Kjaer UK Ltd
Customer Gracey & Associates

Standards
Manufacturer Specifications

Conditions

Atmospheric Pressure	100.4kPa
Temperature	21.8°C
Relative Humidity	42.9%

Calibration Reference Sources

Equipment	S/N	Last Cal	Equipment	S/N	Last Cal
Druck DPI 141	479	06-Aug-20	HP 34401	3146A16728	08-Apr-22
Vaisala HMP23	S2430007	03-Aug-20			

Notes

We certify that the above product was duly tested and found to be within the specification at the points measured (except where indicated). Measurements are traceable to reference sources calibrated to National Standards. Where no national or international standards exist, traceability is to standards maintained by the manufacturer. Our Quality Management System has been assessed to comply with BS EN ISO 9001:2015 - BSI Certificate number FS 25913. Tests were carried out in environmental conditions controlled to the extent appropriate to the instrument's specification. All relevant test certificates are available for inspection. The uncertainties are for a confidence probability of not less than 95%.

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Gracey & Associates is the trading name of W T Gracey Ltd. Registered in Upper Dean England No 1176412. Est. 1972
Hire and calibration of noise and vibration instruments under a BSI ISO 9001 quality management system, Cert No. FS 25913.

CERTIFICATE OF CALIBRATION

ISSUED BY	Gracey & Associates	BSI CERTIFICATE	FS 25913
DATE OF ISSUE	10 January 2023	CERTIFICATE NUMBER	2023-0137
DATE OF CALIBRATION	06 January 2023		
CALIBRATION INTERVAL	12 months	PAGE 1 OF 2	

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TEST ENGINEER
Jamie Bishop
[redacted]

APPROVING SIGNATORY
Greg Rice
[redacted]

Equipment **B&K 4189, s/n: 2523684**
Description Microphone - 1/2" FF 0V, Hottinger Bruel & Kjaer UK Ltd
Customer Gracey & Associates

Standards
BS EN 61094

Conditions

Atmospheric Pressure	100.4kPa
Temperature	21.3°C
Relative Humidity	42.8%

Calibration Data

Sensitivity -26.3 dB
48.4 mV/Pa

Calibration Reference Sources

Equipment	S/N	Last Cal	Equipment	S/N	Last Cal
B&K 4134 L	1935995	08-Oct-21	Druck DPI 141	479	06-Aug-20
HP 34401	3146A16728	08-Apr-22	Nor 1253	22456	08-Oct-21
Stanford DS36	33213	17-Aug-20	Vaisala HMP23	S2430007	03-Aug-20

Notes
We certify that the above product was duly tested and found to be within the specification at the points measured (except where indicated). Measurements are traceable to reference sources calibrated to National Standards. Where no national or international standards exist, traceability is to standards maintained by the manufacturer. Our Quality Management System has been assessed to comply with BS EN ISO 9001:2015 - BSI Certificate number FS 25913. Tests were carried out in environmental conditions controlled to the extent appropriate to the instrument's specification. All relevant test certificates are available for inspection.
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CERTIFICATE OF CALIBRATION

ISSUED BY	Gracey & Associates	BSI CERTIFICATE	FS 25913
DATE OF ISSUE	10 January 2023	CERTIFICATE NUMBER	2023-0111
DATE OF CALIBRATION	06 January 2023		
CALIBRATION INTERVAL	12 months		PAGE 1 OF 2

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TEST ENGINEER
Jamie Bishop
[redacted]

APPROVING SIGNATORY
Greg Rice
[redacted]

Equipment **B&K 4231, s/n: 2384975**
Description Calibrator - Acoustic - Class 1, Hottinger Bruel & Kjaer UK Ltd
Customer Gracey & Associates

Standards
BS EN 60942

Conditions

Atmospheric Pressure	100.6kPa
Temperature	21.3°C
Relative Humidity	42.8%

Calibration Data

Output Level	93.9 dB
Frequency	1000.0 Hz

Calibration Reference Sources

Equipment	S/N	Last Cal	Equipment	S/N	Last Cal
B&K 4134 L	1935995	08-Oct-21	Druck DPI 141	479	06-Aug-20
HP 34401	3146A16728	08-Apr-22	Nor 1253	22456	08-Oct-21
Stanford DS36	33213	17-Aug-20	Vaisala HMP23	S2430007	03-Aug-20

Notes

We certify that the above product was duly tested and found to be within the specification at the points measured (except where indicated). Measurements are traceable to reference sources calibrated to National Standards. Where no national or international standards exist, traceability is to standards maintained by the manufacturer. Our Quality Management System has been assessed to comply with BS EN ISO 9001:2015 - BSI Certificate number FS 25913. Tests were carried out in environmental conditions controlled to the extent appropriate to the instrument's specification. All relevant test certificates are available for inspection.
The uncertainties are for a confidence probability of not less than 95%.
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Hire and calibration of noise and vibration instruments under a BSI ISO 9001 quality management system, Cert No. FS 25913.

CERTIFICATE OF CALIBRATION

ISSUED BY	Gracey & Associates	BSI CERTIFICATE	FS 25913
DATE OF ISSUE	10 January 2023	CERTIFICATE NUMBER	2023-0131
DATE OF CALIBRATION	06 January 2023		
CALIBRATION INTERVAL	12 months	PAGE 1 OF 1	

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Tel: 01234 708835
www.gracey.co.uk

TEST ENGINEER
Jamie Bishop
[redacted]

APPROVING SIGNATORY
Greg Rice
[redacted]

Equipment **B&K 2250 G4A, s/n: 2506359**
Description G4A Sound Level Analyser, Hottinger Bruel & Kjaer UK Ltd
Customer Gracey & Associates

Standards
BS EN 61672-3

Conditions

Atmospheric Pressure	100.4kPa
Temperature	21.3°C
Relative Humidity	42.8%

Calibration Reference Sources

Equipment	S/N	Last Cal	Equipment	S/N	Last Cal
Druck DPI 141	479	06-Aug-20	HP 34401	3146A16728	08-Apr-22
Vaisala HMP23	S2430007	03-Aug-20			

Notes

We certify that the above product was duly tested and found to be within the specification at the points measured (except where indicated). Measurements are traceable to reference sources calibrated to National Standards. Where no national or international standards exist, traceability is to standards maintained by the manufacturer. Our Quality Management System has been assessed to comply with BS EN ISO 9001:2015 - BSI Certificate number FS 25913. Tests were carried out in environmental conditions controlled to the extent appropriate to the instrument's specification. All relevant test certificates are available for inspection.
The uncertainties are for a confidence probability of not less than 95%.
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Hire and calibration of noise and vibration instruments under a BSI ISO 9001 quality management system, Cert No. FS 25913.

CERTIFICATE OF CALIBRATION

0653

Date of Issue: 05 April 2023

Certificate Number: UCRT23/1477

Calibrated at & Certificate issued by:
ANV Measurement Systems
Beaufort Court
17 Roebuck Way
Milton Keynes MK5 8HL
Telephone 01908 642846 Fax 01908 642814
E-Mail: info@noise-and-vibration.co.uk
Web: www.noise-and-vibration.co.uk
Acoustics Noise and Vibration Ltd trading as ANV Measurement Systems

Approved Signatory [redacted]

K. Mistry

Customer [redacted]

Order No.

Test Procedure Procedure TP 14 Calibration of Sound Calibrators (60942:2017)

Description Acoustic Calibrator

Identification	*Manufacturer*	*Instrument*	*Model*	*Serial No.*
	Rion	Calibrator	NC-75	34334831

Public evidence of Type Approval Yes Approved by PTB

The calibrator has been tested as specified in Annex B of IEC 60942:2017. As public evidence was available, from a testing organisation responsible for approving the results of pattern evaluation tests, to demonstrate that the model of sound calibrator fully conformed to the requirements for pattern evaluation described in Annex A of IEC 60942:2017, the sound calibrator tested is considered to conform to all the class 1 requirements of IEC 60942:2017

ANV Job No. UKAS23/04250

Date Received 04 April 2023

Date Calibrated 05 April 2023

Previous Certificate *Dated* Initial Calibration
Certificate No.
Laboratory

This certificate is issued in accordance with the laboratory accreditation requirements of the United Kingdom Accreditation Service. It provides traceability of measurement to the SI system of units and/or to units of measurement realised at the National Physical Laboratory or other recognised national metrology institutes. This certificate may not be reproduced other than in full, except with the prior written approval of the issuing laboratory.

CERTIFICATE OF CALIBRATION	Certificate Number UCRT23/1477
UKAS Accredited Calibration Laboratory No. 0653	Page 2 of 2 Pages

Measurements

The sound pressure level generated by the calibrator (averaged over a 20 to 25 second period) in its WS2 configuration was measured five times (rotating the calibrator on the microphone each time) by the Insert Voltage Method using a microphone as detailed below. The mean of the results obtained is shown below.

The frequency of the sound from the calibrator was measured five times over a 20 to 25 second period and the average frequency calculated.

The total distortion + noise of the sound from the calibrator was measured, using a rejection filter distortion factor meter, five times over a 20 to 25 second period and the average distortion + noise calculated.

Test Microphone — *Manufacturer*: Brüel & Kjær — *Type*: 4134

Nominal Setting dB / Hz	Mean Level dB rel 20 µPa	Frequency	Distortion + Noise
94 / 1000	94.00 ± 0.10	1000.00 ± 0.12Hz	(0.14 ± 0.03) %

Environmental conditions during tests	Start	End	
Temperature	22.64	22.43	± 0.30 °C
Humidity	37.1	37.5	± 3.0 %RH
Ambient Pressure	101.068	101.072	± 0.030 kPa

The reported expanded uncertainty is based on a standard uncertainty multiplied by a coverage factor k=2, providing a coverage probability of approximately 95%. The uncertainty evaluation has been carried out in accordance with UKAS requirements.

The uncertainties refer to the measured values only with no account being taken of the ability of the instrument to maintain its calibration.

A small correction factor may need to be applied to the sound pressure level quoted above if the device is used to calibrate a sound level meter which is fitted with a free-field response microphone. See manufacturers handbook for details.

Note: Calibrator adjusted prior to calibration? NO

Additional Comments: The results on this certificate only relate to the items calibrated as identified above.
None

Calibrated by: K. Zablocki

R 1

END

CERTIFICATE OF CALIBRATION

Certificate Number	
UCRT23/1479	
UKAS Accredited Calibration Laboratory No. 0653	Page 2 of 2 Pages

Sound Level Meter Instruction manual and data used to adjust the sound levels indicated.

SLM instruction manual title	NL-52/NL-42 Description for IEC 61672-1		
SLM instruction manual ref / issue	No. 56034 21-03	Source	Rion
Date provided or internet download date	19 March 2021		

	Case Corrections	Wind Shield Corrections	Mic Pressure to Free Field Corrections
Uncertainties provided	Yes	Yes	Yes

Total expanded uncertainties within the requirements of IEC 61672-1:2013	YES		
Specified or equivalent Calibrator	Specified		
Customer or Lab Calibrator	Lab Calibrator		
Calibrator adaptor type if applicable	NC-74-002		
Calibrator cal. date	23 March 2023		
Calibrator cert. number	UCRT23/1384		
Calibrator cal cert issued by Lab	0653		
Calibrator SPL @ STP	94.04	dB	Calibration reference sound pressure level
Calibrator frequency	1001.98	Hz	Calibration check frequency
Reference level range	Single	dB	

Accessories used or corrected for during calibration - Wind Shield WS-10

Environmental conditions during tests	Start	End	
Temperature	22.09	22.06	± 0.30 °C
Humidity	39.8	41.7	± 3.00 %RH
Ambient Pressure	101.07	101.04	± 0.03 kPa

Indication at the Calibration Check Frequency				
Initial indicated level	94.0 dB	Adjusted indicated level	94.0	dB
Uncertainty of calibrator used for Indication at the Calibration Check Frequency ±			0.10	dB

Self Generated Noise				
Microphone installed -	Less Than	19.5	dB	A Weighting
Microphone replaced with electrical input device -			UR = Under Range indicated	

Weighting	A			C			Z		
	0.9	dB	UR	11.6	dB	UR	19.7	dB	UR

Self Generated Noise reported for information only and not used to assess conformance to a requirement

The reported expanded uncertainty is based on a standard uncertainty multiplied by a coverage factor $k=2$, providing a coverage probability of approximately 95%. The uncertainty evaluation has been carried out in accordance with UKAS requirements.

Additional Comments: The results on this certificate only relate to the items calibrated as identified above.

None

END

Calibrated by: BB/KZ

R 1

CERTIFICATE OF CALIBRATION

0653

Date of Issue: 05 April 2023

Certificate Number: UCRT23/1479

Calibrated at & Certificate issued by:
ANV Measurement Systems
Beaufort Court
17 Roebuck Way
Milton Keynes MK5 8HL
Telephone 01908 642846 Fax 01908 642814
E-Mail: info@noise-and-vibration.co.uk
Web: www.noise-and-vibration.co.uk
Acoustics Noise and Vibration Ltd trading as ANV Measurement Systems

Page 1 of 2 Pages

Approved Signatory [redacted]

K. Mistry

Customer [redacted]

Order No.

Description: Sound Level Meter / Pre-amp / Microphone / Associated Calibrator

Identification

Manufacturer	*Instrument*	*Type*	*Serial No. / Version*
Rion	Sound Level Meter	NL-52	01121102
Rion	Firmware		2.1
Rion	Pre Amplifier	NH-25	22398
Rion	Microphone	UC-59	22499
Rion	Calibrator	NC-74	34536109
	Calibrator adaptor type if applicable		NC-74-002

Performance Class: 1

Test Procedure: TP 10. SLM 61672-3:2013

Procedures from IEC 61672-3:2013 were used to perform the periodic tests.

Type Approved to IEC 61672-1:2013: Yes

If YES above there is public evidence that the SLM has successfully completed the applicable pattern evaluation tests of IEC 61672-2:2013

Date Received: 04 April 2023 ANV Job No. UKAS23/04250

Date Calibrated: 05 April 2023

The sound level meter submitted for testing has successfully completed the periodic tests of IEC 61672-3:2013, for the environmental conditions under which the tests were performed. As evidence was publicly available, from an independent testing organisation responsible for approving the results of pattern-evaluation tests performed in accordance with IEC 61672-2:2013, to demonstrate that the model of sound level meter fully conformed to the class 1 specifications in IEC 61672-1:2013, the sound level meter submitted for testing conforms to the class 1 specifications of IEC 61672-1:2013.

Previous Certificate	*Dated*	*Certificate No.*	*Laboratory*
	Initial Calibration		

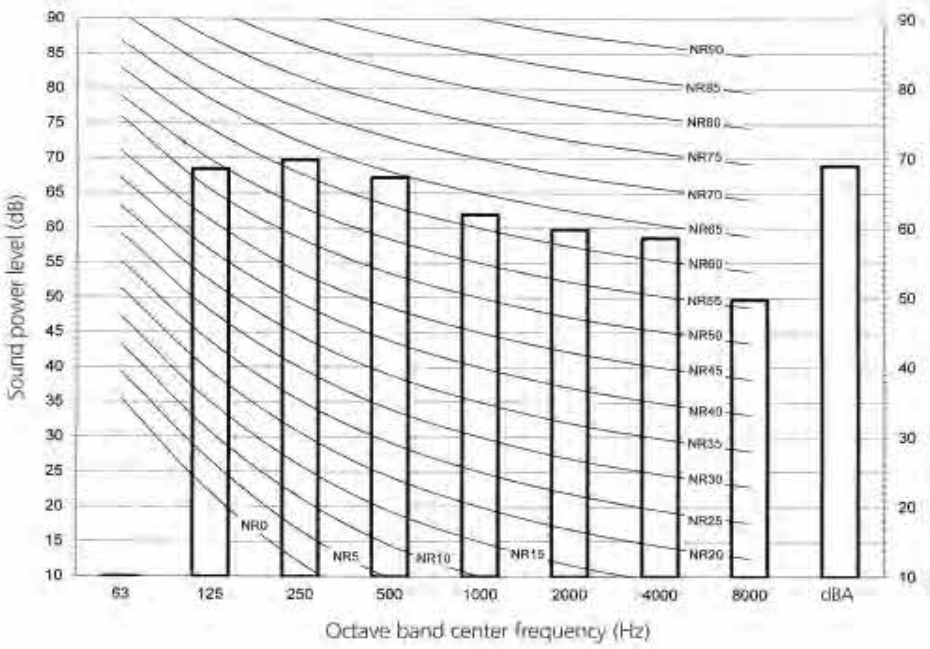
This certificate is issued in accordance with the laboratory accreditation requirements of the United Kingdom Accreditation Service. It provides traceability of measurement to the SI system of units and/or to units of measurement realised at the National Physical Laboratory or other recognised national metrology institutes. This certificate may not be reproduced other than in full, except with the prior written approval of the issuing laboratory

RZQSG140L7Y1B

11 Sound data

11 - 1 Sound Power Spectrum

RZQSG140LY1

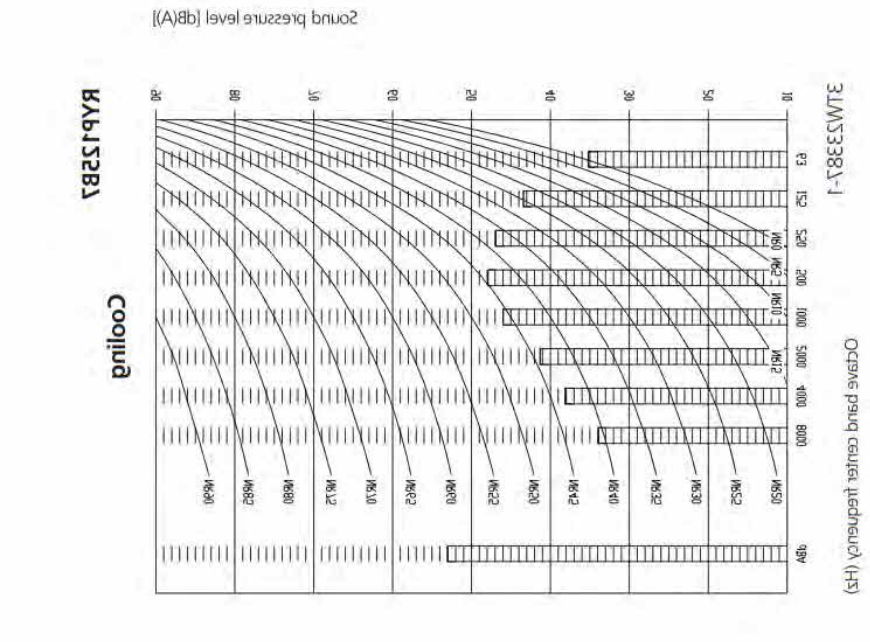


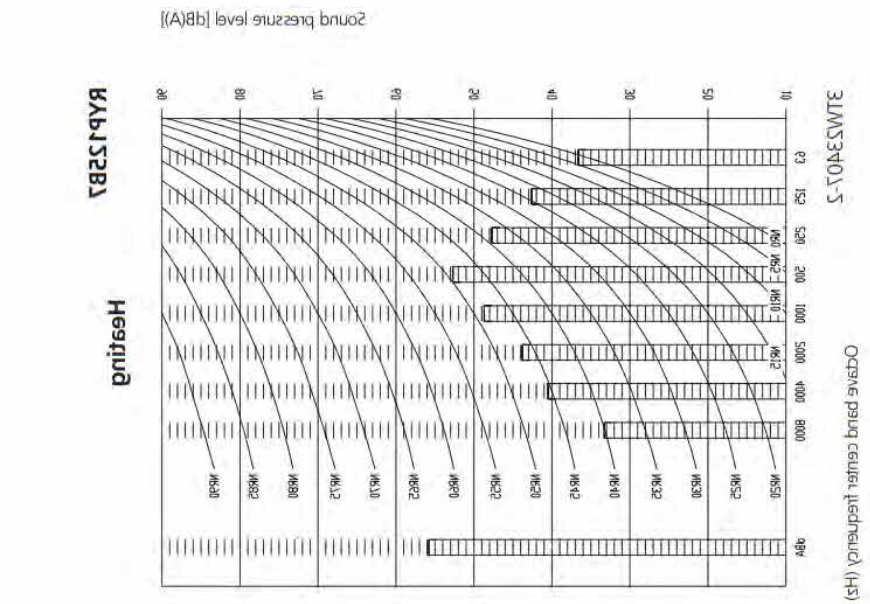
NOTES

1 dBA = A-weighted sound power level (A-scale according to IEC)
2 Reference acoustic intensity 0 dB = 10E-6μW/m^2
3 Measured according to ISO 3744

3D077785

RYP125B7W1 - Cooling

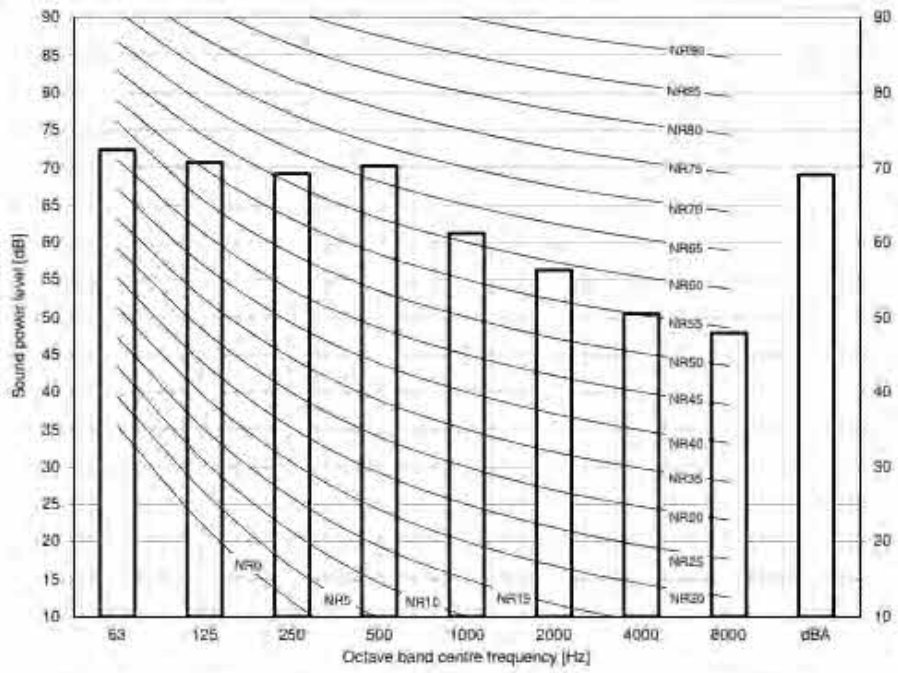




11 Sound data

11 - 1 Sound Power Spectrum

RZAG125NV1
RZAG125NY1



Notes
- dBA = A-weighted sound power level (A scale according to IEC).
- Reference acoustic intensity 0dB = 10E-6µW/m².
- Measured according to ISO 3744.

3D125161

Appendix D Information for BS8233:2014 Rigorous Calculation

Values	Source	63Hz	125Hz	250Hz	500Hz	1KHz	2KHz	4KHz	8KHz
R_{ew} External Wall SRI Values	Architect Specification and INSUL	30	45	50	56	64	67	68	68*
R_{rr} Roof SRI Values	Architect Specification and INSUL	28	43	51	57	62	62	62	62*
Absorbent Coefficient Plastered Walls/Ceiling	Woods Practical Guide to Noise Control	0.25	0.3	0.2	0.15	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05
Absorbent Coefficient Flooring Carpeted	Woods Practical Guide to Noise Control	0.05	0.05	0.1	0.3	0.5	0.65	0.7	0.65
Absorbent Coefficient Windows	Woods Practical Guide to Noise Control	0.08	0.15	0.06	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.02
*8KHz Figures not available so assumed to be same value as 4KHz figures									

Table 16 Information Used in Detailed Break in Calculation

Values	Source	63Hz	125Hz	250Hz	500Hz	1KHz	2KHz	4KHz	8KHz
D_{ne} Trickle Vent Values	Titan V75/C75 Acoustic Vent	37*	37	37	36.1	46.9	49.2	55.2	61.3
SRI Acoustic Glazing	Saint Gobain Acoustic Calculator STADIP SILENCE Double STADIP SILENCE 12.8 16 STADIP SILENCE 8.8	31	30	35	46	54	55	63	63
*63Hz Trickle Vent D_{ne} value not available so assumed to be same value as 125Hz value									

Table 17 Example of Acoustic Glazing and Trickle Vents Figures/Sources Information for Façade 5 Bedroom

Appendix E Mitigation at Building

Façade/Gable and Room	Floor	Acoustic Window Specification R_W (dB)	Acoustic Window Specification R_{W+ctr} (dB)	Acoustic Trickle Vent Specification $D_{n,e,w}$ (dB)	Acoustic External Door Specification R_w (dB)
Façade 5 Bedroom	Ground	44	N/A	48	44
Façade 4 Living Room	Ground & 1st	35	N/A	38	N/A
Façade 4 Bedroom	1st	35	N/A	38	N/A
Facade 3 Living Room	Ground & 1st	35	N/A	38	N/A
Façade 3 Bedroom	1st	35	N/A	38	N/A
Façade 1 Bedroom	Ground	35	N/A	38	35
Façade 2 Living Room	Ground & 1st	35	N/A	38	N/A
Façade 2 Bedroom	1st	35	N/A	38	N/A
Gable 2 Living Room	1st	35	N/A	38	N/A
Gable 1 Living Room	1st	N/A	38	40	N/A
Façade 6 Bedroom	Ground	40	N/A	40	40

Appendix 5: NPF4 and ALDP Policy Extracts

NPF4:

Policy 1: Tackling the climate and nature crises

Policy Intent:

To encourage, promote and facilitate development that addresses the global climate emergency and nature crisis.

Policy Outcomes:

Zero carbon, nature positive places

Policy:

When considering all development proposals significant weight will be given to the global climate and nature crises.

Policy 2: Climate mitigation and adaptation

Policy Intent:

To encourage, promote and facilitate development that minimises emissions and adapts to the current and future impacts of climate change.

Policy Outcomes:

Emissions from development are minimised; and
Our places are more resilient to climate change impacts.

Policy:

a) Development proposals will be sited and designed to minimise lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions as far as possible.
b) Development proposals will be sited and designed to adapt to current and future risks from climate change.
c) Development proposals to retrofit measures to existing developments that reduce emissions or support adaptation to climate change will be supported.

Policy 3: Biodiversity

Policy Intent:

To protect biodiversity, reverse biodiversity loss, deliver positive effects from development and strengthen nature networks.

Policy Outcomes:

Biodiversity is enhanced and better connected including through strengthened nature networks and nature-based solutions.

Policy:

a) Development proposals will contribute to the enhancement of biodiversity, including where relevant, restoring degraded habitats and building and strengthening nature networks and the connections between them. Proposals should also integrate nature-based solutions, where possible.
b) Development proposals for national or major development, or for development that requires an Environmental Impact Assessment will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that the proposal will conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity, including nature networks so they are in a demonstrably better state than without intervention. This will include future

management. To inform this, best practice assessment methods should be used. Proposals within these categories will demonstrate how they have met all of the following criteria:

i. The proposal is based on an understanding of the existing characteristics of the site and its local, regional and national ecological context prior to development, including the presence of any irreplaceable habitats;
ii. Wherever feasible, nature-based solutions have been integrated and made best use of;
iii. An assessment of potential negative effects which should be fully mitigated in line with the mitigation hierarchy prior to identifying enhancements;
iv. Significant biodiversity enhancements are provided, in addition to any proposed mitigation. This should include nature networks, linking to and strengthening habitat connectivity within and beyond the development, secured within a reasonable timescale and with reasonable certainty. Management arrangements for their long term retention and monitoring should be included, wherever appropriate; and
v. Local community benefits of the biodiversity and/or nature networks have been considered.

c) Proposals for local development will include appropriate measures to conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity, in accordance with national and local guidance. Measures should be proportionate to the nature and scale of development. Applications for individual householder development, or which fall within scope of (b) above, are excluded from this requirement.
d) Any potential adverse impacts, including cumulative impacts, of development proposals on biodiversity, nature networks and the natural environment will be minimised through careful planning and design. This will take into account the need to reverse biodiversity loss, safeguard the ecosystem services that the natural environment provides, and build resilience by enhancing nature networks and maximising the potential for restoration.

Policy 9: Brownfield, vacant and derelict land and empty buildings

Policy Intent:

To encourage, promote and facilitate the reuse of brownfield, vacant and derelict land and empty buildings, and to help reduce the need for greenfield development.

Policy Outcomes:

Development is directed to the right locations, maximising the use of existing assets and minimising additional land take.
The contribution of brownfield land to nature recovery is recognised and opportunities for use as productive greenspace are realised where appropriate.
Derelict buildings and spaces are regenerated to improve wellbeing and transform our places

Policy:

a) Development proposals that will result in the sustainable reuse of brownfield land including vacant and derelict land and buildings, whether permanent or temporary, will be supported. In determining whether the reuse is sustainable, the biodiversity value of brownfield land which has naturalised should be taken into account.
b) Proposals on greenfield sites will not be supported unless the site has been allocated for development or the proposal is explicitly supported by policies in the LDP.
c) Where land is known or suspected to be unstable or contaminated, development proposals will demonstrate that the land is, or can be made, safe and suitable for the proposed new use.

d) Development proposals for the reuse of existing buildings will be supported, taking into account their suitability for conversion to other uses. Given the need to conserve embodied energy, demolition will be regarded as the least preferred option.

Policy 12: Zero waste

Policy Intent:

To encourage, promote and facilitate development that is consistent with the waste hierarchy.

Policy Outcomes:

The reduction and reuse of materials in construction is prioritised.
Infrastructure for zero waste and to develop Scotland's circular economy is delivered in appropriate locations.

Policy:

a) Development proposals will seek to reduce, reuse, or recycle materials in line with the waste hierarchy.
b) Development proposals will be supported where they:
    i. reuse existing buildings and infrastructure;
    ii. minimise demolition and salvage materials for reuse;
    iii. minimise waste, reduce pressure on virgin resources and enable building materials, components and products to be disassembled, and reused at the end of their useful life;
    iv. use materials with the lowest forms of embodied emissions, such as recycled and natural construction materials;
    v. use materials that are suitable for reuse with minimal reprocessing.
c) Development proposals that are likely to generate waste when operational, including residential, commercial, and industrial properties, will set out how much waste the proposal is expected to generate and how it will be managed including:
    i. provision to maximise waste reduction and waste separation at source, and
    ii. measures to minimise the cross contamination of materials, through appropriate segregation and storage of waste; convenient access for the collection of waste; and recycling and localised waste management facilities.
d) Development proposals for waste infrastructure and facilities (except landfill and energy from waste facilities) will be only supported where:
    i. there are no unacceptable impacts (including cumulative) on the residential amenity of nearby dwellings, local communities; the transport network; and natural and historic environment assets;
    ii. environmental (including cumulative) impacts relating to noise, dust, smells, pest control and pollution of land, air and water are acceptable;
    iii. any greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the processing and transportation of waste to and from the facility are minimised;
    iv. an adequate buffer zone between sites and sensitive uses such as homes is provided taking account of the various environmental effects likely to arise;
    v. a restoration and aftercare scheme (including appropriate financial mechanisms) is provided and agreed to ensure the site is restored; vi. consideration has been given to co-location with end users of outputs.
e) Development proposals for new or extended landfill sites will only be supported if:
    i. there is demonstrable need for additional landfill capacity taking into account Scottish Government objectives on waste management; and
    ii. waste heat and/or electricity generation is included. Where this is considered impractical, evidence and justification will require to be provided.
f) Proposals for the capture, distribution or use of gases captured from landfill sites or waste water treatment plant will be supported.

g) Development proposals for energy-from-waste facilities will not be supported except under limited circumstances where a national or local need has been sufficiently demonstrated (e.g. in terms of capacity need or carbon benefits) as part of a strategic approach to residual waste management and where the proposal:
    i. is consistent with climate change mitigation targets and in line with circular economy principles;
    ii. can demonstrate that a functional heat network can be created and provided within the site for appropriate infrastructure to allow a heat network to be developed and potential local consumers have been identified;
    iii. is supported by a heat and power plan, which demonstrates how energy recovered from the development would be used to provide electricity and heat and where consideration is given to methods to reduce carbon emissions of the facility (for example through carbon capture and storage)
    iv. complies with relevant guidelines published by Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA); and
    v. has supplied an acceptable decarbonisation strategy aligned with Scottish Government decarbonisation goals.

Policy 13: Sustainable transport

Policy Intent:

To encourage, promote and facilitate developments that prioritise walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport for everyday travel and reduce the need to travel unsustainably.

Policy Outcomes:

Investment in transport infrastructure supports connectivity and reflects place-based approaches and local living.
More, better, safer and more inclusive active and sustainable travel opportunities.
Developments are in locations which support sustainable travel.

Policy:

a) Proposals to improve, enhance or provide active travel infrastructure, public transport infrastructure or multi-modal hubs will be supported. This includes proposals:
    i. for electric vehicle charging infrastructure and electric vehicle forecourts, especially where fuelled by renewable energy.
    ii. which support a mode shift of freight from road to more sustainable modes, including last-mile delivery.
    iii. that build in resilience to the effects of climate change and where appropriate incorporate blue and green infrastructure and nature rich habitats (such as natural planting or water systems).
b) Development proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the transport requirements generated have been considered in line with the sustainable travel and investment hierarchies and where appropriate they:
    i. Provide direct, easy, segregated and safe links to local facilities via walking, wheeling and cycling networks before occupation;
    ii. Will be accessible by public transport, ideally supporting the use of existing services;
    iii. Integrate transport modes;
    iv. Provide low or zero-emission vehicle and cycle charging points in safe and convenient locations, in alignment with building standards;
    v. Supply safe, secure and convenient cycle parking to meet the needs of users and which is more conveniently located than car parking;
    vi. Are designed to incorporate safety measures including safe crossings for walking and wheeling and reducing the number and speed of vehicles;

vii. Have taken into account, at the earliest stage of design, the transport needs of diverse groups including users with protected characteristics to ensure the safety, ease and needs of all users; and
viii. Adequately mitigate any impact on local public access routes.

c) Where a development proposal will generate a significant increase in the number of person trips, a transport assessment will be required to be undertaken in accordance with the relevant guidance.
d) Development proposals for significant travel generating uses will not be supported in locations which would increase reliance on the private car, taking into account the specific characteristics of the area.
e) Development proposals which are ambitious in terms of low/no car parking will be supported, particularly in urban locations that are well-served by sustainable transport modes and where they do not create barriers to access by disabled people.
f) Development proposals for significant travel generating uses, or smaller-scale developments where it is important to monitor travel patterns resulting from the development, will only be supported if they are accompanied by a Travel Plan with supporting planning conditions/obligations. Travel plans should set out clear arrangements for delivering against targets, as well as monitoring and evaluation.
g) Development proposals that have the potential to affect the operation and safety of the Strategic Transport Network will be fully assessed to determine their impact. Where it has been demonstrated that existing infrastructure does not have the capacity to accommodate a development without adverse impacts on safety or unacceptable impacts on operational performance, the cost of the mitigation measures required to ensure the continued safe and effective operation of the network should be met by the developer. While new junctions on trunk roads are not normally acceptable, the case for a new junction will be considered by Transport Scotland where significant economic or regeneration benefits can be demonstrated. New junctions will only be considered if they are designed in accordance with relevant guidance and where there will be no adverse impact on road safety or operational performance.

Policy 14: Design, quality and place

Policy Intent:

To encourage, promote and facilitate well designed development that makes successful places by taking a design-led approach and applying the Place Principle.

Policy Outcomes:

Quality places, spaces and environments.
Places that consistently deliver healthy, pleasant, distinctive, connected, sustainable and adaptable qualities.

Policy:

a) Development proposals will be designed to improve the quality of an area whether in urban or rural locations and regardless of scale.
b) Development proposals will be supported where they are consistent with the six qualities of successful places:

Healthy: Supporting the prioritisation of women's safety and improving physical and mental health.

Pleasant: Supporting attractive natural and built spaces.

Connected: Supporting well connected networks that make moving around easy and reduce car dependency

Distinctive: Supporting attention to detail of local architectural styles and natural landscapes to be interpreted, literally or creatively, into designs to reinforce identity

Sustainable: Supporting the efficient use of resources that will allow people to live, play, work and stay in their area, ensuring climate resilience, and integrating nature positive, biodiversity solutions.

Adaptable: Supporting commitment to investing in the long-term value of buildings, streets and spaces by allowing for flexibility so that they can be changed quickly to accommodate different uses as well as maintained over time.

Further details on delivering the six qualities of successful places are set out in Annex D.

c) Development proposals that are poorly designed, detrimental to the amenity of the surrounding area or inconsistent with the six qualities of successful places, will not be supported.

Policy 15: Local Living and 20 minute neighbourhoods

Policy Intent:

To encourage, promote and facilitate the application of the Place Principle and create connected and compact neighbourhoods where people can meet the majority of their daily needs within a reasonable distance of their home, preferably by walking, wheeling or cycling or using sustainable transport options.

Policy Outcomes:

Places are planned to improve local living in a way that reflects local circumstances.
A network of high-quality, accessible, mixed-use neighbourhoods which support health and wellbeing, reduce inequalities and are resilient to the effects of climate change.
New and existing communities are planned together with homes and the key local infrastructure including schools, community centres, local shops, greenspaces, health and social care, digital and sustainable transport links.

Policy:

a) Development proposals will contribute to local living including, where relevant, 20 minute neighbourhoods. To establish this, consideration will be given to existing settlement pattern, and the level and quality of interconnectivity of the proposed development with the surrounding area, including local access to:
   sustainable modes of transport including local public transport and safe, high quality walking, wheeling and cycling networks;
   employment;
   shopping;
   health and social care facilities;
   childcare, schools and lifelong learning opportunities;
   playgrounds and informal play opportunities, parks, green streets and spaces, community gardens, opportunities for food growth and allotments, sport and recreation facilities;
   publicly accessible toilets;
   affordable and accessible housing options, ability to age in place and housing diversity.

Policy 16: Quality homes

Policy Intent:

To encourage, promote and facilitate the delivery of more high quality, affordable and sustainable homes, in the right locations, providing choice across tenures that meet the diverse housing needs of people and communities across Scotland.

Policy Outcomes:

Good quality homes are at the heart of great places and contribute to strengthening the health and wellbeing of communities.

Provision of land in the right locations to accommodate future need and demand for new homes, supported by the appropriate infrastructure.

More energy efficient, net zero emissions homes, supporting a greener, fairer and more inclusive wellbeing economy and community wealth building, tackling both fuel and child poverty

Policy:

a) Development proposals for new homes on land allocated for housing in LDPs will be supported.
b) Development proposals that include 50 or more homes, and smaller developments if required by local policy or guidance, should be accompanied by a Statement of Community Benefit. The statement will explain the contribution of the proposed development to:
    i. meeting local housing requirements, including affordable homes;
    ii. providing or enhancing local infrastructure, facilities and services; and
    iii. improving the residential amenity of the surrounding area.
c) Development proposals for new homes that improve affordability and choice by being adaptable to changing and diverse needs, and which address identified gaps in provision, will be supported. This could include:
    i. self-provided homes;
    ii. accessible, adaptable and wheelchair accessible homes;
    iii. build to rent;
    iv. affordable homes;
    v. a range of size of homes such as those for larger families;
    vi. homes for older people, including supported accommodation, care homes and sheltered housing;
    vii. homes for people undertaking further and higher education; and
    viii. homes for other specialist groups such as service personnel.
d) Development proposals for public or private, permanent or temporary, Gypsy/Travellers sites and family yards and Travelling Showpeople yards, including on land not specifically allocated for this use in the LDP, should be supported where a need is identified and the proposal is otherwise consistent with the plan spatial strategy and other relevant policies, including human rights and equality.
e) Development proposals for new homes will be supported where they make provision for affordable homes to meet an identified need. Proposals for market homes will only be supported where the contribution to the provision of affordable homes on a site will be at least 25% of the total number of homes, unless the LDP sets out locations or circumstances where:
    i. a higher contribution is justified by evidence of need, or
    ii. a lower contribution is justified, for example, by evidence of impact on viability, where proposals are small in scale, or to incentivise particular types of homes that are needed to diversify the supply, such as self-build or wheelchair accessible homes. The contribution is to be provided in accordance with local policy or guidance.
f) Development proposals for new homes on land not allocated for housing in the LDP will only be supported in limited circumstances where:
    i. the proposal is supported by an agreed timescale for build-out; and
    ii. the proposal is otherwise consistent with the plan spatial strategy and other relevant policies including local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods;
    iii. and either:
        delivery of sites is happening earlier than identified in the deliverable housing land pipeline. This will be determined by reference to two consecutive years of the Housing Land Audit evidencing substantial

delivery earlier than pipeline timescales and that general trend being sustained; or
the proposal is consistent with policy on rural homes; or
the proposal is for smaller scale opportunities within an existing settlement boundary; or
the proposal is for the delivery of less than 50 affordable homes as part of a local authority supported affordable housing plan.

g) Householder development proposals will be supported where they:
   i. do not have a detrimental impact on the character or environmental quality of the home and the surrounding area in terms of size, design and materials; and
   ii. do not have a detrimental effect on the neighbouring properties in terms of physical impact, overshadowing or overlooking.

h) Householder development proposals that provide adaptations in response to risks from a changing climate, or relating to people with health conditions that lead to particular accommodation needs will be supported.

Policy 18: Infrastructure first

Policy Intent:

To encourage, promote and facilitate an infrastructure first approach to land use planning, which puts infrastructure considerations at the heart of placemaking.

Policy Outcomes:

Infrastructure considerations are integral to development planning and decision making and potential impacts on infrastructure and infrastructure needs are understood early in the development planning process as part of an evidenced based approach.
Existing infrastructure assets are used sustainably, prioritising low-carbon solutions.
Infrastructure requirements, and their planned delivery to meet the needs of communities, are clear.

Policy:

a) Development proposals which provide (or contribute to) infrastructure in line with that identified as necessary in LDPs and their delivery programmes will be supported.
b) The impacts of development proposals on infrastructure should be mitigated. Development proposals will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that provision is made to address the impacts on infrastructure. Where planning conditions, planning obligations, or other legal agreements are to be used, the relevant tests will apply.

Where planning obligations are entered into, they should meet the following tests:

- be necessary to make the proposed development acceptable in planning terms
- serve a planning purpose
- relate to the impacts of the proposed development
- fairly and reasonably relate in scale and kind to the proposed development
- be reasonable in all other respects

Planning conditions should only be imposed where they meet all of the following tests. They should be:

- necessary
- relevant to planning
- relevant to the development to be permitted
- enforceable
- precise
- reasonable in all other respect

Policy 20: Blue and green infrastructure

Policy Intent:

To protect and enhance blue and green infrastructure and their networks.

Policy Outcomes:

Blue and green infrastructure are an integral part of early design and development processes; are designed to deliver multiple functions including climate mitigation, nature restoration, biodiversity enhancement, flood prevention and water management.
Communities benefit from accessible, high quality blue, green and civic spaces.

Policy:

a) Development proposals that result in fragmentation or net loss of existing blue and green infrastructure will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that the proposal would not result in or exacerbate a deficit in blue or green infrastructure provision, and the overall integrity of the network will be maintained. The planning authority's Open Space Strategy should inform this.
b) Development proposals for or incorporating new or enhanced blue and/or green infrastructure will be supported. Where appropriate, this will be an integral element of the design that responds to local circumstances. Design will take account of existing provision, new requirements and network connections (identified in relevant strategies such as the Open Space Strategies) to ensure the proposed blue and/or green infrastructure is of an appropriate type(s), quantity, quality and accessibility and is designed to be multi functional and well integrated into the overall proposals.
c) Development proposals in regional and country parks will only be supported where they are compatible with the uses, natural habitats, and character of the park.
d) Development proposals for temporary open space or green space on unused or under used land will be supported.
e) Development proposals that include new or enhanced blue and/or green infrastructure will provide effective management and maintenance plans covering the funding arrangements for their long-term delivery and upkeep, and the party or parties responsible for these.

Policy 22: Flood risk and water management

Policy Intent:

To strengthen resilience to flood risk by promoting avoidance as a first principle and reducing the vulnerability of existing and future development to flooding.

Policy Outcomes:

Places are resilient to current and future flood risk.
Water resources are used efficiently and sustainably.
Wider use of natural flood risk management benefits people and nature.

Policy:

a) Development proposals at risk of flooding or in a flood risk area will only be supported if they are for:
    i. essential infrastructure where the location is required for operational reasons;
    ii. water compatible uses;
    iii. redevelopment of an existing building or site for an equal or less vulnerable use; or.
    iv. redevelopment of previously used sites in built up areas where the LDP has identified a need to bring these into positive use and where proposals demonstrate that long term safety and resilience can be secured in accordance with relevant SEPA advice.

The protection offered by an existing formal f lood protection scheme or one under construction can be taken into account when determining flood risk.

In such cases, it will be demonstrated by the applicant that:

- all risks of flooding are understood and addressed;
- there is no reduction in floodplain capacity, increased risk for others, or a need for future flood protection schemes;
- the development remains safe and operational during floods;
- flood resistant and resilient materials and construction methods are used; and
- future adaptations can be made to accommodate the effects of climate change.

Additionally, for development proposals meeting criteria part iv), where flood risk is managed at the site rather than avoided these will also require:

- the first occupied/utilised floor, and the underside of the development if relevant, to be above the flood risk level and have an additional allowance for freeboard; and
- that the proposal does not create an island of development and that safe access/ egress can be achieved.

b) Small scale extensions and alterations to existing buildings will only be supported where they will not significantly increase flood risk.
c) Development proposals will:
    i. not increase the risk of surface water flooding to others, or itself be at risk.
    ii. manage all rain and surface water through sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS), which should form part of and integrate with proposed and existing blue green infrastructure. All proposals should presume no surface water connection to the combined sewer;
    iii. seek to minimise the area of impermeable surface.
d) Development proposals will be supported if they can be connected to the public water mains. If connection is not feasible, the applicant will need to demonstrate that water for drinking water purposes will be sourced from a sustainable water source that is resilient to periods of water scarcity.
e) Development proposals which create, expand or enhance opportunities for natural flood risk management, including blue and green infrastructure, will be supported.

Policy 23: Health and safety

Policy Intent:

To protect people and places from environmental harm, mitigate risks arising from safety hazards and encourage, promote and facilitate development that improves health and wellbeing.

Policy Outcomes:

Health is improved and health inequalities are reduced.
Safe places protect human health and the environment.
A planned approach supports health infrastructure delivery.

Policy:

a) Development proposals that will have positive effects on health will be supported. This could include, for example, proposals that incorporate opportunities for exercise, community food growing or allotments.
b) Development proposals which are likely to have a significant adverse effect on health will not be supported. A Health Impact Assessment may be required.
c) Development proposals for health and social care facilities and infrastructure will be supported.

d) Development proposals that are likely to have significant adverse effects on air quality will not be supported. Development proposals will consider opportunities to improve air quality and reduce exposure to poor air quality. An air quality assessment may be required where the nature of the proposal or the air quality in the location suggest significant effects are likely.
e) Development proposals that are likely to raise unacceptable noise issues will not be supported. The agent of change principle applies to noise sensitive development. A Noise Impact Assessment may be required where the nature of the proposal or its location suggests that significant effects are likely.
f) Development proposals will be designed to take into account suicide risk.
g) Development proposals within the vicinity of a major accident hazard site or major accident hazard pipeline (because of the presence of toxic, highly reactive, explosive or inflammable substances) will consider the associated risks and potential impacts of the proposal and the major accident hazard site/pipeline of being located in proximity to one another.
h) Applications for hazardous substances consent will consider the likely potential impacts on surrounding populations and the environment.
i) Any advice from Health and Safety Executive, the Office of Nuclear Regulation or the Scottish Environment Protection Agency that planning permission or hazardous substances consent should be refused, or conditions to be attached to a grant of consent, should not be overridden by the decision maker without the most careful consideration.
j) Similar considerations apply in respect of development proposals either for or near licensed explosive sites (including military explosive storage sites).

Policy 26: Business and industry

Policy Intent:

To encourage, promote and facilitate business and industry uses and to enable alternative ways of working such as home working, livework units and micro-businesses.

Policy Outcomes:

Recovery within the business and industry sector is sustainable and inclusive.
Investment in the business and industrial sector contributes to community wealth building.

Policy:

a) Development proposals for business and industry uses on sites allocated for those uses in the LDP will be supported.
b) Development proposals for home working, live-work units and micro-businesses will be supported where it is demonstrated that the scale and nature of the proposed business and building will be compatible with the surrounding area and there will be no unacceptable impacts on amenity or neighbouring uses.
c) Development proposals for business and industry uses will be supported where they are compatible with the primary business function of the area. Other employment uses will be supported where they will not prejudice the primary function of the area and are compatible with the business/industrial character of the area.
d) Development proposals for business, general industrial and storage and distribution uses outwith areas identified for those uses in the LDP will only be supported where:
    i. It is demonstrated that there are no suitable alternatives allocated in the LDP or identified in the employment land audit; and
    ii. The nature and scale of the activity will be compatible with the surrounding area.
e) Development proposals for business and industry will take into account:
    i. Impact on surrounding residential amenity; sensitive uses and the natural and historic environment;
    ii. The need for appropriate site restoration at the end of a period of commercial use.

f) Major developments for manufacturing or industry will be accompanied by a decarbonisation strategy to demonstrate how greenhouse gas emissions from the process are appropriately abated. The strategy may include carbon capture and storage.

Aberdeen LDP 2023:

Policy B1: Business and Industrial Land

The Council will, in principle, support the development of the business and industrial land allocations set out in this Plan.

Land zoned for business and industrial uses on the Proposals Map, including already developed land, shall be retained for Class 4 (Business), Class 5 (General Industrial) and Class 6 (Storage and Distribution) uses and safeguarded from other conflicting development types. Other uses which may be suited to a business and industrial location, such as car showrooms and bus depots, shall be treated on their own merits. The expansion of existing uses within these locations will be permitted in principle.

Where business and industrial areas are located beside residential areas, we will restrict new planning permissions to Class 4 (Business). Buffer zones, which are appropriately sized and landscaped, may be required to separate these uses and safeguard residential amenity. Low amenity 'bad neighbour' uses must have regard to surrounding uses and their potential impact on the environment and existing amenity. In all cases, conditions may be imposed restricting levels of noise, hours of operation and external storage.

New business and industrial land proposals shall make provision for areas of recreational and amenity open space, areas of strategic landscaping, areas of wildlife value and footpaths, in accordance with the Open Space Strategy and any approved non-statutory planning guidance, planning briefs or masterplans. Within existing business and industrial areas, there shall be a presumption in favour of retaining green, open and landscaped spaces.

Facilities that directly support business and industrial uses may be permitted where they enhance the attraction and sustainability of the city's business and industrial land. Such facilities should be aimed at meeting the needs of businesses and employees within the business and industrial area rather than the wider area.

Policy CI1: Digital Infrastructure

All new commercial development and residential development where five or more units are proposed will be expected to have access to high-speed communications infrastructure.

Policy D1: Quality Placemaking

All development must ensure high standards of design, create sustainable and successful places and have a strong and distinctive sense of place which is a result of detailed contextual appraisal.

Proposals are required to ensure:

quality architecture, craftsmanship and materials;
a well considered layout, including biodiverse open space, high quality public realm and landscape design;
a range of sustainable transportation opportunities ensuring connectivity commensurate with the scale and character of the development.

Successful places will sustain and enhance the social, economic, environmental, wellbeing and cultural attractiveness of the city. Proposals will be considered against the following six essential qualities.

Distinctive
Welcoming
safe and pleasant
easy to move around
adaptable
resource efficient

A design strategy will be required to be submitted that demonstrates how a development meets these qualities. The design, scope and content will be proportionate to the scale and/or importance of the proposal.

Aberdeen Planning Guidance: Aberdeen Placemaking Process provides guidance where the production of planning briefs, development frameworks and masterplans are required.

Policy D2: Amenity

In order to ensure provision of amenity the following principles will be applied.

Development will be designed to:

make the most of any opportunities offered by the site to optimise views and sunlight through appropriate siting, layout and orientation;
ensure that occupiers are afforded adequate levels of amenity in relation to daylight, sunlight, noise, air quality and immediate outlook;
have a public face to the street to ensure natural surveillance, and active street frontages;
ensure that refuse and recycling facilities, cycle storage, low and zero carbon technology, plant and services are sensitively integrated into the design;
ensure that external lighting minimises light spillage into adjoining areas and the sky.

Residential developments will also:

ensure that occupiers are afforded adequate levels of privacy;
ensure minimum standards for internal floor space and private external amenity space in terms of quantity and quality;
provide no less than 50% usable amenity space where it is necessary to provide car-parking within a private court. Underground and/or decked parking will be expected in higher density schemes;
ensure minimal shading of external private and public spaces;
ensure all residents have access to usable private/ semi-private open spaces and sitting-out areas provided by way of balconies, terraces, private or communal gardens;
have a private face to an enclosed garden or court to ensure a sense of safety and enclosure.

Further guidance can be found within Aberdeen Planning Guidance: New Developments, and Landscape

Policy D5: Landscape Design

Development proposals will be designed with an effective, functional and attractive landscape framework supported by clear design objectives. The level of detail required will be appropriate to the scale of development.

Landscape design will:

be integrated early into the layout and design of the site, informing the spatial arrangement of both built and natural elements;
ensure a sense of place is maintained and enhanced through an assessment of the site and its surrounding landscape/seascape/ townscape character; and sympathetically incorporate existing key characteristics and features that contribute to landscape/seascape/ townscape character;

mitigate any negative landscape and visual impacts;
ensure physical connectivity to adjoining and nearby green spaces, buildings and features;
maximise adaptation and resilience of the built and natural environment to the effects of climate change, and mitigate the impacts of climate change;
protect and enhance biodiversity by designing the spatial arrangement of new and existing habitats to maximise connectivity between habitats within and around the site, including the design of SuDS, and through the careful use of informed habitat creation and planting design techniques;
impact positively on health and wellbeing; ensure active travel routes and areas of recreational / open space are designed to be well connected, inclusive and safe; and help to mitigate air, light and noise pollution.
be designed for low maintenance where feasible and appropriate to the design objectives.

Applications for new development must include a statement of landscape design objectives, hard and soft landscape design plans and specifications, and detailed maintenance proposals.

Further guidance can be found in the Aberdeen Planning Guidance: Landscape.

Policy H3: Density

The Council will seek an appropriate net density of development on all housing allocations and windfall sites. Net dwelling density includes those areas which will be developed for housing and directly associated uses, including access roads within the site, garden ground and incidental open space. For all residential developments over one hectare, the net density of new development is generally sought at no less than 50 dwellings per hectare. This is to achieve efficient use of land in terms of the scale and layout of the site and its context. Higher densities are expected within the city centre, in and around town centres, public transport nodes and on brownfield sites.

Policy H4: Housing Mix and Need

Housing developments of larger than 50 units are required to achieve an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes, in line with a masterplan. This mix should include smaller 1 and 2 bedroom units and should be reflected in both the market and affordable housing contributions.

An appropriate housing mix is expected in housing developments to reflect the diverse housing need in the area; this includes older people and disabled people. Where possible, housing units should demonstrate a design with accessibility and future adaptability in mind.

For smaller developments (fewer than 50 units), a suitable mix of dwelling types and tenure will be provided in the interests of placemaking and local housing need and demand.

Policy H5: Affordable Housing

Housing developments of five homes or more are required to contribute no less than 25% of the total number of homes as affordable housing.

Affordable housing requirements will be delivered on-site. Off-site provision of affordable housing requirements will only be considered where there is sufficient justification. Commuted Payments will only be accepted in certain circumstances, as set out in the Aberdeen Planning Guidance.

Housing development for occupation by ‘Key Workers’ will be supported in principle, with further advice set out in Aberdeen Planning Guidance.

Policy I1: Infrastructure Delivery and Planning Obligations

To create sustainable communities, development must be supported by the required infrastructure, services and facilities to deliver the scale and type of developments proposed. Where development either individually or cumulatively will place additional demands on community facilities or infrastructure that would necessitate new facilities or exacerbate deficiencies in existing provision, the

developer will be required to meet or contribute to the cost of providing or improving such infrastructure or facilities.

Infrastructure requirements relating to Masterplan Zone sites and other allocated sites outwith the Masterplan Zones are set out below. Actions for delivering infrastructure are described in the Local Development Plan Delivery Programme. Infrastructure requirements and the level of contributions will be required to be agreed with the Council in consultation with the accompanying Supplementary Guidance.

The precise level of infrastructure requirements and contributions will be agreed with the Council, and in consultation with other agencies where appropriate. The level of provision or contribution required will relate to the development proposed either directly or to the cumulative impact of development in the area and be commensurate to its scale and impact.

Masterplans will be expected to reflect the infrastructure requirements and contributions identified and should include a Delivery Statement setting out details of how the proposed development and supporting infrastructure will be delivered.

Depending on the scale of development proposed, developers shall have the opportunity to mitigate the impact of their development through the provision of new infrastructure in compliance with other relevant Local Development Plan policies. Otherwise the impact of development shall be mitigated through financial contributions that shall be used by the Council to deliver new or expand existing infrastructure and facilities.

Policy NE2: Green and Blue Infrastructure

Green Space Network

Development proposals will seek to protect, support and enhance the Green Space Network (identified on the Proposals Map). This broadly encompasses the wildlife, biodiversity, ecosystem services & functions, access, recreation, landscape and townscape value of the Green Space Network. Development that does not achieve this will not be supported.

Coherence of the Green Space Network should also be maintained when considering any development and infrastructure proposals. Where infrastructure projects or certain developments necessitate crossing the Green Space Network, they should maintain and enhance the coherence and quality of the network. In doing so, appropriate provision should be made for access across roads for wildlife and outdoor recreation.

Masterplans will determine the location, extent and configuration of the Green Space Network within the area, and its connectivity with the wider network.

Urban Green Space

We will protect, support and enhance the city's Urban Green Space (parks, playing fields, sports pitches, outdoor sport facilities, woods, food-growing spaces, or all other areas including smaller spaces not identified on the Proposals Map such as amenity space or garden ground). Development proposals that do not achieve this will not be supported.

Exceptions may be made when a suitable alternative and equally convenient and accessible area for public space is provided by the applicant for Urban Green Space purposes, for example through the replacement of school buildings, within the locality of the site. Where proposals would affect an outdoor sports facility, development may also be acceptable where it would be ancillary to and/or not affect its current and potential principal use for sport and training; or a clear excess of provision is demonstrated. In all cases, development will only be acceptable if it meets criteria set out in the Aberdeen Planning Guidance: Open Space and Green Infrastructure.

Open Space in New Development

We will require the provision of biodiverse, usable and appropriate open space in new developments to ensure functionality. Please see Aberdeen Planning Guidance: Open Space and Green

Infrastructure for information on how to calculate open space requirements, as well as different types of provision (including food-growing) and the expected accessibility and quality standards.

We will seek open space provision in all developments, including on brownfield sites. It may not be possible to increase the amount of open space on some brownfield sites, for example where existing buildings on the site are being retained. In these cases, appropriate design solutions to deliver on-site amenity will be sought in the first instance and commuted sums towards off-site provision or enhancement of existing open spaces will be sought where appropriate.

In areas where the Open Space Audit has shown that there is opportunity for improvement of existing open space, contributions may be sought to enhance existing provision instead of new provision being required. The Open Space Audit and Strategy provides details of any improvements or enhancements that may be required to open spaces in different areas of the city, and how the linkages between them may be improved. Further guidance is included in Aberdeen Planning Guidance: Open Space and Green Infrastructure.

Outdoor.Access.and.Core.Paths

New development will maintain and enhance the integrity of existing access rights to; land and water, Core Paths, other paths and rights of way, or safeguard potential access opportunities to these. This includes any impacts on access during the construction, operation, decommissioning and reclamation phases of development.

In exceptional circumstances routes may be affected by development. In these cases it will be necessary to maintain their condition, enhance their amenity value, or provide an alternative path or access (which links the same locations) that is safe, high quality and convenient for the public to use.

Development proposals should include new or improved provision for public access, permeability, and links to the core path network and green spaces for recreation and active travel within their design. We may seek Developer Obligations for Core Paths where appropriate. Further information about the standards of infrastructure required are set out within Aberdeen Planning Guidance: Open Space and Green Infrastructure.

Policy NE4: Our Water Environment

Flood Risk & Management

Development will not be supported if:

1. It increases the current and/or future risk of flooding on site or elsewhere
    a) by reducing the ability of the functional flood plain to store and convey water; or
    b) through the discharge of additional surface water; or
    c) by harming flood defences;
2. It would be at risk of flooding itself; or
3. Adequate provision is not made for watercourses to be maintained as or restored to naturalised channels wherever possible with riparian buffer strips including for maintenance access and erosion prevention; or
4. It would require the construction of new or strengthened flood defences unless flood protection measures to an appropriate standard are a planned measure in a current flood risk management plan.

The piecemeal reduction of functional floodplains will be avoided. Development on the functional floodplain will only be considered where its location is essential for operational reasons and for water compatible uses. Development must be designed and constructed to remain operational during floods and not to impede water flow. Measures to protect against or manage flood risk will be required and any loss of flood storage capacity mitigated to achieve a neutral or better outcome.

Applicants will be required to provide a Flood Risk Assessment where a development may result in a material increase in the number of buildings at risk of flooding, area of land at risk of flooding, if there is an increase in land use vulnerability compared to the existing land use, or where it has been

indicated in the opportunity sites schedule that one will be prepared. Potential flood risk is determined by a screening process, including consideration of the indicative flood risk maps produced by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

There is a presumption against excessive engineering and culverting of waterbodies. Natural treatments of floodplains and other water storage features will be preferred wherever possible and supported by a flood risk assessment. There will be a requirement to restore existing culverted or canalised water bodies to a naturalised state where this is possible and supported by a flood risk assessment. Where the Council agrees that culverts are unavoidable for technical reasons, they should be designed to maintain existing flow conditions and aquatic life. Any proposals for new culverts should have a neutral impact on flood risk as demonstrated in a flood risk assessment and be linked to long term maintenance arrangements to ensure they are not the cause of flooding in the future.

Foul Drainage & Water Quality

Connection to the public sewer for foul drainage will be a prerequisite of all development where this is not already provided. Private wastewater treatment systems within the settlement boundary will not be permitted.

Surface Water Drainage

All new developments are required to incorporate SuDS to manage surface water, with the exception of single dwellings/extensions to residential properties or discharges to coastal waters. For change of use and/or redevelopment, opportunities should be sought to retrofit SuDS where appropriate.

SuDS components need to be selected based on specific site opportunities and constraints and provision should be addressed as part of a Drainage Impact Assessment (DIA) which details how surface water quality and quantity will be managed. DIAs will be required for new development proposals of 5 or more homes or 250 square metres non-residential floorspace. DIAs will also be required if the proposal falls within a sensitive area (identified in the TAN).

Aberdeen Planning Guidance: Flooding, Drainage and Water Quality provides further information on flooding and drainage.

Coastal Development

Development will not be supported in undeveloped coastal areas (shown on the Proposals Map). Exceptions to this general presumption will be considered where the proposal:

1. Is dependent on that coastal location given the purpose and operation of the development; and
2. There is no other suitable site, including brownfield land; and
3. It respects the character and value of the landscape, the natural and historic environment, and the recreational value of the surrounding area; or
4. There is an overriding environmental benefit from the proposal.

The exceptions listed above, where considered acceptable in principle must also meet all of the following criteria:

1. The development must not be located in an area at risk of coastal erosion or flooding (as demonstrated in a topographical survey showing that the development lies above the 200 year flood level plus additional allowances for climate change and freeboard);
2. Public access to and along the coast must be protected and promoted wherever possible; and
3. Where marine noise modelling is deemed necessary by the Council or key agencies, it must be demonstrated that adverse impacts on bottlenose dolphins, Atlantic salmon, and any other protected species will be avoided

Policy NE5: Trees and Woodland

Development should not result in the loss of, or damage to, trees and woodlands.

Development proposals will seek to increase tree and woodland cover and achieve the long-term retention of existing trees and woodlands that the planning authority consider worthy of retention. Particular emphasis is placed on the protection and ongoing management of Ancient Woodlands. Where tree removal takes place or is necessary for good arboricultural reasons, replacement planting will be required to ensure an overall net gain in tree cover. Development that does not achieve this will not be supported.

Buildings and infrastructure should be sited to allow adequate space for a tree's natural development, taking into account the predicted mature height, canopy spread and future rooting environment.

Where applicable, root protection areas should be established, and protective barriers erected prior to any work commencing. See relevant Aberdeen Planning Guidance for more information.

Policy R2: Degraded and Contaminated Land

The Council will require that all land that is degraded or contaminated, including visually, is either restored, reclaimed or remediated to a level suitable for its proposed use. This may involve undertaking site investigations and risk assessments to identify any actual or possible significant risk to public health or safety, or to the environment, including possible pollution of the water environment, that could arise from the proposals. Where there is potential for pollution of the water environment the Council will liaise with SEPA. The significance of the benefits of remediating a contaminated site, and the viability of funding this, will be taken into account when considering proposals for the alternative use of such sites.

Policy R5: Waste Management in New Developments

All new developments should have sufficient space for the storage of general waste, recyclable materials and compostable wastes where appropriate.

Flatted developments will require communal facilities that allow for the separate storage and collection of these materials. Recycling facilities should be provided in all new superstores or large supermarkets and in other developments where appropriate. Details of storage facilities and means of collection must be included as part of a planning application for any development which would generate waste. Further details are set out in Aberdeen Planning Guidance: Waste Management Requirements for New Development.

For proposals where we believe the potential savings on construction or demolition materials for recycling or reuse is likely to be significant, we will ask developers to prepare a Site Waste Management Plan as a condition of planning consent.

Policy R6: Low and Zero Carbon Buildings, and Water Efficiency

All new buildings will be required to demonstrate that a proportion of the carbon emissions reduction standard set by Scottish Building Standards will be met through the installation and operation of low and zero carbon generating technology. The relevant Building Standards and percentage contribution required is set out in Aberdeen Planning Guidance. The Aberdeen Planning Guidance will be kept under review to ensure the proportion of the carbon emissions reduction standard to be met by these technologies will increase over time.

This requirement does not apply to:

1. Alterations and extensions to buildings; or
2. Change of use or conversion of buildings; or
3. Ancillary buildings that are stand-alone having an area less than 50 square metres; or
4. Buildings which will not be heated or cooled, other than by heating provided solely for the purpose of frost protection; or
5. Buildings which have an intended life of less than two years.

To reduce the pressure on water abstraction from the River Dee, and the pressure on water infrastructure, all new buildings are required to use water saving technologies and techniques. The level of efficiency required, and types of efficiencies are detailed in Aberdeen Planning Guidance.

Further guidance on compliance with this policy is contained in Aberdeen Planning Guidance: Resources for New Developments.

Policy T2: Sustainable Transport

Proportionate to the scale and anticipated impact, new developments must demonstrate that sufficient measures have been taken to minimise traffic generated. New developments must be accessible by a range of transport modes, with an emphasis on active and sustainable transport, and the internal layout of developments must prioritise walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport. Proposals should be designed to allow for public transport penetration which should be available within 400 metres from the centre of the development.

Transport Assessments and Travel Plans will be required where thresholds set out in Aberdeen Planning Guidance are exceeded.

Where sustainable transport links to and from new developments are not in place, developers will be required to provide infrastructure to support such facilities or a suitable contribution towards implementation.

Development of new communities should be accompanied by an increase in local services as well as employment opportunities that reduce the need to travel.

Recognising that there will still be instances in which people will require to travel by car, initiatives such as car sharing, alternative fuel vehicles and Car Clubs will also be supported where appropriate.

Existing access rights, including Core Paths, rights of way and paths within the wider network will be protected and enhanced. Where development proposals impact on the access network, the principle of the access must be maintained at all times by the developer through provision of suitable alternative routes approved by the Council.

Further information is contained in the relevant Aberdeen Planning Guidance which should be read in conjunction with this policy.

Policy T3: Parking

City Centre

Within the City Centre boundary – as specified in the Proposals Map – the principle of ‘zero parking’ shall be applied with respect to all new development. Limited vehicle parking will only be permitted when demonstrated as necessary for the servicing/operation of businesses and buildings, and for customer drop off/pick up arrangements. Where possible, such parking should preferably be provided at basement level within buildings and not on ground or street level where this would be at the expense of an active frontage onto a public street, public space or private open space. The needs of disabled people will be considered for all proposals.

Inner and Outer City

In inner city areas, low or no car development will be supported in suitable locations where there is adequate access to active travel and public transport options. Where this is not possible, development shall be required to comply with the parking standards set out in Aberdeen Planning Guidance: Transport and Accessibility. Low car development is encouraged within conservation areas.

Alternative Fuel Vehicle Infrastructure

Where residential parking is permissible, new developments are required to install appropriate electric vehicle charging infrastructure either in the form of active or passive provision. Details of requirements for all parking facilities at non-residential developments should include the provision of charging

stations for electric vehicles. Ratios and requirements for electrical vehicle charging are set out in Aberdeen Planning Guidance: Transport and Accessibility.

Cycle Parking Developments should include covered and secure cycle parking facilities in accordance with the standards set out in Aberdeen Planning Guidance: Transport and Accessibility.

New Parking

Proposals for car parking that are not directly related to new developments will not be supported.

Policy WB1: Healthy Developments

Developments are required to provide healthy environments, reduce environmental stresses, facilitate physical activity and promote physical and mental wellbeing.

National and major developments, and those requiring an Environmental Impact Assessment must submit a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) to enhance health benefits and mitigate any identified impacts on the wider determinants of health; this may involve planning obligations.

Further guidance can be found in Aberdeen Planning Guidance: Health Impact Assessments.

Policy WB3: Noise

In cases where significant exposure to noise is likely to arise from development, a Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) will be required as part of a planning application.

There will be a presumption against noise generating developments, as identified by a NIA, being located close to noise sensitive developments, such as existing or proposed housing, while housing and other noise sensitive developments will not normally be permitted close to existing noisy land uses without suitable mitigation measures in place to reduce the impact of noise to an acceptable level.

Development within or near to Noise Management Areas (NMAs) and Quiet Areas (QAs) will not be permitted where this is likely to contribute to a significant increase in exposure to noise or a deterioration of noise conditions in these areas, or where this will reduce the size of, or cause an increase in the noise level within, the QA.

Further information on NIAs, NMAs and QAs, including maps of these areas, can be found in the relevant Aberdeen Planning Guidance which should be read in conjunction with this policy.

Appendix 6A: Housing Demand, Health and Land Supply Supporting Information

- **Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership's Independent Living and Specialist Housing Market Position Statement (2024-2034)**
- **Aberdeen Local Housing Strategy 2025 – 2030 – Evidence base**
- **Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Housing Needs & Demand Assessment: 2023 -2028**
- **National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes: Framework (2015)**

Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership

A caring partnership

Independent Living and Specialist Housing Provision

Market Position Statement 2024 - 2034

Foreword 3
Context 5
Whose needs are we looking to meet? 6
Older People 7
Current Provision and Future Requirements 8
Care Homes 8
Amenity, Sheltered and Very Sheltered Housing 11
Independent Living for Older People 11
Current Provision and Future Requirements 11
People living with Disabilities 12
Children and young people with lifelong care and support needs 12
Specialist Support 12
Residential Support 13
Current Provision and Future Requirements 13
Brain Injury 15
Neurological Conditions 15
Current Provision and Future Requirements 15
Bariatric Care 16
Current Provision and Future Requirements 18
People living with Alcohol and Substance Use 19
Current Provision and Future Requirements 19
Current Provision and Future Requirements 23
People subject to justice orders including those who are leaving prison 25
Current Provision and Future Requirements 26
Homelessness 27
People Experiencing Homelessness 27
Demand for Temporary Accommodation 27
Support Needs for Homeless applicants 28
Current provision and future requirements 28
Supply Gap 28
Support Provision 28
Upcoming legislation 30
Displaced Households 30
Current Provision and Future Need 30
Unaccompanied Asylum-seeking children and young people 32
Current Provision & Future Need 32
Conclusion 33
Next Steps 34
1. Definition of terms 36
2. Integrated Impact Assessment ..... Error! Bookmark not defined.

3. Summary table 36
References 36
Appendix 1: Definition of Terms 37

Foreword

This Market Position Statement (MPS) outlines ACHSCP's vision, commitment, and expectations for accommodation across the city for people with specialist requirements, from 2024 until 2034, and sets out an aspiration that will help to ensure that accommodation provision in Aberdeen will meet the city's demographic need for the future. The Housing for Varying Needs design guide has been utilised since 1999 and sets out the design standards for mainstream housing to achieve and work to "barrier free housing". The aim is to provide a home that is flexible enough to allow a person to live independently for most of their life, and which meets the existing and future needs of the household.

The purpose of developing this MPS is to highlight to accommodation providers and service providers our understanding of the current and future needs in relation to specialist provision in Aberdeen.

This document will be used when Aberdeen City Council (ACC) is preparing its Local Housing Strategy (LHS) and the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP), and when Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and social care providers are planning service provision in the City.

A short life working group was convened in Spring 2023 to oversee the development of the MPS, consisting of a wide range of stakeholders and partners from both within and outwith ACHSCP. Links were made with ACC's Housing for Varying Needs Steering Group and the Mental Health Forensic Accommodation Steering Group. Various workshops were held, followed by individual and groups meetings to gather and discuss the relevant information required. All of the stakeholders were consulted and contributed to the final draft of the MPS.

Acknowledging that needs will be continually developing and changing, and that not all relevant information is currently readily available, the MPS will be reviewed as part of the IJB Delivery Plan to ensure this remains relevant to emerging needs.

ACHSCP has worked with service providers, colleagues and teams within ACHSCP, and more widely with partners to develop a detailed analysis and understanding, as far as possible, of the accommodation needs of our citizens with specialist requirements.

In addition to considering the links to the ACHSCP Strategic Plan, the ACHSCP Workforce Plan and Community Planning Aberdeen's Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) were also considered when developing the MPS. It also references current projects delivered following production of previous single service statements such as the MPS for Complex Care.

The Independent Living and Specialist Housing Provision Market Position Statement has had due regard to the needs of the ageing population and unpaid carers, whose health and wellbeing can be greatly impacted when service users do not have safe and secure accommodation.

A thorough evaluation was undertaken of the needs of people living in:

- care homes;
- amenity housing;
- sheltered and very sheltered housing;
- forensic mental health accommodation; and
- their own home whilst receiving care at home.

The range of needs considered included:

- acquired brain injury;
- neurological conditions;
- bariatric needs;
- substance use;
- mental health and learning disability;
- those currently within children's social work services;
- homelessness

- justice social work; and
- young people with lifelong care support needs.

People with these needs tend to be disproportionately affected by lengthy delays in hospital, out of area placements and breakdown in community support services.

In developing the MPS, challenges were identified relating to the availability of suitable accommodation, funding, recruitment and retention of specially qualified workforce and data. ACHSCP is working closely with partners to understand these challenges and to overcome them, and will continue to involve providers, people who use services and their loved ones in this work.

ACHSCP want people to live in their local communities, in appropriate environments that will be their home for as long as they need it, and which allows them to access the best services most relevant to their needs. Our ambition is to see communities playing an active role in people's experience of care and support, promoting robust community connections and inclusion. By clearly demonstrating the priority we place on this, and outlining how ACHSCP will work with partners, we hope to see significant and meaningful progress in the development of specialist accommodation for people in Aberdeen City.

Context

The Independent Living and Specialist Provision Housing Market Position Statement aims to answer three main questions related to accommodation within Aberdeen City:

- What accommodation provision do we have now?
- What accommodation do we need in the short term?
- What accommodation do we need longer term to provide for future needs?

The intention is to identify any gaps in provision and the accommodation that will be required.

This Market Position Statement has been informed by the Population Needs Assessment 2023 of people across Aberdeen City. The impacts on those individuals with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 have been considered. An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) (Appendix 2) has been completed and the recommendations from this have been incorporated into the Market Position Statement. It includes analysis of the current population who have unmet needs and anticipated projections of future demand for services, including the number of people in need of support and the budget available for the commissioning of services.

The focus of the MPS is those people who, by reason of a long-term health condition, require specialist provision in relation to their accommodation. It is recognised that, whilst it is not the purpose of this document, prevention and early intervention will greatly support people to remain in mainstream homes independently for longer. In addition, the increased use of Technology Enabled Care (TEC), enhanced Care at Home and Hospital at Home, and the provision of specialist equipment and adaptations to existing properties are all key enablers to support people living in their own homes for as long as possible, but there will always be a need for more specialist accommodation provision to meet particularly challenging needs.

By aligning the provision of specialist housing to the Getting It Right For Everyone (GIRFE) principles and embedding a human rights approach in the way we consider how care needs are met, we aim to ensure that people can live in their own homes with dignity and independence for as long as possible.

ACHSCP utilise a collaborative commissioning approach, which embeds the Ethical Commissioning Principles when procuring and commissioning future services. This approach includes engagement with providers, staff and people with lived experience when designing the service to be provided. The Independent Review of Adult Social Care outlined these principles focussing on achieving better outcomes for people.

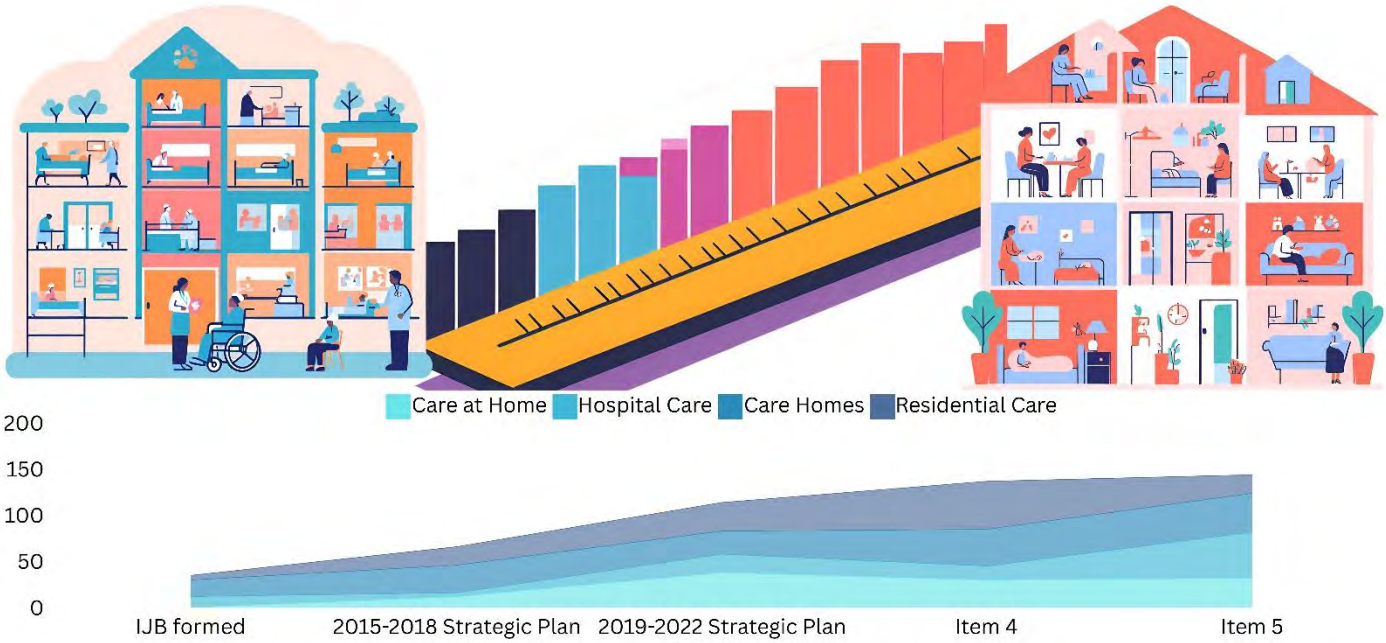
Previous Market Position Statements that have been published have been referenced within this document. The Complex Care Market Position Statement and Mental Health and Learning Disability Residential and Supported Living Market Position Statements were produced to inform the market of current and future need, and detail opportunities for new provision or re-provision, in addition to setting out how services will be delivered in future. These can be found on the Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnerships website - www.aberdeencityhscp.scot.

Whose needs are we looking to meet?

Supporting people to remain independent in their homes and in good health is central to our overall vision for the people of Aberdeen City. Having access to housing which is suitable and adaptable is essential to living independently. This can be challenging for some people who are affected by ill health or certain life circumstances, where mainstream housing is not able to meet their needs. Working with people with lived experience as partners recognises that no one is defined by their condition or the circumstances they find themselves in.

Having housing provision which is adapted to suit areas of identified need will reduce barriers for people, which can sustain increased independence and reduced levels of need. Not having this in place is likely to increase pressure on the health and social care system through delays in hospital discharges and unnecessary deteriorations in health which require higher levels of care and support. Gaps in provision for people in the following circumstances have been identified and are detailed below.

For illustrative purposes only, Final graphic still in development



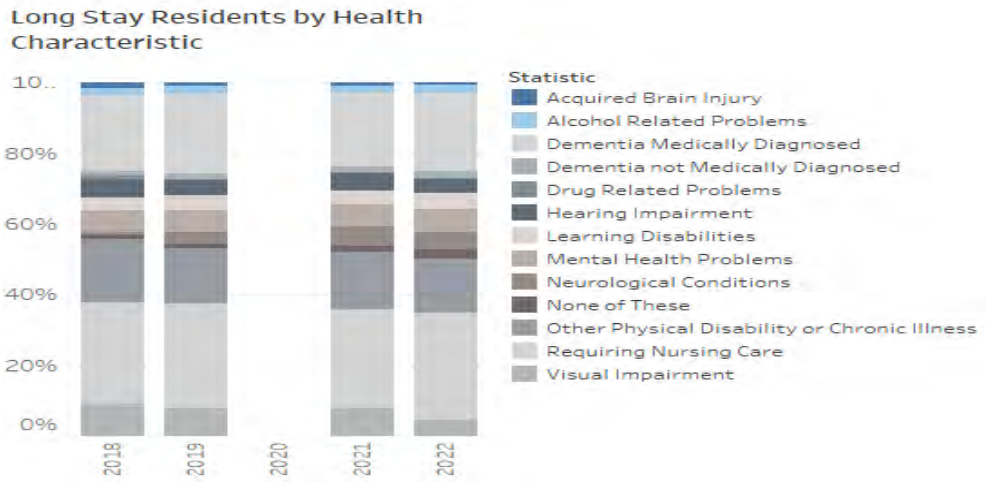
Older People

In Aberdeen City it is projected that the number of people aged 75 years and over will increase by 28.2% by 2033. There will be a 16.1% increase in the number of people over 75 by 2038.[1] Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership continues to develop approaches to ageing well which support all adults to consider what plans they should make for the future to support them as they age. This includes considerations around housing and future support needs. There are also options available that enable older people to remain in their own mainstream homes for longer, including access to adaptations, Housing Support, Care at Home, and Technology Enabled Care.

Whilst the majority of older people live independently at home throughout older age, many are affected by changes in health, cognitive ability, and mobility as they get older which may require different types of housing provision. Data for 2020-2022 from the National Records of Scotland show the average life expectancy of an adult in Aberdeen is 76.9 years for males and 80.7 years for females. The data for 2019 – 2021 shows that in Aberdeen City the average healthy life expectancy is 60.2 years for males and 61.4 years for females, which indicates a significant period where people will not be in the best of health.

Demand for social care services is increasing as people live longer and live at home with more complex needs. The number of people living with a long-term condition is also rising. It is estimated that in Aberdeen approximately 66% of adults over the age of 65 will be living with multi-morbidity.

In Aberdeen there are approximately 250 people with a medical diagnosis of dementia known to, and actively working with health and social care services. This indicates that the need for a range of housing provision is directly linked to conditions which are more common for older people. Recent analysis by the Networked Data Lab indicates that where an older person is admitted to hospital in Grampian they are doing so at an older age (median 80 years) and that they are sicker at point of admission than they were 5 years ago. A higher proportion are also affected by dementia/delirium at point of admission.[2] Suitable housing options are needed for older people to support timely discharge from hospital. Patients with longer stays (more than three weeks) in hospitals tend to have poorer health outcomes and may require more support upon discharge.[3] Deterioration in patients' general health due to lack of movement and loss of independence while in hospital are factors in this as well as effects on a patient's emotional state.



Source: Public Health Scotland Hospital Long Stays by Health Characteristic 2022

Frailty can affect people as young as 50 years old, but is more common for older people with 10% of people over 65 in Scotland living with frailty.[4] When a person is living with frailty, their body systems are gradually

[1] Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Housing Need & Demand Assessment 3: 2023 -2028
[2] NHS Grampian Health Intelligence
[3] Han et.al Evaluation of the association of Length of Stay in Hospital and Outcomes
[4] Who we are, what we do (ihub.scot)

losing their in-built reserves, leaving them vulnerable to significant changes in their health or circumstances.[5] Increased frailty is a common contributor to changes in functional ability for older people, affecting mobility and ability to carry out daily living tasks. This can lead to a need for more care and a change of accommodation that better supports this.

Dementia is a collective term for a range of diseases of the brain which cause damage over time leading to deterioration in brain and body health. Dementia accounts for 10% of the deaths in Scotland according to National Records of Scotland. Like frailty, dementia is not an inevitable part of ageing, but it predominantly affects older people.[6] The effects of dementia may require environmental adaptations, additional support and accommodation equipped to meet these needs. The Scottish Housing and Dementia Framework sets out specific considerations which should be made when supporting people living with dementia such as incorporating dementia friendly design principles into new build properties. People living with early on-set dementia (under 65 years) experience additional challenges, particularly in relation to work, family life and finances which could affect their housing needs.

Where a person is living with advanced dementia, they may require high levels of care and support, including nursing level care as outlined in Scottish Government Dementia in Scotland: Everyone's Story . For some people this includes specialist dementia care provided in a secure environment and Aberdeen City has two services dedicated to care for those with dementia.

Nursing care homes fees on average in Scotland were £5,776 per month in 2023. In Aberdeen comparative costs were £7,396 per month. In the production of this Market Position Statement, care homes, nursing homes, amenity, extra care, sheltered and very sheltered housing provision have been evaluated to gauge capacity to deliver independent living which indicates the gap in housing need in the city.

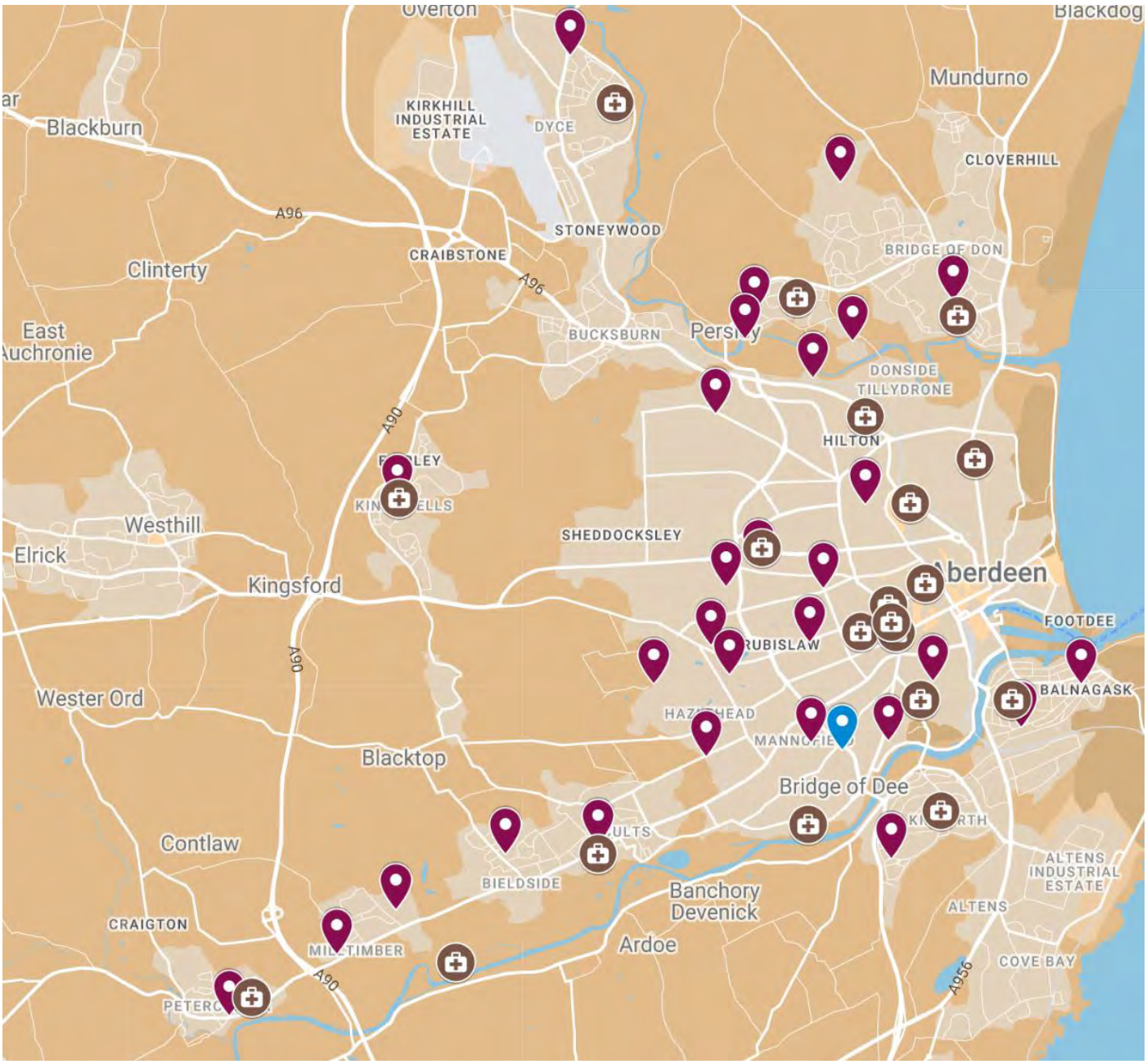
Current Provision and Future Requirements

Care Homes

Public Health Scotland's Care home census for adults in Scotland highlights that demand for care homes has declined. Aberdeen City has a similar trend, with a 22% reduction in demand in 2011 and the number of registered places has reduced by 18% in 2023 which is more than the national average. The reduction in care home demand is due to many reasons such as affordability, improved estate planning for retirement, better outcomes in other care settings and lack of local authority funded places.

Aberdeen City has 30 care homes registered to support over 65's which are split over the three localities Central, North, and South Care Homes: Aberdeen City – Google My Maps

[5] Ageing Frailty Draft Standards April 2024.pdf (healthcareimprovementscotland.scot)
[6] Care home census for adults in Scotland



All of the remaining care homes in Aberdeen operate at near capacity, with on average, 4 or fewer vacancies per home. The ACHSCP Care Management Team often have waiting lists for local authority funded beds due to shortage of local authority funded beds, unlike private beds which are more readily available, but are dependent on demand from self-funding service users.

Within Aberdeen City there is a gap in provision of care home places for people under the age of 65 who require 24-hour care but are dependent on services provided within a care home setting. The majority of care homes have specialist beds where they provide dementia care, but more often than not data is not recorded in relation to their use as residents are in care because of other age-related care needs[7]. With the decline in available care home beds, rising costs of nursing care, and the complexities of varying registration to cater for the needs of under 65's within a care home setting, it is essential that the existing capacity is maximised.

It has been identified that specialist housing provision to support other independent living models with a focus on meeting people's specific specialist needs without age restrictions is required to meet future demand. This could include increased provision of Technology Enabled Care and models such as very sheltered housing. ACHSCP does not intend to develop its own residential care homes nor significantly increase funding on

[7] Care Homes and GP Practices: Aberdeen City – Google My Maps

local authority funded beds. However, there is still a need to meet the requirements of self-funded citizens who wish to have a residential setting, and it is anticipated that this demand will grow.

Any proposed future care home builds should include cognisance to the availability of the area infrastructure at the pre-planning stage. For example, difficulty can be caused by not engaging with General Practitioners with regard to their patient list capacity and the capacity to enrol more patients at the practice.

Amenity, Sheltered and Very Sheltered Housing[8]

Amenity housing is designed for people who are usually 55 years and above with functional and support needs. There are two main types of amenity properties: stand-alone cottages, which are sometimes referred to as 'pensioners cottages', and the amenity/amenity plus properties that are located in former sheltered housing accommodation. The latter are fitted with a telecare/warden call system that enables people to call for assistance when required. People living in this type of accommodation are likely to have a lower level of care and support needs, compared to those living in sheltered housing.

Sheltered housing is designed for people of pensionable age in grouped developments. Most developments have common areas to allow people to meet and socialise and include facilities such as laundry. A 24-hour call system is available for emergencies.

Very sheltered housing provides an enhanced level of care and is allocated to people of pensionable age. Staff are available on-site 24 hours a day and tenants may choose to benefit from a cooked meal daily. A similar level of care and support is provided in extra care housing however, there is no age restriction for this type of accommodation.

Independent Living for Older People

Castlehill Housing Association introduced an independent living model for older people across six sites in Aberdeen. This replaced the sheltered housing provision that was previously delivered at these sites. The model is designed for people aged 55 years and over and aims to provide a safe and secure environment for tenants.

The properties provide a range of accessible features and may include communal facilities. Tenants can access community alarm in emergencies if appropriate. An enhanced housing management is provided by staff on site who can provide support with signposting to other services that may be required.

Current Provision and Future Requirements

There are six very sheltered housing services and one extra care housing service in Aberdeen (where the pensionable age restriction does not apply). The **Health and Social Care Cost Benefits of Housing Older People** report outlines NHS, Local Authority and Health and Social Care Partnerships collaborative working which provides better outcomes for older people being accommodated in very sheltered and extra care housing. Some of the benefits are reduced loneliness, improved psychological wellbeing, mental health and memory, unplanned hospital stays, reduced number of hospital callouts to NHS111, fewer community nurse visits, and residents are 22% less likely to enter long term care.

Aberdeen City Council are experiencing lower demand for multi storey sheltered accommodation, and this has been the case for some time. This has given rise to a Special Lettings Initiative in order to more effectively utilise the available housing stock, but this has only partially addressed the issue. There may be mileage in considering the available housing stock for this target group alongside the growing demand for additional support, for example, Very Sheltered Housing and Extra Care housing (supported living for people of all ages). It will be important that these considerations take account of the increasing demand from citizens to live well at home for as long as possible, and the necessity to design services around the service user needs, for example, hybrid living with care that increases as the needs of the individual increases.

It is anticipated that there will be a growing demand for Very Sheltered Housing in Aberdeen to meet the increasing complex needs of an older population. To this end, ACHSCP, ACC, and relevant partners have initiated early discussions to progress a proposal to increase the volume of very sheltered housing units in the city whilst reducing the number sheltered housing units. This aligns with the focus referred to above to help enable people to live within their own homes. It is anticipated that there is scope for additional independent providers in Aberdeen to meet the needs of self-funding residents over the long term.

[8] Definition of Terms Page 226 - Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Housing Needs & Demand Assessment 3

People living with Disabilities

Disability is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as a long-lasting health condition that limits daily activity. Identified areas of need related to specific disabilities are included where there are identified gaps and a need for further consideration and development of provision.

Children and young people with lifelong care and support needs

Children and young people with lifelong support needs and their families have been included in this Market Position Statement because by the time these children are 12 years old it can usually be ascertained if they will require lifelong care.

There are a small but significant and growing number of children and young people that will require some form of specialist care setting due to their complex care needs, and these needs will continue into their adulthood. The nature of the care and support needs are broad, including but not limited to learning disabilities, cognitive/sensory impairment, mental health challenges, complex autism, extensive trauma background, and complex physical health disability. Life-long targeted specialist health and care support can be required to sustain the young person throughout their adult years in a home setting or alternative residential/24-hour care setting.

For a small, but significant proportion of children supported by the Children's Social Work service in Aberdeen, the specialist care will be crucial to supplementing the support provided by unpaid carers, usually family members, and to allowing the young person/young adult to remain within their home and continue to be part of their family network. Where this support is not provided, crisis can arise and result in a requirement for residential care. For other young people with complex needs, the specialist care will be to support the young adult in a more independent residential setting on a life-long basis.

Specialist Support

The home-based specialist support in place at present for children and young people with lifelong care and support needs can range from social care to more specialist nursing care. Support often requires to be bespoke and can be up to and including 24 hours per day, often requiring more than one specialist carer at a time. Some people are likely to have progressive and/or life-limiting illnesses, although there can be considerable unpredictability to these, hence it is often vital to prepare for care in the longer term. In addition to the self-directed, commissioned, or social work support that is in place, some children meet the high eligibility criteria for receiving NHS Homecare up to the age of 18, usually but not exclusively for children who require ventilation overnight. This support allows parents/carers to sleep and negates the need for hospitalisation. This is a provision that is not replicated by the NHS when this group reach adulthood, therefore resourcing defaults to statutory social work services to provide as a means of retaining this group within family and kinship care settings.

Some of these young people will have been cared for by the local authority during their childhood years and as *Looked after Children under the Children (Scotland) Act 1995*, they may be eligible for Continuing Care packages, for example, to remain supported in the care setting they were living in on their 16th birthday, up until they reach the age of 21, where it is proposed that this extended care will allow them to progress towards more independent living.

Looked after children may well be disconnected from their birth family and community links, and a number will have experienced a background of trauma which can compound their presenting needs on a lifelong basis. Some may be living within foster families and this commitment will not routinely be sustainable beyond the young person reaching adulthood. Whilst fostering 'payment for skills' is restricted to 18 years of age, (or to the age of 21 for some children who can be then supported to live more independently) alternative means of offering financial support to this group of carers may allow some arrangements to continue into adulthood where this negates the need to source alternative residential care for the adult with such complex needs.

Residential Support

Demand for residential support for children and young people with lifelong care needs outstrips available resources in the city. There are a number of children with the most complex of care and support needs, who require to be placed in residential children's homes or residential schools out with the city. Due to a shortage of carers recruited, trained, and supported by Aberdeen City (a situation which is reflective of the national picture), there is also a reliance on sourcing foster families from independent fostering agencies, many of which again are out of the area. This geographical distance can increase professional challenge in identifying resources which will meet needs for this group in adulthood. The struggle to secure care and intensive support within the city can be specifically challenging due to the complexity of needs exhibited by this group of children, including those with complex health and disabilities, learning difficulties, mental health challenges, cognitive impairments and those whose trauma background compounds their capacity to manage day to day living without intensive support.

Current Provision and Future Requirements

The Scottish Government's Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy to 2034 outlines, among other groups, the care of young people with lifelong care and support needs. To contextualise, it is relevant to note that in recent years, parents and carers are requesting specialist housing and care support when their child is younger than had previously been the case. The reasons for this are likely to be multi-faceted, linked to increased life expectancy of children with life-limiting/complex health needs, an increase in mental health challenges of parents and carers which can impact on capacity to be cared for in a family setting, increased knowledge and diagnosis of health needs confirming a view that specialist intervention should be provided by statutory services.

Whilst Adult social work will not have had scope to confirm their assessment of need for all transitioning young people, the demand for those who will age out of children's social work provision within the next 3 years is largely known already. Twenty young people currently have needs that indicate specialist housing and care accommodation will be required (by 2027) when this group reach adulthood. Specialist care refers to those who require care to be provided by those with an increased level of skill, training, and experience. By nature, these carers usually require to be recruited via the commissioning of services, or through the use of specialist care agencies, and are costed accordingly. This data does not include the wider number of young people who are supported through the use of Personal Assistants, financed through their receipt of a Direct Payment at the standard rates of allowance.

This group of young people with the most complex of needs, and their parents and carers, can struggle when case responsibility transitions from Children's Social Work to Adult Social Work. This is in part due to the differing duties, rights, and responsibilities in relation to the care of children, as well as to the fact that children's services and adult services have their own respective eligibility criteria in operation. Additionally, the transition to adulthood comes at the same time as attendance within specialist education provision is ceasing. This coupled with what parents and carers tell us is an increasing sense of isolation and panic, renders the transition to adulthood as vulnerable to crisis and care arrangement breakdown.

Predicating demand beyond the initial 3 year period with any certainty presents greater challenges. For most parents with a child with a disability/complex health needs, the teenage years are the most challenging. While parents/carers may, with support, be able to meet the needs of their pre-teen child, for safety, health or protection concerns as adolescence progresses such arrangements can become unsustainable.

The forecast in the medium term (by 2030) is that 19 children will age out of children's social work and will require specialist housing and care accommodation. In the longer term (up to 2034) current forecasting indicates that 16 children will require specialist provision. It should be noted that intervention and support continues to take place, to build resilience and skills with these young people, striving to ensure that where it is possible, as many can be supported to remain in the care of their family networks when they reach adulthood. This potential is maximised through implementation of Self Directed Support (SDS) packages of care.

In the production of the Mental Health and Learning Disability Residential and Supported Living Accommodation - Market Position Statement 2021 - 2026, of the 8 Care homes which provided information in the service provider survey in 2021 only 1 (with 20 placements within it) was fully in line with the expectations of the current Market Position Statement. All others required varying levels of upgrading. Of the remaining seven services, two are Aberdeen City Council owned and are the focus of this Market Position Statement in the short to medium term forecast as our statutory landlords. The remaining five care homes are owned by Registered Social Landlords (RSL) with the operators of the buildings being a mixture of the RSLs themselves, third sector organisations and an independent care provider.

Many of the properties within the Learning Disability Portfolio have been operational for at least 15 years and at time of development met the needs of those who they were developed for. The care and support needs of Adults with Learning Disabilities has changed over the years resulting in a number of issues within the current properties. Managing compatibility across this client group is more challenging nowadays resulting in shared communal areas causing stress and distress at times, steep stairs to bedrooms, small floor space in key rooms in the house limiting those who are wheelchair dependant. Vacancies also exist in properties where there is contract non-compliance and poor Care Inspectorate Grades.

Aberdeen City Council delivers new homes and works with Registered Social Landlord partners to deliver the required affordable housing. Successful projects that have recently been delivered in partnership with Hillcrest Housing Association and Sanctuary Scotland include Newton of Charleston and North Anderson Drive, where specialist provision homes have been delivered through the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) for ACHSCP with no capital costs being required from Aberdeen City Council or ACHSCP.

It is anticipated that there will be a growing need for care and support with mental health and learning disability requirements in Aberdeen as life expectancy increases within the relevant population.

This will likely require additional resource allocation towards MHLD placements and to addressing current environmental conditions.

Brain Injury

Acquired Brain Injuries (ABI) are caused by conditions such as strokes, tumours, blood clots, seizures, infections (encephalitis, meningitis), anoxia (lack of oxygen to the brain), metabolic disorders, drug use and neurotoxic poisoning. ABI is not hereditary, congenital degenerative or caused by birth trauma.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) is defined by Headway UK as a jolt or blow to the head or penetrating head injury that disrupts the normal functioning of the brain. Causes of TBI are road traffic accidents, falls, gunshot wounds, sports related injuries, military actions, physical violence, and injuries caused by trauma.

Causes of Acquired Brain Injury - Headway UK ABI Information and Statistics

Neurological Conditions

A neurological condition is any condition that affects the brain, spinal cord, and/or nerves. Neurological conditions can be caused by a variety of factors, including genes, the environment, bacterial or viral infections and traumatic injuries or accidents. It's not always possible to tell what causes a neurological condition, although research is ongoing.[9]

An integrated rehab network across Grampian state there are gaps in appropriate long-term housing and care provision that supports individuals with ongoing cognitive support and behavioural support needs. There is a lack of provision across Grampian that will provide support, which has led to out of area placements or trying to create options within current providers.

Current Provision and Future Requirements

ACHSCP hosts Neuro rehabilitation for Grampian. This means that ACHSCP hold responsibility for the delivery of this service on behalf of NHS Grampian, Aberdeenshire Health and Care Partnership and Moray Health and Social Care Partnership.

A decision was taken by the IJB in March 2022 to shorten the notice period on the contract for the transitional living arrangements in Craig Court. This created the conditions to repurpose the budget and provided an opportunity to enable a full review of the neurorehabilitation pathway. This has included exploring how best to provide transitional living support in different ways to support the needs of patients across Grampian.

[9] What is a neurological condition? – The Neurological Alliance (neural.org.uk)

From co-creating a revised pathway with a range of stakeholders in line with principles of good rehabilitation, an exploration of how transitional living could be delivered differently, using a localised community rehabilitation model as opposed to a centralised bricks and mortar model was agreed.

From examining patient profile of usage of Grampian Specialist rehabilitation, looking at 2022 data, a total of 1,514 patients went through ARI ward 203/204, acute neurological settings, and a total of 81 patients from Grampian through Neuro Rehabilitation Unit (NRU) at Woodend.

ARI responds to acute admissions whilst NRU offers step down from ARI and a small number of step up from wider community into a rehabilitation focused environment.

From reviewing patient recovery destinations, 75% patients go home directly, some with ongoing care.

A number are suitable for a HomeLink approach whereby a multi-disciplinary therapy team support the patient at home, allowing rehabilitation goals established on ward to be transferred to the much more applied environment of a patient's own home.

When reviewing the pathway, a limiting factor identified was therapy capacity within NRU. Timely access to rehab and the intensity of rehabilitation provided has an impact upon outcomes and length of stay.

It is anticipated that the re-modelling of the neuro rehab pathway could be delivered in two phases. Phase one would focus upon investment in additional staffing to support a rehabilitation in community model. After an evaluation to consider impact, a second phase would focus on investing on additionality of what has worked and targeting any identified clinical or geographical gaps. Consideration will be given to proceeding with the plans in full having due regard to the developing financial environment.

Across Grampian, there are several providers who offer long term care placements and have a Care Inspectorate registration recognising their ability to support individuals with neurological conditions. However, providers have not been operating at full capacity and have existing waiting lists that include individuals from Aberdeen City and across Grampian. The ACHSCP Contracts Team have supported in commissioning bespoke care packages that have enabled individuals to remain in their communities, either in supported living or nursing home care environments. A broader geographical range of resources are required that can provide skilled quality care in an individual community.

There needs to be a response to the evaluation of phase one of the Neuro rehab pathway in order to understand impact of an increased community rehabilitation model and respond to gaps and opportunities identified by the stakeholders around this.

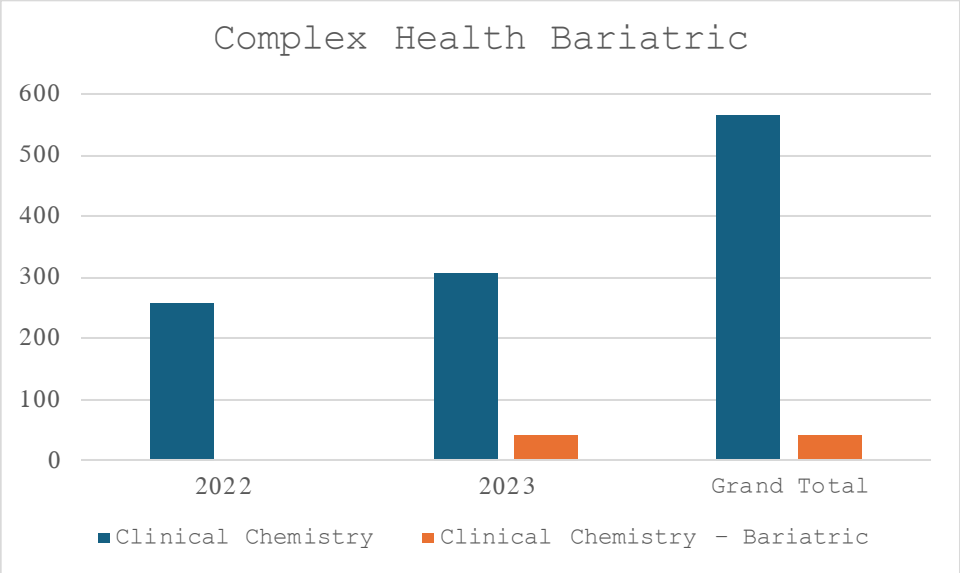
There needs to be sufficient adequately trained staff in care homes, that can be agile and responsive to individuals with neurological needs. Alongside this is a recognition of the need to access very specialist care for a small number of individuals annually. Exploration is required regarding how best and where to meet these needs.

Bariatric Care

Bariatric care is the care of people who typically weigh 25 stones or more. Obesity and its related conditions can significantly affect individual health and wellbeing. 29% of adults in Scotland would be considered

obese[10]. The ACHSCP's wider priorities around early intervention and prevention are also directed at tackling poor health related to obesity.

Data source:



https://www.nhs.scot/dataset/Bariatric care

There has been an increase in the number of people requiring specialist bariatric care. In some circumstances, bariatric conditions can result in a loss of mobility and the need for additional space standards and specialist aids. There may also be a need to increase the number of carers to manage care safely to enable people to live independently. Mainstream housing does not always accommodate these requirements and specialist provision is therefore required. Care workers and Occupational Therapists currently have concerns on planning for the future in how we care for those with bariatric needs.

Two 'bariatric standard' properties were delivered as part of the Aberdeen City Council's new-build programme in recent years. These benefit from additional space standards, robust fittings and accessibility features. An evaluation report highlighted tenants experienced improved levels of independence and a reduced requirement for care and support as a result of the design. In addition to the two new build properties, significant adaptations have been carried out to deliver a bariatric standard property in a sheltered housing development.

Those adults requiring bariatric care may also be subject to discrimination and stigma and may be susceptible to poor mental health. Housing requirements should not be considered in isolation of this, and a holistic and sensitive approach needs to be taken when determining need.[11]

Work is underway to meet the current unmet need through the Aberdeen City Local Housing Strategy (LHS) and the associated Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP).

The SHIP sets out local authority strategic investment priorities for housing over a 5-year period, specifically for affordable housing, with these strategic investment priorities being aligned with the priorities and outcomes set out in the local housing strategy.

The future need for bariatric care is difficult to predict, because robust data is not available to support future planning for this type of home, but the Housing Need and Demand Assessment identified an unmet need for 10 individuals living in Aberdeen City.

ACHSCP Dietetics Service and ACC Housing Service will continue to work collaboratively to identify and support individuals who may require specialist bariatric provision, and ensure early consideration is given to

[10] prevalence_causes__impact_1920_data_f_2023_updated_version.pdf (obesityactionscotland.org)
[11] obesity-and-mental-health-final-report-with-cover.pdf (obesityactionscotland.org)

future housing needs. To support this Aberdeen City Council's Housing Service is changing the way it records information to support identification of need in future.

Current Provision and Future Requirements

Currently there are three homes provided in Aberdeen City Council's housing stock designed specifically for bariatric care. The Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Housing Needs & Demand Assessment: 2023 -2028 identified the need for a further ten homes to meet existing and unmet need in the short term (up to 5 years) and predicted data shows that a total of 30 homes would be required to meet the increasing needs of the city by 2034. The issue of bariatric accommodation provision will require a whole system solution. ACHSCP will seek to contribute to the growing need through partnership working as opportunities arise.

People living with Alcohol and Substance Use

The Aberdeen City Alcohol and Drug Partnership (ADP) have a central role in reducing the use of and harm from alcohol and other drugs by supporting the delivery of the Alcohol Framework and delivering the Scottish Government Strategy "Rights, Respect and Recovery"

Within this context the ADP has three functions:

1. To identify the current issues and gaps where plans or improvements are needed
2. To co-ordinate efforts and work in partnership to deliver measurable improvements
3. To performance-manage and report achievements of the partnership

Problematic alcohol and drug use disproportionately affects deprived communities, where health outcomes are already poorer. Alcohol consumption directly impacts on population health with proven links to breast cancer, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, injury, stroke, and premature death.[12] Drug use also contributes to poor health and early death. Poor health as result of alcohol and drug use can lead to physical disability requiring additional support and treatment including nursing care. Older people who have used alcohol or drugs for many years are likely to present with complex co-occurring conditions.

There is a national commitment to preventing and reducing harm from the use of alcohol and drugs through methods such as high-quality early interventions. In January 2021, the Scottish Government launched the Residential Rehabilitation programme (2021–2026) to help improve access to residential rehab for individuals who use alcohol or drugs. The Scottish Government's stated aim is that access to residential rehab should be available in Scotland for everyone who wants it – and for whom it is deemed clinically appropriate – at the time they ask for it, in every part of the country[13]. ACHSCP has identified housing as an instrumental part to aid and support recovery.

Current Provision and Future Requirements

The Scottish Government response to unacceptably high levels of drugs deaths in Scotland was to launch National Mission: Alcohol and Drugs and Rights, Respect and Recovery: Alcohol and Drug Treatment Strategy. A new development of 23 units has been secured and funded for 3 years by the Scottish Government in relation to drug use. The North East Residential Rehabilitation facility, which is located in Aberdeenshire, has a dedicated programme for Aberdeen City residents to move back to the community.

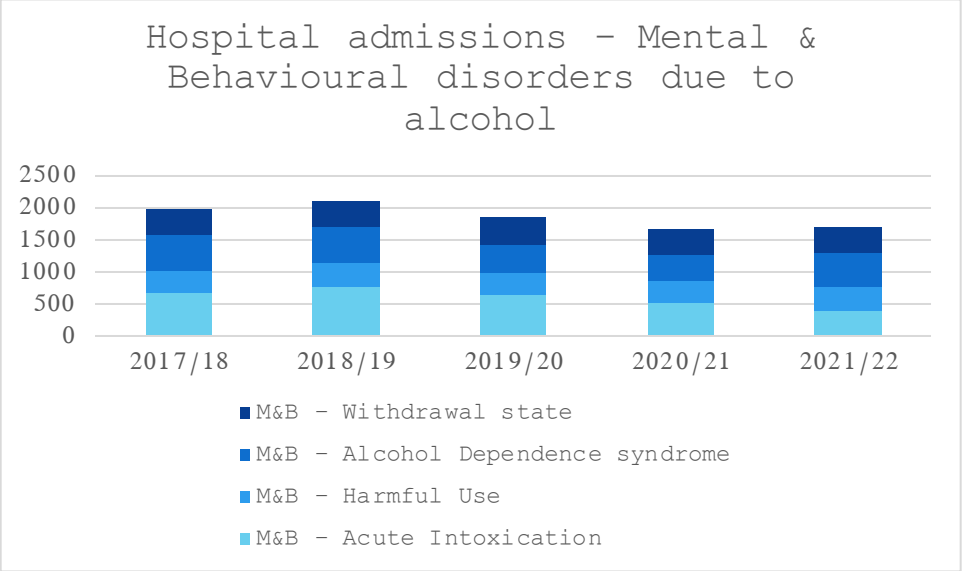
Placements in this residential rehab facility are fully funded until 2026. There is uncertainty, and therefore a risk, in relation to the ongoing funding and demand for residential rehab after the three-year contract and for the 'moving on' accommodation. Whilst North East residents will be prioritised for placements, the provider will generate income from accepting referrals from all over the UK which potentially has an impact for their capacity for city residents. The 'moving on' capacity is at the request of the provider and is an ask of all City Housing providers. Commissioning the provision of housing sits centrally with Scottish Government, there is the potential for duplication in community provision as well as additional demand on the service from out of area placements.

Future requirements going forward in Aberdeen ADP and Aberdeen City Council's Housing Service, and other housing providers will be collaborating on a pathway that looks at future requirements based on needs and risks of individuals, as illustrated below. Future work will look at capacity and demand in collaboration. National models of stabilisation and supported accommodation that is technology enabled to respond to potential drug and alcohol overdoses and harm will also be considered.

[12] Policy briefing: alcohol (publichealthscotland.scot)
[13] National mission - Alcohol and drugs - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

	Acute Risk	Engagement	Stable	Recovery
Situation	People who are homeless; people with housing difficulties, people using substances but not in treatment; very chaotic drug/alcohol users; high risk drug/alcohol users	People looking for or coming into structured treatment especially prescribing via outreach/ Timmermarket	People maintaining engagement in treatment	People looking to maintain drug free lifestyle away from potential neighbours/ suppliers/ dealers/ acquaintances

Aberdeen City has one alcohol related residential facility, and the service has been identified as in need of being replaced. The facility currently has 17 places that require to be reprovisioned for people with alcohol addiction. This facility is always operating at capacity. Waiting lists fluctuate but there are usually between 2 and 4 people waiting for access as any one time. Work is ongoing with Registered Social Landlords and service providers to find an alternative site for service provision and to progress with this development through the Strategic Housing Investment Plan. The process of commissioning a new service will look at best practice in relation to service model, design, and size to accommodate the needs of this group.



Source: Public Health Scotland Acute Hospital Activity 2023

People requiring forensic mental health support

Forensic mental health is the specialist response to assessment, treatment, and risk management of people with a mental disorder who are currently undergoing or have previously undergone court proceedings. Most mainland territorial health boards provide low secure services. In Aberdeen, services are comprised of:

- The Intensive Psychiatric Care Unit IPCU [14] - 8 bed spaces (2 designated specifically for female forensic patients)
- The Forensic Acute Ward which has 8 beds for males
- The Forensic Rehabilitation Ward which has 16 beds for males and 2 surge beds[15].
- Step down accommodation which has 8 beds for males

It should be noted that there is very little or no provision for female forensic patients.

The resources currently available in the Aberdeen City Forensics estate do not always meet the needs of the patient group with gaps in services/pathways, particularly for females and those requiring specialist services (e.g. Acquired Brain Injury (ABI), Autism, Older Adult). This results in out of NHS/out of area placements. Out of area placements were recently reviewed by the Mental Welfare Commission (MWC) for Scotland. This review recommended regional solutions based on the following findings:

- The impact that out of area care had on patients, families, and barriers in returning to the local communities.
- The significant costs in relation to out of area placements.
- The length of out of area placements due to the difficulty identifying community care.

Community Provision

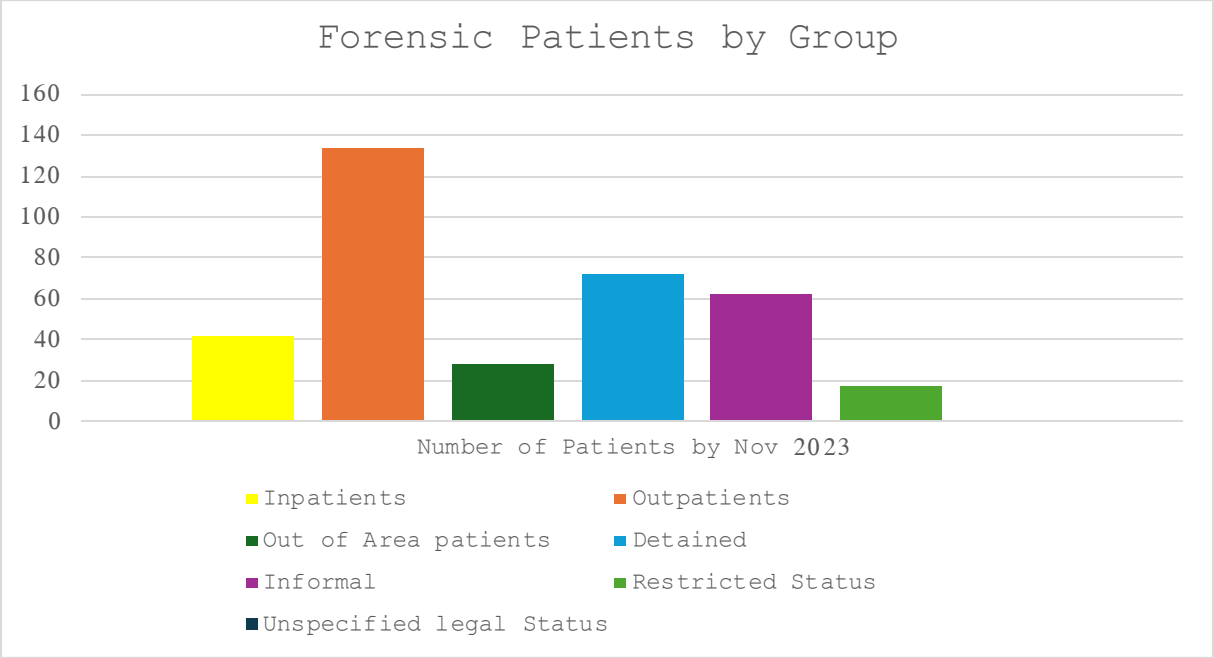
Current community accommodation for forensic mental health, including the use of general supported accommodation services, do not meet needs and are becoming harder to access due to perceived risk. This results in longer hospital admissions and readmissions due to 'failing' in supported accommodation as the support is not tailored to needs. The process of accessing supported accommodation has no specialist forensic input, and therefore does not always have a good understanding of the needs and aims for this patient group, with unrealistic expectations. To address this issue, a Forensic Mental Health Environmental Specification has been created, providing detail on the needs of this group in relation to accommodation settings. In general, standard accommodation such as council or private lets would be appropriate to meet the needs of the majority of this population, as the main concern is usually based around risk and relational security rather that functional ability. Specialist or supported housing may also need to be considered when an individual's level of risk and/or complex support needs requires this. There are other Environmental Specifications for complex needs such as dementia and autism that should be referred to for a more specific advice and recommendations. However, forensic patients with complex care needs will need to be considered when developing complex care accommodation or consider how care provision for this specialist group would be met in forensic settings. It is of key importance that the least restrictive option for housing and support is met as outlined in the Millan principles under the Mental Health Act (2003).

The Advance Statements in Forensic Mental Health Services in Scotland (January 2022) found that, of the 503 patients in forensic settings, forensic intensive psychiatric Care Units (IPCUs) and rehabilitation settings, the vast majority were male (92.3%) with an average age of 44 years. Most people receiving care and treatment in forensic mental health services have a diagnosis of a mental illness (75.1%), followed by intellectual disability (15.5%). 2% had a diagnosis of a personality disorder and for 7% their diagnosis was unknown.

The Renewal of Forensic Mental Health Services Review and Report was undertaken on request from the Chief Officers of Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership (ACHSCP), Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership (AHSCP) and Health and Social Care Moray (HSCM), as a response to the findings of the Barron Report) found in November 2023:

[14] At times patients may be residing elsewhere within Royal Cornhill Hospital (RCH). As of November 2023, there were 42 inpatients receiving forensic services, up from 38 in March 2022.

[15] Surge beds – service user numbers exceeds capacity



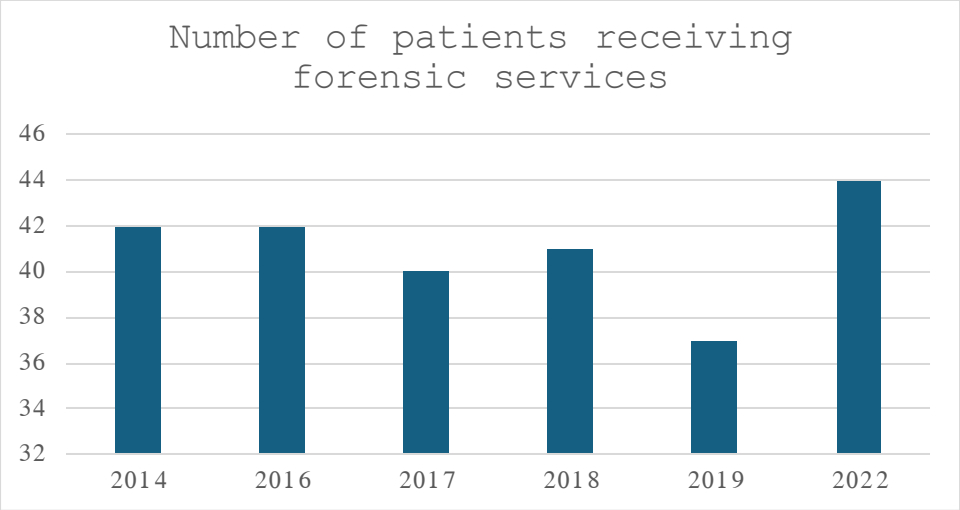
Source: Scottish Government Mental Health in patients bed census

Of the 204[2] patients in the care of Grampian's forensic settings, forensic intensive psychiatric care units (IPCUs) and rehabilitation settings, the vast majority are also male. 70% of the people receiving care have a primary diagnosis of a mental illness in the form of schizophrenia/schizoaffective disorder or bipolar affective disorder. The national statistics in Scotland for Forensic Mental Health accommodation make for difficult reading and Aberdeen City is no different.

The Forensic Services Steering Group has highlighted the following challenges:

- An overall lack of appropriate accommodation in Aberdeen City to support people with a Forensic Mental Health need.
- A lack of staff to work in forensic units with the necessary specialist knowledge and skills required when working in a '24/7' forensic service.
- Forensic rehabilitative support services need to be improved and supported.
- There are currently small numbers of patients experiencing delayed discharge, with others progressing towards discharge into a community setting.
- Forensic patients discharged to community settings, with a care/support provider, can often be required to move every few years. This can result in a change of care/support provider, impacting upon the stability of their rehabilitation and care and the relationships that have been formed.
- Following on, if these patients are being discharged from a custodial sentence, their lives previously undertaken with routine and with other issues such as substance misuse, a lack of appropriate accommodation and support could accelerate a return to chaotic lifestyles.
- A lack of funding to specify and build appropriate, bespoke accommodation.
- Existing accommodation is not fit for purpose for both inpatient accommodation or regarding community environment specifications.
- Forensic programmes need to expand to meet demand and needs.

Forensic Services data includes patients managed primarily by Forensic Services within their NHS Board. The presented information includes data for the whole of NHS Grampian. There is a significant population in custody, out of area and a number of individuals inappropriately placed within the community.



Source:MentalHealthandLearningDisabilityInpatientCensus2022[16]

Current Provision and Future Requirements

Of the 204 patients open to the service, around 93 patients would benefit now and/or in the future from supported accommodation:

i. Restricted patients require the most support and can face limitations related to accommodation e.g. they may have multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) and cannot be placed near schools or specific individuals. They may be at risk of absconding and require 24/7 support.

ii. Complex patients may have a variety of behaviours or challenges in addition to their mental illness, which require supported accommodation. This could be a single room with shared facilities or their own property within a larger development. Behaviours or challenges could include substance misuse, violence and arson.

iii. Standard patients are considered low risk and require standard housing, with some patients requiring support at home. Otherwise these patients would continue to engage with their multi-disciplinary team as regularly as required from within their community.

Around five+ additional admissions each year are likely to require supported accommodation.
Several patients currently out of area in specialist community services would require accommodation but their needs cannot yet be met locally. It is anticipated that the current number of people requiring forensic support and suitable accommodation is likely to remain similar for the foreseeable future. However, due to the lack of suitable community housing provision, less people are able to move on from inpatient Forensic Services. So, while inpatient admissions continue to grow, so will the community accommodation need.

Further concerns related to inpatient and community housing provision for Forensic Services are:

- The strategic direction of housing services
- The 'cost of living crisis'
- The Scottish Government's strategic direction

There are approximately 23 inpatients who may be considered delayed discharge. Of these, two patients are likely to meet current definitions of delayed discharge, five did not have access to an appropriate community setting, which then required their admission for further rehabilitation. A stepdown service is required to accommodate these numbers.

The following need has been outlined by Aberdeen City/Hosted Forensic Services. However, this has been challenging, because the definitions of inappropriately placed/delayed discharge are not clear:

[16] In November 2023 there were 42 inpatients receiving care within Aberdeen City/Hosted Forensic Services, up from 38 in March 2022

- Around 38 inpatients (inclusive of the above 23 inpatients and 5 additional admissions each year likely to require supported accommodation) have been identified as benefitting from supported accommodation from 2024 - 2027.
- A further 47 patients (inclusive of 12 current inpatients and 5 additional admissions likely to require supported accommodation) would benefit from supported accommodation from 2027 - 2034.
- An additional 9 patients (current inpatients) would benefit from supported accommodation beyond 2034.
- Low or community setting provision is required to alleviate the pressure from the current provision being provided within a Grampian and Highlands and Islands.

People subject to justice orders including those who are leaving prison

The Justice Social Work (JSW) service is diverse, complex, and busy and consists of Caledonian, Community Payback Orders (CPO), Connections, Pre-Disposal, Throughcare, Unpaid Work, Support Work and Admin teams. It's primary remit is to provide statutory supervision and support to individuals who have offended, using interventions which are proportionate to risk and need. This supervision ranges from low level for those on diversion from prosecution to very high level, usually with multi-agency support, for the "critical few" who pose significant public protection concerns.

In Aberdeen City Justice Social Workers supervise approximately 1,020 Community Payback Orders, 60 post-release licences and 120 Bail Supervision Orders at any one time, many of whom experience severe and multiple disadvantages including housing issues (see Hard Edges Scotland Report 2019). Approximately 25% of those who completed Supervision Exit Questionnaires say that housing was an issue for them before their order. However, as Exit Questionnaires can only be collected from those who have successfully completed their orders, it is likely that those who did not complete their orders due to a breach or breaches were those who had the most complex needs, including lack of stable and safe accommodation.

The main issues in JSW providing specialist accommodation are:

Bail Supervision: The Scottish Government is committed to reducing the number of people in prison. Courts may therefore make people subject to Bail Supervision and/or Electronic Monitoring (tagging) as a direct alternative to remand, both of which require the individual to have a suitable address. Court based social workers are required to assess suitability within a short time frame and will contact housing services for information to inform the assessment including, if the person is homeless, whether housing can be provided. (N.B. Temporary accommodation within hotel accommodation is not suitable for this group.)

Changes in the prison population: In December 2023 The Prison Reform Trust published the Scottish Prisoner Advocacy and Research Collective Scoping Report which informs that there has been a 46% increase in prisoners over 60 years old since 2017 in Scotland. It is recognised that there are increasing numbers of elderly prisoners and those with increasing mobility issues which is attributed in part due to longer prison sentences and a rise in the number of those convicted of serious and organised crime as well as historical sex offences.

SPS processes for prisoners who will be subject to statutory supervision on release include multi agency meetings (Integrated Case Management meetings) held annually and 3 month pre-release. Part of this will discuss the individual's health, personal care needs, social care needs, mobility and identify specialist housing needs. Following the pre-release meeting and as part of the planning process, Justice Social Work make appropriate referrals to community partners such as Occupational Therapy, Care Management and Housing to support with planning for the needs/risk management plan for the individual's transition to the community. Within Aberdeen this is undertaken on a case by case basis, current numbers are low and average less than such case one per year.

National Accommodation Strategy for Sex Offenders (NASSO): This strategy applies to the housing of sex and high-risk offenders managed under the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). Environmental Risk Assessments are undertaken on all tenancies under consideration for individuals in this client group. Sometimes multiple assessments are undertaken to find the best tenancy for an individual. Given the paucity of available housing these decisions sometimes come down to the "least bad" option.

Individuals released from prison and subject to statutory supervision by Justice Social Work such as Parole Licence (average 60 at any one time). Although services usually have prior knowledge of release dates for these individuals and can plan towards them, they are currently not allocated tenancies until the

day of release (at times this includes MAPPA cases dependent on availability of accommodation). This can cause considerable anxiety for some people as it does not allow for the person to visualise themselves in the tenancy.

No Recourse to Public Funds. There is a small but increasing number of individuals with no recourse to public funds but, as JSW funding is ring fenced for work with offenders, housing and associated costs cannot be met. Nonetheless, these costs are currently being charged to Justice Social Work.

The Sustainable Housing on Release for Everyone (SHORE) Standards: Promote a nationally consistent approach in meeting the housing needs of individuals in contact with the justice system and this approach is person-centred, trauma-informed, and prevents homelessness at liberation." As the Scottish Government say, "evidence suggests that people who have access to stable housing are less likely to reoffend."

Early Prevention: Wherever possible there is work undertaken to prevent individuals from going to prison in the first place through Diversion, Problem Solving Structured Deferred Sentences, Bail Supervision and the delivery of robust interventions in line with risk and need. Access to safe and affordable housing and productive multi-agency working underpins all of this.

Current Provision and Future Requirements

Justice Social Work requirement is to have access to housing for MAPPA clients and for those released from prison on licence who are subject to statutory supervision. Having stable accommodation reduces the risk of recidivism and enables justice social work and partner agencies to support the individual and more effectively manage any risk to the public. The number of people released from prison on Licences/Orders is on average 50 per annum, the majority of whom will require approved accommodation.

In many instances, MAPPA partner agencies are aware of an individual's planned date of release. It would be of benefit to the individual and partner agencies to have a suitable permanent tenancy identified 2-4 weeks prior to release. This would support timeous registration with a GP practice, identify support services local to the address and opportunities for community integration at an early stage.

For some prisoners who are released subject to statutory supervision every year, occasionally they will have accommodation, however, the majority will not. Most will require to be accommodated in a temporary tenancy whilst awaiting a permanent offer. Their status will depend on whether they have prison discretion, and whether they have a determinate release date. If they are eligible to apply for parole from the mid-point of their long-term prison sentence, usually annually, accommodation has to be applied for at each stage of the parole process and often they are not released. It is hard to predict the future requirements, however utilising previous years as a benchmark, it is anticipated maintaining 50 tenancies per year would continue to meet needs.

Homelessness

People Experiencing Homelessness

Demand for homelessness assistance in the city reached a peak in 2022-23 seeing the highest number of applications received since moving to delivery of a housing options model in 2011/12. Homelessness is influenced by a multitude of personal and socio-economic factors and for this reason is unpredictable, as seen by the fluctuations experienced during this period falling to a low of 1,285 in 2015/16, and a high of 1,772 in 2022/23. It is within the last few years where the city has experienced arguably its greatest homeless challenge, when applications rose by a sharp 26% in 2022/23, caused primarily by the ongoing effects of COVID-19 and the cost of living crisis that are still being felt today. Since this position, applicant demand has begun to plateau with 1763 applications received in 2023/24. As at 31st August 2024 no further change in trend is evident, and a similar position is expected to be reported at year end 2024/25 with demand remaining high.

Single member households are most at risk of homelessness in the city where approximately 72% of applicants applying each year are from this group, the majority of whom are male. Applications amongst the youth population in the city rose in 2023/24 and are higher than the national average. Homelessness among the over 60s is also on the rise increasing by 58% since 2021/22 (+34).

Whilst the number of homeless applications received has been on the rise, levels of homelessness in the city have remained more constant, increasing by a more modest 5% (+53) from 1225 in 2011/12 to 1278 in 2023/24. During this period the median levels of homelessness is 1,232 and provides a reasonable indication of year on year statutory homeless demands.

Demand for Temporary Accommodation

The rise in applications experienced over the last 2 years has led to increasing numbers of households requiring temporary accommodation. In 2023/24, 1,104 households applying were placed in temporary accommodation, up almost a third (+251) on 2021/22. To meet demands and ensure compliance with statutory instrument, the temporary stock profile has increased from 395 units on 31st March 2022, to 592 on the 31st of March 2024, a rise of almost 50% and the highest level seen since 31st March 2018.

Despite a further 100 furnished mainstream units being introduced into stock during this period there remains significant reliance on use of hotel rooms to ensure accommodation is provided to all who require it. Currently(as of November 2024) there are 60 hotel rooms occupied, 63 fewer than at the 31st March 2024, but while these continue to be used there remains significant financial and compliance risks.

Hotels have been commissioned as a short-term option to provide accommodation on an emergency basis, however, over time this has become a more medium term option, with average placement times rising from 9 days in 2022/23 to 64 days currently. The increase has subsequently led to 540 breaches of The Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Order 2014 being reported in 2023/24, the highest level on record.

It is not only hotel placements that have increased over the last 2 years. The average stay in a temporary furnished flat has increased by 31 days to 142 in 2023/24 and hostel by 25 to 56 days. The increase in placement times has been caused by a slowdown in throughput, which has led to increasing levels of occupancy. Asat 31st March 2024 there were 442 homeless households accommodated in temporary accommodation a rise of 67% when compared with the same period in 2022. There are, however, signs that pressures might be beginning to ease with occupancy rates at 31st August 2024 receding to 408, a fall of 8% on year end.

In April 2023 the Scottish Government published a Framework for Temporary Accommodation Standards (Temporary Accommodation Standards Framework (www.gov.scot)). These standards are in addition to the

Unsuitable Accommodation Order and set out criteria in relation to 4 standards and overview of the provision under each standard is below:

Physical – accommodation that meets the needs of any disabled persons, complies with relevant housing quality standards, has units that are secure, has sufficient bedroom space, adequate cooking, laundry facilities and exclusive toilet and personal washing facilities and affordable heating systems.

Location – consider proximity to main essential services, access to employment, formal and informal support networks, religious and cultural needs, and an assessment of personal safety specifically for households experiencing domestic abuse.

Service – creating psychologically informed environments, ensuring staff have been trained in trauma informed care, offer support for households, conduct regular home visits to allow unmet needs to be identified, and support to access different types of accommodation allocated on the basis of gender.

Management – legally compliant occupancy agreements, clear communication about tenants' rights, housing support provided at the point of entry (rather than on completion of homeless assessment), information provided on repairs, notice agreement, how to report anti-social behaviour complaints procedure and information to support move on from temporary accommodation.

Continuation of hotel use in the city would be in direct breach of these 4 standards, particularly when considering the physical standards, and service standards. When reviewing these standards against our temporary flatted accommodation, the current provision in the city, would in some instances not meet the physical standards when considering larger families (households that require 4 bedrooms and above) and some cases which have physical disabilities that require temporary accommodation which is fully wheelchair accessible. The location of temporary properties is spread across the city, but with an average of 15 temporary furnished flats becoming available to let each week Aberdeen City Council is not currently in a position that employment, religious and cultural needs could be met in all instances.

Support Needs for Homeless applicants

As part of the assessment when a person presents as experiencing homelessness they are given the opportunity to self-disclose a support need. In 2023/24, 39% of statutory homeless households contained a member assessed as in need of support (495), a fall of 30% when compared with the 69% identified as requiring support in 2021/22 (775). Fewer households are now being assessed as in need of basic housing support, with a 30% fall evident during this period. However the proportion of homeless households with a member requiring support for mental health continues to rise with 215 identified in 2023/25 equivalent to 17% of the homeless population. Among those requiring support, the number identified with multiple needs is also on the rise with 269 reported in 2023/24, equivalent to 21% of this population, a 3% increase since 2021/22.

Current provision and future requirements

Supply Gap

Using a calculation introduced to support planning for a rapid rehousing approach, current gap analysis estimates suggest that an additional 452 properties are required to meet the needs of all homeless households who require to be permanently rehoused each year. Even if the council were to achieve its target and reduce homeless applications by 10% by 2026 this would still leave a forecasted shortfall of approximately 363 properties. Having sufficient supply of housing is essential to bridging this gap and achieving the principle aim of rapid rehousing policy - to rehouse homeless households as quickly as possible. In 2023/24 the average homeless journey time was 166 days, 44 more than the previous year.

Support Provision

The current options are available to provide support to a person experiencing homelessness are:

Specialist Support for Young People: Foyer Accommodation Based Support provides supported accommodation for 27 Young People (aged between 16-25) within a supported block. This service also provides resettlement support for young people for a short period after their service within supported accommodation has ended. A further service for young people is Foyer Nightstop for young people who are threatened with becoming homeless. It provides short-term support within hosts' homes for young people who are unable to stay in their family home. This aims to provide a period of respite to allow the young person to consider more fully their options, which may result in a return to the family home. Last year of the 481 young people who had a recorded outcome after presenting to the local authority as homeless, 82 returned to previous accommodation or made their own arrangement.

Long term housing support is provided through our Housing First programme in the city for up to 50 individuals. As an approach, Housing First prioritises providing permanent settled accommodation. This is open ended and intense housing support for statutory homeless individuals with a history of cyclical homelessness and multiple complex needs. This includes, but is not limited to, issues with alcohol and other drugs, offending behaviour and anti-social behaviours. Those referred are considered by a multi-agency triage panel. They must be statutorily homeless at the point of referral, and must have access to public funds in order to be considered. The service is provided by Turning Point Scotland.

Outreach Housing Support provides medium to long term housing support to those either at threat of homelessness or going through the homeless process. Support is also provided to those in mainstream council tenancies who have been identified as needing longer term housing support need by their Housing and Support Officer. Whilst the service supports those with other needs (mental health, financial, criminal justice etc), support is tailored to maintaining and sustaining tenancies. As such, identified support needs must be relevant or in the context of tenancy support. The contract is provided by Turning Point Scotland and supports in the region of 500 individuals across the course of a year.

Our offering related to support provision for people experiencing homelessness has aligned with the key approach to ending homelessness and rapid rehousing, prioritising prevention. If homelessness occurs then households are provided with appropriate settled housing as quickly as possible, paving the way for focussing on faster access to mainstream housing, and the support necessary to sustain their tenancy.

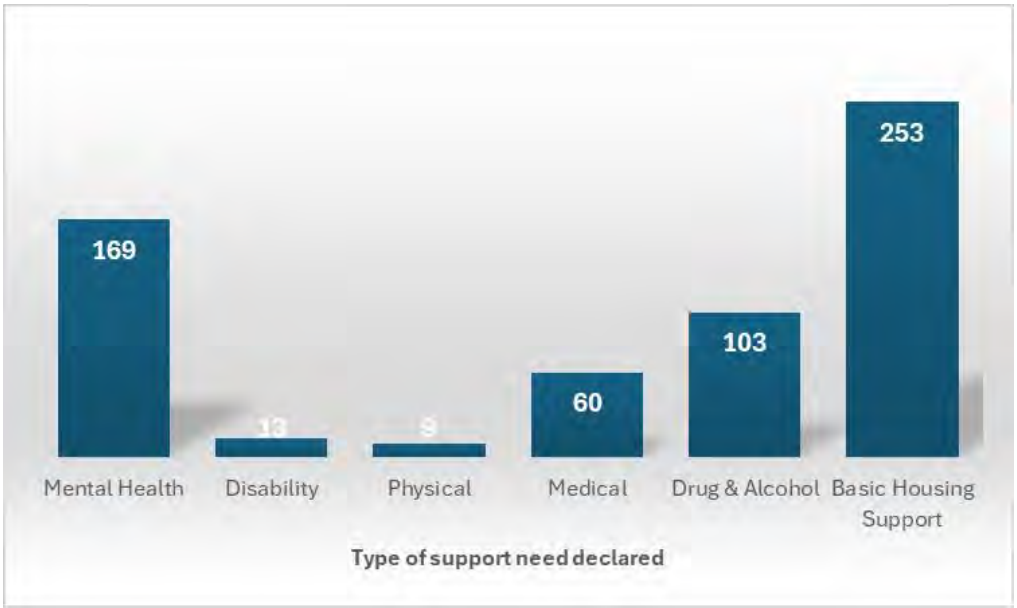
More recently however, a report published regarding supported housing (Supported Housing Task and Finish Group Report) has reviewed and presented recommendations related to supported housing. The report outlines that around 2-5% of those households who make a homeless application to their local authority would be the best fit for permanent supported housing.

Our current offering in the city aligns with the recommendations in this report, as we move away from our existing accommodation-based support service for adults. This was offered on a short Scottish secure tenancy basis, involving a move on from one property to another, and continuing with the specialist provision for young people which is provided in accommodation on interim basis. Aberdeen City Council identify the potential for a developing gap for those that do not view permanent accommodation as the goal. Aberdeen do not currently have an offer for people experiencing homelessness with multiple and complex needs who do not wish to progress into permanent accommodation, but currently attempt to fit these individuals into the Housing First model, whereby the outcome is permanent accommodation with wrap around support. We lack a firm data set to evidence this small cohort of individuals, however a review of individuals who have interacted with the Housing First service but not reached the panacea of long term settled accommodation is being undertaken to help understand this unmet need.

In addition, Aberdeen City Council do not have a permanent supported accommodation service for adults which can be accessed through a housing options/homeless pathway. The Supported Housing task and finish report clearly recommends that there should be jointly planned and commissioned supported housing as a response to homelessness, between Health and Social Care Partnerships and Local Authorities. Aberdeen City Council do not currently jointly commission provision in the city, however, given the growing number of people presenting as homeless with complex and multiple needs, there would be value in exploring this approach and adopting a health rather than purely housing led approach to homelessness.

As evidenced by data, there is an increasing number of people who are experiencing more than one area of support need, with some recent case examples of individuals experiencing homelessness, substance use,

mental health and physical disability. Whilst the data to evidence this gap in provision of short term supported accommodation provision is not fully developed, it is understood that there is increasing complexity of need and an increasing level of abandonments from secure tenancies. The chart below illustrates the type of support need declared by 269 people in 23/24 who indicated that they had multiple support needs.



Forthcoming legislation

The Housing (Scotland) Bill is currently at stage 1 of the parliamentary process. Scottish Government states that the package of reforms 'will help ensure people have a safe, secure and affordable places to live while contributing to the ambition to end homelessness in Scotland'. Part 5 of the Bill relates to the prevention of homelessness and places duties on relevant bodies such as health boards and Police Scotland to ask if an individual is homeless or at risk of homeless and requires them to take action if they are. The overarching aim is to make homelessness prevention a shared responsibility across the public sector. Local authorities will also have to act sooner to prevent homelessness by providing support to households threatened with homelessness up to 6 months before homelessness appears imminent rather than the current two months. The 'ask and act' duty within the Bill raises concern of a potential increase in homelessness presentations with the potential that it could be seen as an 'ask and refer'. With current operating systems, including siloed databases, there will be a challenge around mapping a person's journey, touch points across services and identifying preventative steps taken by services. However, given what is known about a person's increasing contact with medical services as they escalate towards a housing crisis, there is real opportunity for a more cohesive, person centred approach across housing and health.

Displaced Households

Along with other Local Authorities across the UK, Aberdeen has striven to meet the challenges presented by the rapid influx of displaced people seeking support and refuge, and is currently home to around 2,000 displaced people, having witnessed a ten-fold increase in arrivals over the last 2 years. Aberdeen City Council remains committed to welcoming and supporting displaced people in line with the New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy, yet recognises challenges which may be exacerbated by the increase in migration such as pressure on housing supply, increases in homelessness presentations, lack of school places and the provision of primary care and mental health services.

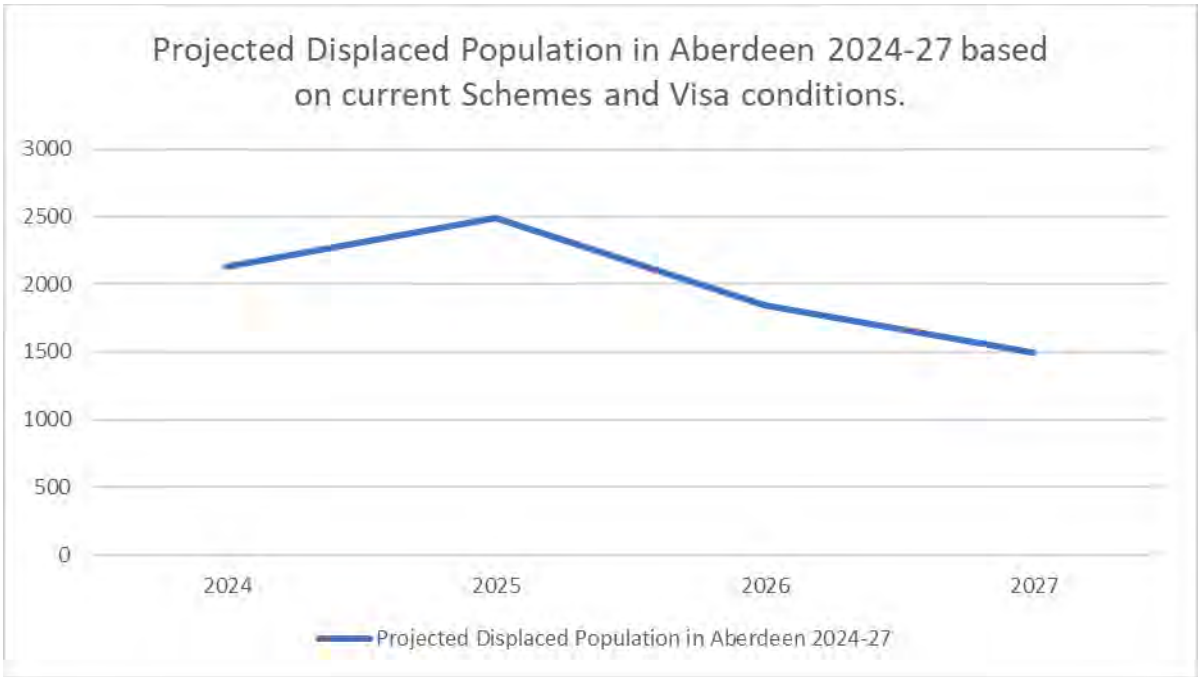
Current Provision and Future Need

The number of displaced households making Aberdeen their home is projected to increase by circa 20% over the next 12 months due to the National Accommodation Plan V2 which will increase the number of dispersed bedspaces in the city, asylum backlog decisions, UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS) and Afghan arrivals. There is also the possibility of a surge in Ukrainian arrivals due to imminent visa changes, which will likely require residency in the UK as a prerequisite for extending current visas for a further 18 months.

Thereafter, beyond 2025, a marked shift in population numbers is anticipated dependent on whether the Homes for Ukraine Permission Extension Scheme is further extended or not.

There are 2 potential population scenarios:

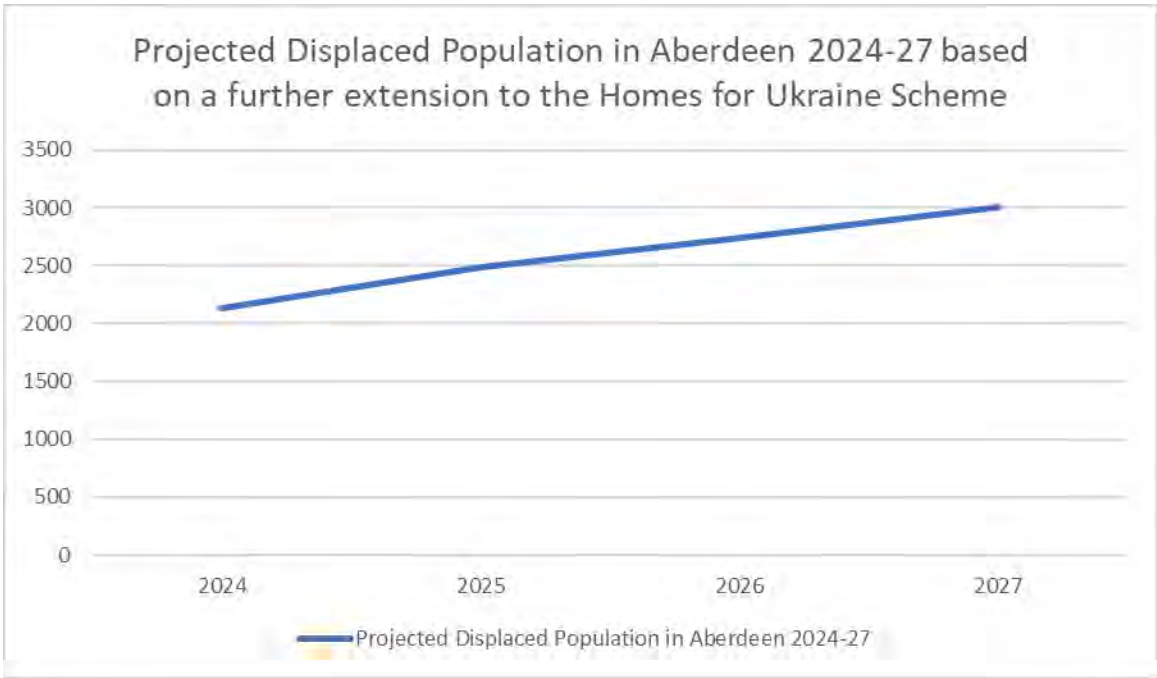
Scenario 1: No extensions to the Ukrainian Schemes



This population scenario assumes:

- No further extensions are granted for the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and those currently here will be required to leave based on their visa expiration date. Current expiration dates are staggered across 2026 to 2028.
- New arrivals via the Homes for Ukraine schemes continue at current levels.
- Increased demand from the arrival of Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) households and a shift towards assisting those on UNHCR (The UN Refugee Agency) programmes, namely Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) and UKRS households.
- Increased demand from Asylum Refugees due to accelerated decision making, continued growth in the asylum-seeker population and a marked shift in focus from Contingency Hotels (CA) to asylum -seekers being based in dispersed accommodation.
- No further migration related to civil war, international conflict, climate, economic change or natural disasters.

Scenario 2: Further extension to the Ukrainian Schemes



This population scenario assumes:

- The UK Government announces further provision to those on Homes for Ukraine visas beyond the current Extension Scheme and that approximately 95% of Ukrainians currently living in Aberdeen will stay here.
- New arrivals via the Homes for Ukraine schemes continue at current levels.
- Increased demand from the arrival of Afghan ARAP households and a shift towards assisting those on UNHCR programmes, namely ACRS and UKRS households.
- Increased demand from Asylum Refugees due to accelerated decision making, continued growth in the asylum-seeker population and a marked shift in focus from Contingency Hotels (CA) to asylum -seekers being based in dispersed accommodation.
- No further migration related to civil war, international conflict, climate, economic change or natural disasters.

There is likely to be a continued housing need that arises across the schemes, The 500 Aberdeen City Council owned properties that were allocated to people fleeing the conflict in Ukraine for up to a 3 year period would likely to continue to be used for this purpose, meaning they would be unable to be used to alleviate housing pressures elsewhere. The additional 120 properties provided outwith the Ukraine Long Term Resettlement Funding (ULTHF) scheme would also continue to be used as they are currently. In 2023/24 Aberdeen City recorded a 33% increase in homeless applications from people who were present in the UK having been granted refugee status or leave to remain, suggesting a growing number of people choosing to stay in the city after receiving a positive asylum decision.

Unaccompanied Asylum-seeking children and young people

Current Provision & Future Need

The arrival of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and Young People (UASYP) also poses challenges as these individuals also typically have high support needs due to their young age and the likelihood that they

have experienced some form of trauma prior to arriving in the UK. Table 1.0 below shows the number of UASYP that have arrived in Aberdeen as well as the route of referral.

Table 1.0: UASYP in Aberdeen City as of 31st December 2023

Route of Referral	UASYP
Spontaneous Arrival	3
Hotel Dispersal	21
National Transfer Scheme	25
Total	49

Source: Social work service provision for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children and Young People (UASYP), CFS/24/045, 20th February 2024

UASYP have the same status as other Looked After Children and Aberdeen City Council will fulfil its duty to provide care and support as a corporate parent to this group. UASYP can be from a wide range of age groups, however, the majority of UASYP in Aberdeen are between 16-18 years of age. The Council has worked with RSLs and other housing providers to source accommodation for UASYP, as well as with third-sector organisations to ensure that these groups receive appropriate aftercare support.

Conclusion

This Independent Living and Specialist Provision Housing Market Position Statement has set out the future requirements for provision of specialist housing in Aberdeen, notwithstanding the current economic

challenges. A key element of delivery will be the further engagement with service providers and those with lived experience of the various target groups with the aim of delivering the improved outcomes highlighted.

In developing the MPS, a number of challenges have been identified however, these also provide opportunities for improvement, particularly in relation to the data collected and how this can be used to enhance future updates to this document. The vision is for a flexible approach to housing provision that meets a variety of needs, and ensures people can live in the community of their choosing, throughout their life, in a home of their choosing, with the care or support they require. Working collaboratively with our partners will help achieve that vision.

Where care provision is required, co-locating people with similar needs provides opportunities for economies of scale in terms of staffing. This also helps to ensure consistency of care which improves understanding of needs, the quality of care provided, and confidence in that care from those receiving care and their loved ones. In order to make the best use of the resources available, existing models may be reprovisioned to meet the changing needs of the population. There is evidence to suggest care delivered in communities is more cost effective, as well as providing improved outcomes by maintaining independence. There is commitment to shifting the balance of care towards community and the use of digital solutions for the provision of support where this is appropriate.

Finally, aligning the provision of specialist housing to the Getting It Right For Everyone (GIRFE) principles, and embedding a human rights approach in considering how care needs are met, will ensure that people can live in their own homes with dignity and independence for as long as possible. In addition, ethical commissioning and collaborative stakeholder engagement will secure stronger outcomes for the people of Aberdeen via aligning the work Community Planning Partners are undertaking in relation to prevention of demand for various services.

Next Steps

This MPS will be a working document which informs planning and delivery to close the gap in demand and supply in the short term, medium term and longer term. The closing of the gap is anticipated to come from a combination of public and private investment and may include adaptations, refitting, and bespoke builds. This will be supplemented with relevant lived experience and professional views, as well as improved data collection, interpretation, and forecasting of need. ACHSCP will continue to work in partnership across the

city and beyond to deliver these changes and have already commenced solutions focussed work with partners.

The Disabled Adaptations Group is already underway in relation to the provision of equipment and adaptations in all tenures, which can help people continue to live safely in their own home for longer. This includes the promotion of early planning for long term housing needs. Once this work is concluded, consideration will be given to the impact of this on the Market Position Statement for Independent Living and Specialist Provision Housing.

Action
Forensic – Open dialogues on new secure stepdown accommodation
Sheltered, Very Sheltered and Extra Care Housing – Review Strategy and redesignation of stock where appropriate
Development of Mental Health and Learning Disability & Bariatric Accommodation
Replacement substance related residential facility
Preparation for Ask and Act Legislation
Complete the Housing for Varying Needs Review

Appendixes

1. Definition of terms
2. Summary table

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National Health Wellbeing Outcomes Framework

Appendix 1: Definition of Terms

Care homes	Care home provision in Aberdeen City is delivered by the private sector and voluntary organisations in both privately owned properties and local authority owned properties. In Aberdeenshire, providers include private sector, voluntary organisations, and the local authority. The sector meets a range of personal and nursing care needs. Residents can be either long stay, short stay or respite.
Amenity Housing	Amenity housing or medium dependency housing is designed to be suitable for older people or ambulant disabled. This type of housing is specially designed or adapted to provide accessible accommodation.
	Some properties may have an integrated telecare system that is linked to an alarm receiving centre.
Independent living	Independent living provides for older and disabled people the same freedom, choice dignity and control as other people at home at work and in the community. It does not mean living by yourself or looking after yourself on your own. Independent living means a person has the right to practical assistance and support to participate in society and live an ordinary life.
Sheltered Housing	Sheltered housing allows older people or people with particular needs to live independently, with the right support, in a comfortable and secure environment. It also gives the opportunity for social contact and companionship through communal facilities. Sheltered housing is generally a self-contained, one bedroom flat in a main scheme or a one-bedroom linked property. Two-bedroom properties are available at some schemes. An alarm or telecare system is available. Support is provided onsite by support staff, sheltered housing officers or mobile service.
Very Sheltered Housing	Very sheltered housing provides a safe environment for people with higher level support needs to live independently. Tenants are usually aged 60 years or above and may have additional care needs or be vulnerable in their current accommodation. Younger applicants may be considered depending on their circumstances. Very sheltered housing has a dedicated team of care and support staff, available on-site 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
Extra Care Housing	Extra care housing provides a similar level of support to sheltered or very sheltered housing for adults with a range of disabilities. Each tenant is provided with agreed levels of care and support on site. Individuals have self-contained homes with access to communal facilities, and there is onsite accommodation for support staff.
Core and Cluster	Core and cluster housing is a model of supported living where tenants have self-contained flats and receive support, usually from visiting staff. The flats can be dispersed within housing schemes and may have on-site office facilities. The collocated individual tenancies help to reduce dependency and increase community participation without the stresses associated with communal living.
Group home	A property where a small number of adults live alongside each other, usually in groups of four and under. Facilities such as a kitchen and living space will typically be communal. Care and/or support will likely be provided 24/7
Housing Support	As part of our housing support, those tenants living in Aberdeen City Council Sheltered Housing that are entitled to receive assistance can expect the following from our Service Supervisor will receive some or all depending on assessment and level of need. Daily call or visit , Assisting with the security of the complex, Assisting with arranging repairs of the property , Helping to arrange appointments with relevant professionals, Liaising with families, Supporting good relationships with neighbours, Assisting to deal with letters, bills and benefit claims, Helping maintain and responding to fire alarms and emergency call system , Personal care in the event of an emergency, Assisting with social interaction and social activities, Checking and dealing with health and safety issues in the building, Developing, reviewing and monitoring individual support plans
House of Multiple Occupation (HMO)	House of multiple occupation (HMO) are properties where there are at least three or more unrelated adults who live in a property where bathroom, living or kitchen spaces are shared. HMO's offer a suitable option for individuals with a preference for supported group living.

Personal care	Personal care includes things like bathing, showering, hair washing, shaving, brushing your teeth, and nail care, going to the toilet, catheter and stoma care, skin care, incontinence laundry and bed changing, eating, special diets, and food preparation, mobility support, counselling, behaviour management, psychological support and reminding devices taking medication (like eye drops), application of creams and lotions, simple dressings and oxygen therapy, getting dressed, surgical appliances, prostheses, mechanical and manual aids, help getting in and out of bed and using hoists
Nursing care	nursing care, requires a qualified nurse to help you. For example, a nurse will give injections or help to manage pressure sores.
RSL	Registered social Landlord
Retirement housing	Retirement housing has similar features to sheltered housing but is usually provided in the private sector. Levels of care and support may vary from site to site.
Supported living	Supported living services for adults with learning disability or mental health problems have their own tenancy with appropriate care and support. This helps them to live as independently and safely as possible. Support can include assistance with activities such as personal care, managing bills and accessing social experiences.
Standalone services	Stand-alone services in mainstream housing provision with visiting support or overnight support can enable people to live independently. The levels of support can vary depending on individual's needs.
Unpaid carer, care partner	The term unpaid carer is used in this document as the term used by ACHSCP. Care partner is preferred by the National Dementia Lived Experience Panel

Appendix 2 – Summary Table

SPECIALIST PROVISION	CURRENT PROVISION	SHORT TERM to 2027	MEDIUM TERM to 2030	LONG TERM to 2034
Care Homes (this includes both Residential Care and Nursing Care)	**Total bed numbers in Aberdeen City Older Adult Care Homes**: 1446 **Total number of residents in Aberdeen City Older Adult Care Homes**: 1353 **Total number of residents in Aberdeen City Older Adult Care Homes, receiving care funding via ACHSCP:** 1074 782 are funded at the full National Care Home Contract levels, and 292 are self-funders (note: In Scotland, there is entitlement to free personal and nursing care. Therefore, no care home resident has to pay for the own personal and nursing care charges (currently £248.70 & £111.90 per week respectively) Free personal and nursing care: questions and answers - gov.scot .)	ACHSCP is not planning to significantly increase the proportion of spend on national care home rates contracts so far as possible and does not intend to commission new Local Authority Care Home(s). ACHSCP focus will be on enabling people to stay within their own homes to mitigate demand for care home placements with a view to potentially reducing residential care home placements at national care home contract rate. It is anticipated that there is scope for additional independent providers in Aberdeen to meet the needs of self-funding residents over the long term.		

Appendix 2 – Summary Table

SPECIALIST PROVISION	CURRENT PROVISION	SHORT TERM to 2027	MEDIUM TERM to 2030	LONG TERM to 2034
	Total number of residents in Aberdeen City Older Adult Care Homes, who are out-of-area placements: Approx. 279 of the residents do not have ACHSCP funding. This however can be due to placements being arranged directly without any local authority involvement.			
Sheltered Housing	2,194 (ACC 1873, RSL 321) units. Several multi-storey sheltered properties are experiencing low demand. This reflects an increase preference for people to stay at home with appropriate adjustments.	ACHSCP anticipates reducing the volume of sheltered housing units in Aberdeen. This is due to evidence of overprovision and the anticipated increased complexity of need. This will be achieved via working in partnership with Aberdeen City Council and relevant partners. It is not anticipated that there will be additional scope for independent provider investment at this stage.		
Very Sheltered Housing	280 Units (ACC 110, RSL 170)	It is anticipated that there will be a growing demand for Very Sheltered Housing in Aberdeen to meet the increasing complex needs of an older population. To this end, ACHSCP has initiated early discussions with partners to progress a proposal to increase the volume of very sheltered housing units in the city whilst reducing the number sheltered housing units. This aligns with the focus referred to above to assist and enable people to live within their own homes. It is anticipated that there is scope for additional independent providers in Aberdeen to meet the needs of self-funding residents over the long term.		

Appendix 2 – Summary Table

SPECIALIST PROVISION	CURRENT PROVISION	SHORT TERM to 2027	MEDIUM TERM to 2030	LONG TERM to 2034
Children and young people with lifelong care, support needs Factors which will impact on the forecasting data include: Migration – A small number of families each year (largely from the wider Grampian area) relocate to Aberdeen to be nearer specialist medical facilities. **Unpredictable demand.** Migration - Inward migration of families from other parts of the world with a child with complex disabilities. **Unpredictable demand.** There are children and young people with a life limiting condition who were not predicted to live for more than a few years but who, as a result of advances in medical science, are living well beyond this and into adulthood. **Growing population/demand.**	Children with the most complex health and disability needs are currently cared for in various care settings. Most remain in parental care, with Self Directed Support (SDS) packages of support to meet need. Others are accommodated in residential care resources or within foster placements. These can be within or outwith the city.	Demand in the coming three years (2024-2027) is largely known – 20 young people are likely to need specialist accommodation and/or care provision as they will neither be able to live independently within mainstream accommodation nor be able to remain in the care of family or their current alternative care networks. • 13 of these young people are currently looked after in residential or foster care placements which should end within 3 years (at 18 years of age) • Most of these 20 young people are likely to be able to be supported in some form of specialised supported housing and care (Various degrees of complexity of health and care needs so will require further assessment to determine what tier of service provision) • 10 of the 20 young people are likely to require lifelong 24 hour care due to the complexity of their needs. Whether these needs are met within residential care or specialist supported housing and care in the community will be dependent on availability of resource to meet need.	Predicting demand beyond the initial 3 year period with any certainty presents greater challenges. For most parents with a child with disability/complex health needs, the teenage years are the most challenging. While parents/carers may, with support, be able to meet the needs of their pre-teen child, for safety, health or protection concerns as adolescence progresses such arrangements can become unsustainable. For this reason, these numbers may increase. There are currently 19 children who are likely to need specialist accommodation and/or care provision within the next 3 to 6 years (2027-2030) • A small number of these children (4) may be able to be supported within their families if sufficiently robust bespoke packages of care can be mobilised. Intervention aims to support this option if feasible. • One of this group is currently in residential	There are currently 16 children who are likely to need specialist accommodation and/or care provision within 6 to 10 years (2030-2034). As for the previous group, this is based on knowledge of current children and their circumstances hence numbers may increase. • Most of this group's needs are complex indicating they will require 24 hour care. Given the timeframe, intervention and support will continue to strive to build the necessary resilience and skills. • Only one of this group is currently within a residential care setting and one more is on the edge of care. • A small number of these children may be able to be supported within their families if sufficiently robust bespoke packages of care can be mobilised. Intervention aims to support this option if feasible.

Appendix 2 – Summary Table

SPECIALIST PROVISION	CURRENT PROVISION	SHORT TERM to 2027	MEDIUM TERM to 2030	LONG TERM to 2034
			• care and two more are on the edge of care. • 7 of the 20 young people are likely to require lifelong 24 hour care due to the complexity of their needs. Whether these needs are met within residential care or specialist supported housing and care in the community will be dependent on availability of resource to meet need.	
Mental Health and Learning Disability[17]	93 Mental Health Care Home Placements Of the 8 Care homes which provided information in the service provider survey in 2021, only 1 (with 20 placements within it) was fully in line with the expectations of the current Mental Health and Learning Disability Residential and Supported Living Accommodation - Market Position Statement 2021 - 2026. All others required varying levels of upgrading.	It is anticipated that there will be a growing need for care and support with mental health and learning disability requirements in Aberdeen as life expectancy increases within the relevant population. This will likely require additional resource allocation towards MHLD placements and to addressing current environmental conditions.		

[17] People living with disability and complex Care see earlier MPS- Mental Health and Learning Disability Residential and Supported Living Accommodation - Market Position Statement 2021 - 2026 and Complex Care Market Position Statement 2022 - 2027

Appendix 2 – Summary Table

SPECIALIST PROVISION	CURRENT PROVISION	SHORT TERM to 2027	MEDIUM TERM to 2030	LONG TERM to 2034
Bariatric Care	Less than 5 individual homes are provided by Aberdeen City Council	A further 10 individual homes to meet existing and unmet need in the short term (up to 5 years) and predicted data shows that a total of 30 individual homes would be required to meet the needs of the city by 2034. ACHSCP will seek to contribute to the growing need via partnership working as opportunities arise.		
Substance use	**Alcohol/Drugs use:** Current service has 17 places but requires to be re-provisioned for people with alcohol dependence. Currently at capacity with less than 5 people on the waiting list. **Alcohol/Drugs use:** Phoenix Futures (3rd sector provider) has secured 23 units funded by the Scottish Government until 2026.	ACHSCP is working in partnership with the ACC housing service and third sector to identify a suitable alternative site to replace current accommodation for alcohol use. It is anticipated that technology enabled care will play an increasing role in supporting the needs of people. It is anticipated that 17 or less SMS residential/supported accommodation places would be sought for the future. Regarding drug use, there is currently no intention to replace government funding beyond the current funding arrangement to 2026.		
Forensic Mental Health Accommodation	42 current places are provided at RCH. There are currently 29 people on the waiting list for a placement within the forensic mental health accommodation unit.	It is anticipated that 38 places will be required. This incorporates 23 patients currently considered delayed discharge and 5 additional admissions that will likely require supported accommodation, from years 2025- 2027.	It is anticipated that 59 places will be required. This incorporates 6 additional patients currently receiving care and 5 additional admissions that will likely require supported accommodation, from years 2028-2030.	It is anticipated that 85 places will be required. This incorporates 6 additional patients currently receiving care and 5 additional admissions that will likely require supported accommodation, from years 2031-2034. Given the significant scale of current and anticipated demand, it is anticipated that this need will require local, regional and national cooperation across public, private and third sector stakeholders.

Appendix 2 – Summary Table

SPECIALIST PROVISION	CURRENT PROVISION SHORT TERM to 2027	MEDIUM TERM to 2030 LONG TERM to 2034
Justice Social Work	The number of people released from prison on licences or orders is on average 50 per year. ACHSCP seeks to maintain 50 tenancies through ACC to keep people safe in the community and reduce reoffending.	It is hard to predict the future requirements, however utilising previous years as a benchmark it is anticipated maintaining 50 tenancies per year. Wider engagement and development of business case with National Accommodation Strategy for sex offenders which applies to the housing of sex and high-risk offenders manged under the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)
Homelessness	Temporary Accommodation- 592 Units, 72 of which are hotel accommodation. Support Provision – Outreach Housing Support for up to 500 people experiencing homelessness, Housing First support for up to 50 people with enduring complex needs, Foyer Accommodation Based support for up to 27 young people(aged 16-25). Mainstream need.	Increased provision of temporary furnished properties. Wider consideration required of a supported accommodation model that could be provided on a flexible basis for those with complex and multiple health needs, including mental health, physical disability and substance use. Compounded by challenges of cyclical and sporadic interaction with services (social work, treatment services) A gap in mainstream provision of 452 units is highlighted, with the upcoming introduction of Ask and Act Legislation and a potential risk of increase referrals into the homelessness service as a result brings a challenge of predicting future need. Despite increases in homeless applications, levels of homelessness have remained fairly stable in the city.

** Acquired Brain Injury and Neurological conditions – Ongoing work has informed this market position statement.

Evidence Base

Local Housing Strategy 2025-2030

Consultation Draft

Introduction

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 places a statutory duty on councils to produce a Local Housing Strategy (LHS) supported by an assessment of housing need and demand. The Scottish Government's Local Housing Strategy Guidance 2019 has been followed in the production of the strategy.

The Local Housing Strategy is a five-year strategy sets out the strategic vision of Aberdeen for the delivery of housing and housing related services. The Local Housing Strategy considers local and national priorities which, along with stakeholder consultation, which has helped shape the strategic priorities aimed to be achieved across all tenures of housing in Aberdeen.

The Local Housing Strategy builds on Aberdeen City's previous Local Housing Strategies and supports the Scottish Government's strategy detailed in Housing to 2040 and the priority actions in the Joint Delivery Action Plan, which forms the monitoring framework that supports the Local Housing Strategy.

Since the previous Local Housing Strategy there have been a series of economic, political and environmental challenges, including the global COVID-19 pandemic, cost of living crisis and in the context of a national housing emergency. All of this occurring at a time when local authority finances are under significant pressures.

Vision

The vision for the Local Housing Strategy reflects the city's core vision in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan: "a place where all people can prosper."

The Local Housing Strategy sets out the strategic vision and priorities for the future delivery of housing and housing related services. It identifies the specific commitments made by the council and its key partners to deliver the strategic priorities within the Local Housing Strategy.

The vision for housing is:

The people of Aberdeen live in good quality, safe, sustainable and affordable homes in thriving communities that meet their needs.

Strategic Priorities

The strategic priorities have been established through stakeholder consultation, and informed by the Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3. These strategic priorities aim to promote equality in housing, help reduce poverty, provide high quality housing, and to develop actions to reduce fuel poverty and reverse the effects of climate change.

The Local Housing Strategy aims to deliver seven overarching strategic priorities in relation to:

Priority 1: Adequate supply of housing
We will support a sufficient supply of housing to meet the varying needs of the people of Aberdeen.
Priority 2: Placemaking and Communities
We will use a place-based approach to encourage lesser heard voices to shape their communities and the community offering, focusing on the unique circumstances of a particular place and involving local people in decision making.
Priority 3: Homelessness
We will support a proactive housing options approach and will work collaboratively to provide a person-centred service to make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring.
Priority 4: Promote independent living in communities
We will use a multi-agency approach, technology and other innovations to enable the people of Aberdeen to live as independently as possible, for as long as possible in their community.
Priority 5: Promote health through housing
We are committed to reducing health inequalities by providing affordable, accessible, high quality and energy efficient homes that enhance people's health and wellbeing.
Priority 6: Housing quality and energy efficiency
We will improve the condition of existing homes across all tenures and improve their energy efficiency to help to alleviate fuel poverty and address climate change and support a just transition to net zero.
Priority 7: Private rented sector
We will support a well managed private rented sector

The strategic priorities form the foundation of the Aberdeen City Local Housing Strategy 2025-2030 Delivery Action Plan. This provides the monitoring and evaluation framework in relation to delivery of the each of the key priorities. Performance indicators agreed jointly with key stakeholders and monitored by the Strategic Priority Group annually.

Social Determinants of Health

The World Health Organisation states that any factors combine together to affect the health of individuals and communities and whether people are healthy or not, is determined by their circumstances and environment. Public Heath Scotland published a briefing paper on "Healthy housing for Scotland" which sets out the link between housing and health. To a large extent, factors such as where a person lives, the state of the environment, genetics, income and education levels, and relationships with friends and family all have considerable impacts on health.

Figure 0.1: Social Determinants of Health - Main factors

Whereas the more commonly considered factors such as access and use of health care services often have less of an impact. Figure 0.1 highlights the main factors which make up the social determinants of health.

The social or wider determinants of health are the non-medical factors that influence people's health outcomes. These are the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age, and the wider set of forces and systems shaping daily life that include the broad social and economic circumstances which together influence the health of the population.

Aberdeen Context

Location

Aberdeen is an urban local authority located in the northeast of Scotland and is the country's third largest city. It is the regional centre for employment, retail, culture, health and higher education. It is also the region's transport hub with road, rail, sea and air links.

Aberdeen City extends to 185.7 km² (71.7 square miles) and shares its boundaries with Aberdeenshire. The Local Housing Strategy covers the area outlined in Figure 0.2.

Aberdeen is home to two leading research universities, Europe's largest medical hub including Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, Royal

Figure 0.2: Map of Aberdeen area
Source: Aberdeen City Council.

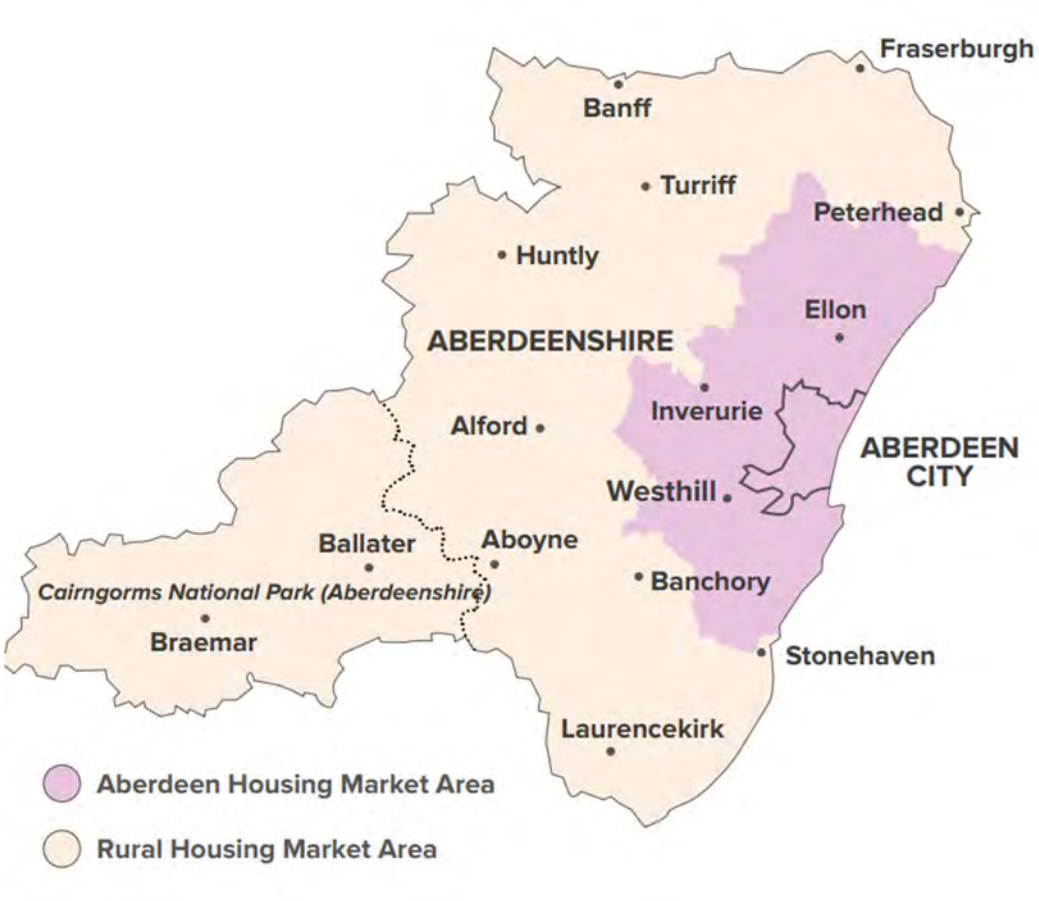
Cornhill Hospital along with the Rowett Research Institute, and Northeast Scotland College, one of the largest in Scotland.

It has some of the most affluent areas of Scotland based on house prices such as Rubislaw, Cults and Bieldside where the average house price is £590k according to Rightmove, the average house price for Aberdeen was £137k according to ONS. However, Aberdeen has some deprived areas as well, according to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. (SMID) Aberdeen has a number of areas identified as deprived including Woodside, Tillydrone and Middlefield.

Urban/Rural Split

The Aberdeen Housing Market Area stretches well beyond the city boundaries as highlighted in purple in Figure 0.3 below. The definition of a Housing Market Area is “a geographical area where the demand for housing is relatively self-contained”.

Figure 0.3 - Map of Aberdeen City including the wider housing market area



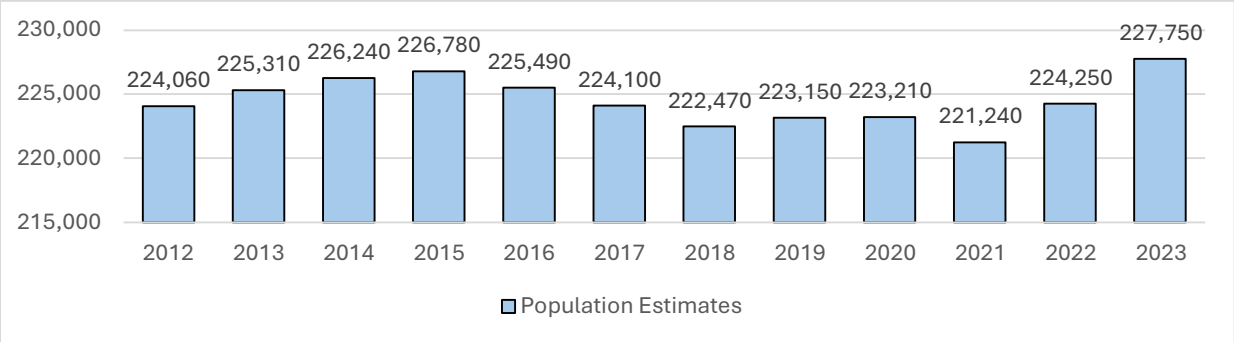
Source: Aberdeen City Council

Population

The population of Aberdeen experienced steady growth in the early 2010s as seen in Table 0.1 below. The downturn of the oil and gas sector in 2015 saw the population in the city begin to decline. Since then, it has fluctuated, reaching its lowest point in 2021. This may be attributed to the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2022, the population figure seems to have made a significant recovery, exceeding pre-COVID levels.

It is important to note that these estimates were provided by the National Records of Scotland (NRS) and are based on 2020 projections. The scheduled update of the 2022-based projections are not due to be published by NRS until early 2025. The estimated population projection for 2022 of 224,190 closely aligns with the figure reported as part of the 2022 Census of 224,109, indicating the accuracy of this projection.

Table 0.1: Aberdeen City Population Estimates – 2012-2023



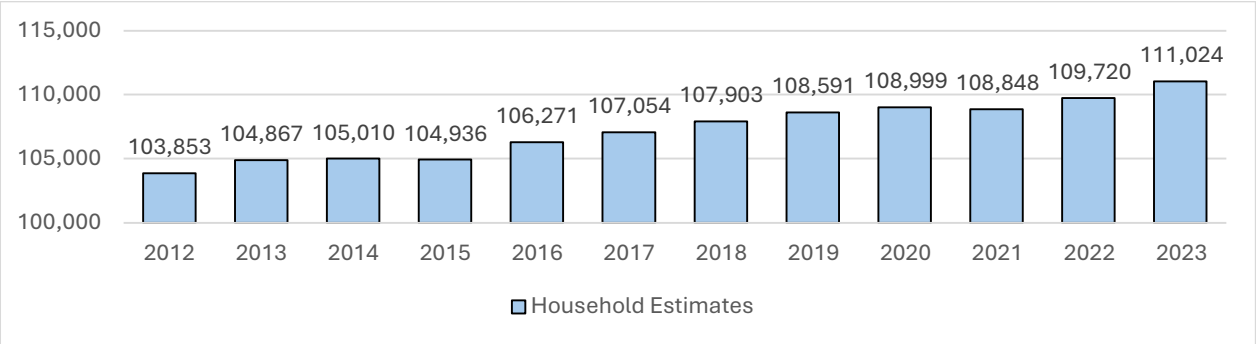
Source: National Records of Scotland, Population Estimates, Time Series Data (July 24)

Households

In contrast to the population fluctuations, data from the National Records of Scotland (NRS) shown in Table 0.2 below indicates the number of households in the city has increased at a comparatively consistent rate between 2012 and 2023 with a slight annual growth most years. Results from the Census 2022 indicated the total households in the city was 109,374, which closely aligns to the estimate provided by NRS for the same year.

The latest available data in relation to population and households suggests that both figures are rising in the city.

Table 0.2: Aberdeen City Household Estimates – 2012-2023



Source: National Records of Scotland, Estimates of Households and Dwellings in Scotland (June 24)

Housing Need and Demand

The Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3 for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, published in January 2024, provided a summary of the key issues identified in each section of the document that would be considered in the development of the next Local Housing Strategy and Local Development Plan produced by both local authorities respectively.

For Aberdeen City, key issues of particular importance included increased demand for larger family homes, a requirement for additional specialist provision accommodation, the effects of international migration and a low demand for property types such as tenement blocks and multi-storey properties. While this is not an exhaustive list of the issues identified in the Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3, these issues provide examples of the key challenges being faced by the council and other housing providers in the city. These have been considered by Aberdeen City Council when developing the priorities of this Local Housing Strategy in collaboration with Registered Social Landlords and other local stakeholders.

Supporting chapters have further information on the Aberdeen context that is relevant to each of the strategic priorities.

National Context

Housing to 2040

The Scottish Government's Housing to 2040 vision is for everyone in Scotland to have a safe, high-quality home that is affordable and meets their needs in the place they want to be. In line with this national vision, the Aberdeen Local Housing Strategy 2024-2029 provides a range of housing priorities and seeks to compliment this vision.

Supporting chapters have further information on the national context that is relevant to each of the strategic priorities.

Local Housing Strategy Achievement 2018 - 2023

Significant progress has been made in relation to delivery of strategic outcomes identified in the Local Housing Strategy 2018 - 2023. A summary of some of the key achievements is given below:

Strategic outcome 1: Housing Supply

- 3,097 social homes delivered which includes 1,130 from Aberdeen City Council plus 433 buy-back homes.
- 394 Mid-Market Rent homes
- Upgrade of the Gypsy/Traveller site at Clinterty to ensure it meets current regulations

Strategic outcome 2: Homelessness

- The implementation of the Housing First Model in 2021
- The roll out of the Housing Options toolkit which completed in 2024
- The introduction of the Housing for Care Leavers procedure in 2020
- The introduction of the Foyer's Nightstop Service in 2023
- In 2023 Aberdeen became one of the six flagship locations for Homewards project which is part of HRH Prince and Princess of Wales Royal Foundation that aims to end homelessness.

Strategic outcome 3: Independent living and specialist provision

- The supply of wheelchair accessible housing has increased by 112 homes since 2018/19. A further 67 homes were delivered to housing for varying needs, accessibility standard and 26 specialist provision housing as been delivered through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme.
- The Strategic Housing Investment Plan has a minimum 15% target for the delivery of wheelchair accessible homes. (The current Strategic Housing Investment Plan projects that 365-wheelchair accessible or specialist provision homes will be delivered between 2025/26 – 2029/30, which is in line with the 15% target.)
- Increased the provision of interim housing options to support people who are delayed discharge in hospital. An additional 25 places have been provided in sheltered and very sheltered accommodation. This is in addition to the 21 places already provided. This model has eased the flow from hospital settings.
- Increased the provision of specialist provision housing for people with learning disabilities/mental health issues in partnership with Sanctuary Scotland and Hillcrest at North Anderson Drive and Newton of Charleston providing 16 new tenancies.
- Working in conjunction with Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership to produce the Complex Care Market Position Statement and Mental Health and Learning Disability Residential and Supported Living Market Position Statements that inform the market of current and future need, and detail opportunities for new provision or re-provisioning.

Strategic outcome 4: Private rented sector
• Quarterly Newsletters issued to Private Landlords providing landlords advice and guidance within the sector. • Introduction of the Private Landlord Support Officer post within the Private Sector Housing Team in 2023. The post provides enhanced advice and support to private landlords and tenants. In 2023, the Landlord Support Officer dealt directly with 65 landlords who required advice, and the main theme was around legislative queries and tenancy management issues. • Re-instatement of the Landlord Forums online, consisting of key speakers from the Scottish Government, Landlord Accreditation Scotland and Under One Roof. These forums cover a variety of topics such as property maintenance, tenancy management and legislative updates within the Sector.
Strategic Outcome 5: Fuel poverty and climate change
• Engaging a consultant to assist in the completion of the public engagement and the preparation of the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy. • Achieving over 8,500 Home Energy Scotland interactions, Home Energy Scotland interacts via a range of ways with residents in the Northeast including by telephone or digital service, home visits, at events either public facing over via employee engagement, the online competition or via targeting campaigns. • 350 referrals made to Warmer Homes Scotland a government funded project to assist private households who are struggling financially. This is to make their homes warmer and easier to heat, where the owners' circumstances and property are suitable. 129 of the referrals led to an installation happening either for insulation or heating. • The Net Zero Aberdeen Routemap was approved in 2022 setting an approach to a net zero city by 2045. Supporting the Routemap is a Buildings and Heat Strategy (2022), covering energy efficiency and decarbonising heat. • Aberdeen Adapts the city Climate Adaptation Framework was refreshed in 2022, this includes buildings and infrastructure as one of the 5 priority themes. • Phased delivery of Gold Standard specification Aberdeen City Council homes under the Council house-building programme. This included the hand over of new homes at Cloverhill. The programme is increasing connections to lower carbon district heating and to zero carbon renewable technology.
Strategic outcome 6: House Condition – Social Sector
• Improved understanding of the energy profile of the Council's housing stock. The stock is now 93% compliant with the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing. • Expansion of the district heating network which includes new build developments at Wellheads (383 homes), Auchmill Road (92 homes), Summerhill (369 homes), and 6 Multi Storey Blocks (324 homes). • Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHESS) has achieved stages 1 to 4 in the strategy these are 1 Policy and Strategy, 2 Data and Tools Library, 3 Baseline Tools and Strategic, Zoning, 4 Generation of initial Delivery Areas

Strategic outcome 6: House Condition – Private Sector
• Implementation of 10% sampling, where private landlords are requested to provide copies of safety certification as part of the Landlord Registration application process. In 2023, 419 properties were sampled and certification checked. This assists in ensuring privately rented properties are adhering to current standards. • Proactive visits to tenement properties are conducted to highlight communal areas for improvement/repair as a preventative measure to maintain property condition. Between 2020 – 2023, a total of 1,202 properties have received a pro-active visit. In some cases, private owners are written to and advised of property repairs required. • The Missing Share process was reviewed and information available to the public made clearer with an application form available. The Council promotes Novoville (a shared repairs App) that encourages owners to manage communal repairs.

Any outstanding actions have been incorporated in this Local Housing Strategy and the associated Joint Delivery Action Plan for 2025 - 2030.

Integrated Impact Assessments

Equality issues have been considered throughout the development of the Local Housing Strategy. The approach taken has been to 'mainstream' equalities issues across all aspects of housing including planning for new housing, housing management, allocations and homelessness. Mainstreaming equalities is about systematically considering equality and diversity at all stages and across all areas of activity. Understanding and reflecting that some people's views may not readily be heard via the use of traditional engagement methods.

An Integrated Impact Assessment will be undertaken and monitored throughout the lifetime of the Local Housing Strategy to consider any unintended consequences for the people of Aberdeen, particularly for groups who may be seen as vulnerable or marginalised. The assessment will also allow the council to consider steps that can be taken to mitigate the risks to the people of Aberdeen.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

A Strategic Environmental Assessment is being carried out as required under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. This will determine the impact of the strategy and if there are likely to be any significant environmental effects. This is a dynamic assessment that will evolve over the period of the strategy development.

Consultation

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 requires local authorities to consult on their proposed Local Housing Strategy. Similarly, statutory Equality Duties on public bodies require involvement, consultation and engagement with as wide a range of local people as possible.

The development of the vision and strategic priorities was developed in consultation with members of the Strategic Priority Groups that are made up of key stakeholders. These have informed the development of the evidence base.

Further consultation on the draft strategy is planned in line with the Consultation and Engagement Plan.

Priority 1: Adequate supply of housing

Introduction

This chapter recognises the importance of good quality, sustainable and affordable housing. It sets out our strategic vision for housing supply across all tenures to meet projected need and demand.

The delivery of an adequate supply of housing, that is of the right type and size to meet current and future needs is central to creating balanced, sustainable, and mixed communities. Challenges resulting from the economic downturn, increased building costs and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to have an impact on the housing market.

This chapter is informed by the Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3 and sets out the housing need and demand required for the city over the next 20 years. It identifies the key issues and actions required in relation to the supply of housing.

Strategic Priority

We will support a sufficient supply of housing to meet the varying needs of the people of Aberdeen.

This strategic priority for the duration of this Local Housing Strategy was developed in consultation both with internal and external stakeholders for this sector. This outcome encapsulates the approach that stakeholders wish to see over the next five years.

Aberdeen Context

Significant progress has been made with the delivery of affordable housing in recent years; however, demand still outstrips supply across the city. The Housing Need and Demand Assessment is the evidence base required to calculate local housing and land requirements over the next 20 years.

Local Outcome Improvement Plan

Table 1.1 below details the Aberdeen's Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-2026 (LOIP) stretch outcomes that hold particular relevance to housing supply. Table 1.1 is not an exhaustive list of every potential link to these topics in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, however it includes several of the improvement project aims/key drivers that relate to housing supply that can contribute to the achievement of the stretch outcomes.

Table 1.1: LOIP Stretch Outcomes and Improvement Project Aims Relevant to House Supply

Stretch Outcomes	Improvement Project Aims/Key Drivers
1. 20% reduction in the percentage of people who report they have been worried they would not have enough food to eat and/or not be able to heat their home by 2026.	Increase to 92% the number of homes that meet an EPC rating of C or better by 2026.
10. Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026	Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people, families, and groups.
12. Reduce homelessness by 10% and youth homelessness by 6% by 2026, ensuring it is rare, brief, and non-recurring with a longer-term ambition to end homelessness in Aberdeen City.	Increase accessibility to a wider range of housing options to people at risk of homelessness.
13. Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by at least 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate	Reducing emissions across the city through delivery of Aberdeen's Net Zero Vision & Route-map.

Source: Aberdeen City Council Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-2026, Refreshed Version (2024)

Housing supply can contribute to Stretch Outcome 1 through the provision of new housing which is built to high energy efficiency standards. This can also contribute to Stretch Outcome 13 as an increased number of energy efficient properties will result in a lower overall carbon footprint for the city and contribute to the delivery of Aberdeen's Net Zero Routemap.

The supply of good quality, sustainable and affordable housing can also contribute to the achievement of Stretch Outcome 10 and 12 by increasing the housing options available to vulnerable and disadvantaged people. Ensuring that there is an adequate supply of good quality housing, particularly to vulnerable groups, can help to reduce the level of homelessness and contribute to an overall improvement of healthy life expectancy in the city.

Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3 (HNDA3)

The Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3 is completed jointly with Aberdeenshire Council. Both local authorities worked with housing market partners to produce the HNDA 3 which was signed off as 'robust and credible' by the Centre for Housing Market Analysis (CHMA) in January 2024.

To assist local authorities with the HNDA process, the Scottish Government has developed an HNDA tool which produces an estimate of the additional housing units needed at a local authority and housing market area level.

The HNDA tool projects the number of new households who will require housing by using household projections produced by the National Records of Scotland. The tool also considers the number of existing households who need to move to more suitable housing.

Several economic scenarios were modelled, each with a different set of variables that were input into the HNDA tool to provide a range of estimates of future housing need in the city. The differing variables in the scenarios included level of migration, income growth and the tenure split in the city. The HNDA tool then calculates housing affordability and provides total future housing requirements over a twenty-year period, split by tenure.

Aberdeen Local Development Plan

Planning authorities must prepare a local development plan for their area. This shows how local places will change into the future, including where development should and should not happen.

The Aberdeen Local Development Plan was adopted in June 2023 and is used to guide decisions on planning applications alongside Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance and National Planning Framework 4.

The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 changed how Local Development Plans are structured and presented. With the implementation of National Planning Framework 4, there are now national planning policies that cover the whole of Scotland and are used to guide decisions on planning applications alongside the Local Development Plan. Local Development Plans have a focus on local policies and are more place and spatial based than previously. There is no requirement to repeat national planning polices within the Local Development Plan, as both National Planning Framework 4 and the Aberdeen Local Development Plan are used to assess and determine planning applications.

The Aberdeen Local Development Plan focusses on outcomes to ensure it delivers for people and places. It is place-based, relevant, accessible, and useful to people with an interest in their place. To ensure the Aberdeen Local Development Plan is deliverable, it is place-based, and people focused and takes an "infrastructure first" approach. This involves the consideration of infrastructure implications at every stage of the planning process, and it encourages, promotes, and facilitates development that addresses the global climate emergency and nature crisis.

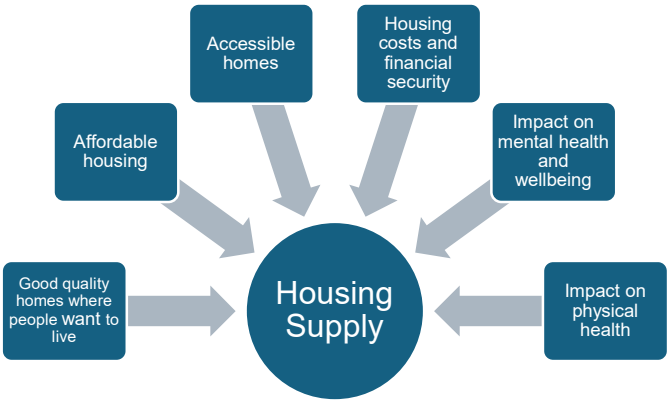
The Local Development Plan delivery programme is expected to establish a deliverable housing land pipeline for the “local housing land requirement.” It provides a transparent view of the phasing of housing allocations so that interventions that enable delivery, including infrastructure, can be planned. The pipeline is expected to cover the short (1-3 years), medium (4-6 years) and long term (7-10 years).

The Local Development Plan is required to allocate deliverable land to meet the “local housing land requirement” in locations that create quality places for people to live. Areas that may be suitable for new homes beyond 10 years also have to be identified. The locations where new homes are allocated should be consistent with local living including, where relevant, 20-minute neighbourhoods and an infrastructure first approach.

Diverse needs and delivery models should be taken into account, as well as allocating land to ensure provision of accommodation for Gypsy/Travellers and Travelling Showpeople where need is identified.

Social Determinants of Health – Housing Supply

Housing is recognised as an important social determinant of health. Poor quality housing such as those with damp, mould or inadequate heating can lead to various health issues and negatively impact on wellbeing. The same can be said for people who experience homelessness, overcrowding and accessibility issues. The adequate supply of good quality housing that is affordable and secure has significant positive effects on health outcomes. Efforts to increase the supply of social housing can also improve quality standards have the potential to reduce health inequalities.



National Context

The national legislative framework for housing supply in Scotland is designed to ensure that everyone has access to good quality, affordable housing that meets their needs. Key components of this framework include:

Housing to 2040 sets out a vision for housing in Scotland to 2040 and a route map to get there. It aims to deliver the Scottish Government’s ambition for everyone to have a safe, good quality and affordable home that meets their needs in the place they want to be.

National Planning Framework 4 outlines the Scottish Government’s intention to encourage, promote and facilitate the delivery of more high quality, affordable and sustainable homes, in the right locations, providing choice across tenures that meet the diverse housing needs of people across Scotland.

The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 and the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) aim to integrate housing and planning systems to increase the speed and efficiency of the planning process. Local Development Plans are expected to identify a local housing land requirement for the area they cover. This is to meet the duty for a housing target and to represent how much land is required. To promote an ambitious and plan-led approach, the local housing land requirement is expected to exceed the 10 year Minimum All Tenure Housing Land Requirement. The Minimum All-Tenure Housing Land Requirement is the minimum amount of land, by reference to the number of housing units, that is to be provided by each planning authority in Scotland for a 10-year period. The Minimum All Tenure Housing Land Requirement is expected to be exceeded in each Local Development Plan's Local Housing Land Requirement. Deliverable land should be allocated to meet the 10-year local housing land requirement in locations that create quality places for people to live. Areas that may be suitable for new homes beyond 10 years are also to be identified. For Aberdeen, the 10-year Minimum All Tenure Housing Land Requirement is 7,000 units.

The Affordable Housing Supply Programme comprises a range of funding mechanisms to enable affordable housing providers to deliver homes for social rent, mid-market rent, and low-cost home ownership.

The Local Government Finance (Unoccupied Properties etc.) (Scotland) Act 2012 allows local authorities to charge increased Council Tax on certain homes that have been empty for more than 12 months.

These legislative measures, along with various policies and funding programmes, work together to support the delivery of housing and housing-related services across Scotland.

Housing Supply Targets

The Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3 provides the evidence-based estimate of how much additional housing will be required to meet all future housing need and demand in the city.

The Local Housing Strategy, using the HNDA as an evidence base, provides the starting point for setting Housing Supply Targets (HST) within the Local Housing Strategy.

The Housing Supply Target (HST) sets out the estimated level of additional housing that can realistically be delivered. This will be developed with stakeholders throughout the consultation process.

These targets will be further refined as part of the consultation process with stakeholders.

Strategic Housing Investment Plan

The core purpose of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) is to set out strategic investment priorities for affordable housing over a 5-year period to achieve the outcomes set out in the Local Housing Strategy (LHS). The SHIP reinforces the

local authority as the strategic housing authority and details how investment priorities will be delivered. The SHIP should:

- Set out the investment priorities for affordable housing
- Demonstrate how these will be delivered
- Identify the resources required to deliver these priorities
- Enable the involvement of key partners.

Over the lifespan of the previous Local Housing Strategy, 3,097 affordable housing units were delivered in Aberdeen City as part of the SHIP, as seen in Table 1.2 below.

Table 1.2: Affordable Housing Completions 2018/19-2023/24

Developer	Type	No. of units
Aberdeen City Council	Social Rent – Buy-Backs	433
Aberdeen City Council	Social Rent	1,130
Aberdeen City Council	Mortgage to Rent	1
Barratt Homes	LCHO	4
Castlehill	Social Rent	68
Castlehill	Mid-Market Rent	6
Grampian	Social Rent	43
Grampian	Mid-Market Rent	64
Hillcrest	Social Rent	644
Hillcrest	Mid-Market Rent	156
Langstane	Social Rent	32
LAR	Social Rent	9
LAR	Mid-Market Rent	4
Muir Homes	LCHO	1
Osprey	Social Rent	1
Places for People	Social Rent	98
Places for People	Mid-Market Rent	92
Places for People	Shared Equity	35
Sanctuary	Social Rent	203
Sanctuary	Mid-Market Rent	72
Scotia	LCHO	1
Total		**3,097**

Source: Aberdeen City Council, Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2025-30

Table 1.3 below shows the distribution of affordable housing completions by tenure over the lifespan of the previous Local Housing Strategy. 2,228 were new social rent properties which is around 72% of all units delivered, with the majority of these being delivered by Aberdeen City Council and then Hillcrest Housing Association.

Table 1.3: Affordable Housing Completions 2018/19-2023/24 by Tenure

Tenure	Total Units Delivered
Mortgage to Rent	1
LCHO	6
Shared-Equity	35
Mid-Market Rent	394
Social Rent – Buy Backs	433
Social Rent	2,228
All Tenures	**3,097**

Source: Aberdeen City Council, Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2025-30

The SHIP and its investment priorities are aligned with the strategic priorities of the Local Housing Strategy 2025-2030. The delivery of affordable housing through the SHIP has the potential to contribute to the achievement of all of the strategic priorities of this Local Housing Strategy, with the exception of the Private Rented Sector strategic priority.

The SHIP 2025/26-2029/30 has the potential to provide 2,427 new affordable homes over the lifespan of this Local Housing Strategy. If all homes were delivered, this would significantly help meet housing need and demand across the city and help to address the housing emergency that was declared in Aberdeen in September 2024. There are, however, several constraints which may have a detrimental impact on the number of affordable homes delivered in the coming years.

A combination of factors including inflation rates and the invasion of Ukraine affecting access to supply markets in Russia, Ukraine, and surrounding area, have led to a cycle of market and price volatility and shortages across many commodities which has had a negative impact on the delivery of capital projects and budgets. Whilst price volatility appears to be levelling off, there is still a significant increase in the cost of materials and contractors.

There is uncertainty regarding funding sources for future affordable housing projects which has a detrimental effect on the ability to plan for affordable housing provision in the coming years. There has also been a reduction in grant funding through the affordable housing supply programme which has led to Aberdeen City Council being unable to proceed with sites, particularly those that do not fall under a Section 75 legal agreement. There has also been an increase in developers who are reluctant to plan for delivery of affordable housing through Section 75 agreements and would choose to provide a commuted sum which will require careful management and consideration.

Although the current landscape presents various challenges, Aberdeen City Council will continue to utilise available funding from a variety of sources and work with key stakeholders in order to maximise the delivery of affordable housing in the city.

Housing Demand

The HNDA 3 presented evidence to suggest that housing supply in the city does not meet current levels of demand. In the social sector, the majority of households on Aberdeen City Council’s waiting lists are waiting for 1-bed properties with around

60% of all applications, as shown in Table 1.4 below. Demand for 2-bed and 3-bed properties is considerably lower with, approximately 22% and 14% of the waiting list respectively, however there are significantly lower levels of 3-bed homes which means that whilst there is lower demand, the length of time a household is waiting can be significant. This also applies to those who need 4-bed and larger as there is fewer exiting stock of this size.

Table 1.4: Aberdeen City Council Waiting Lists by Bedroom Size*

Total Applicants	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	5 Bed	7 Bed
6,554	3,958	1,445	913	213	24	1
100%	60.4%	22.1%	13.9%	3.3%	0.4%	0.02%

Source: Aberdeen City Council Waiting List as of 31 March 2024 *percentages rounded to one decimal place

Data was also included in the HNDA 3 in relation to demand for property sizes that Registered Social Landlords in the city are experiencing, as shown in Table 1.5 below. This data was sourced from These Homes, a choice-based lettings platform used by several housing associations in Aberdeen City.

Table 1.5: Registered Social Landlord Applicants by Bedroom Size*

Total Applicants	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	5 Bed+
10,371	4,959	2,964	1,783	529	136
100%	47.8%	28.6%	17.2%	5.1%	1.3%

Source: These Homes data (2024)[1]

Scottish Household Survey data suggests that the number of bedrooms per dwelling in the social sector is insufficient to meet demand for 1-bed properties in Aberdeen, with 33% of social housing being properties of this size, as shown in Table 1.6 below. The proportion of 1-bed social properties in the city is around half of the proportion of applicants for 1-bed properties on Aberdeen City Council's waiting lists.

Although demand experienced by RSLs for 1-bed properties is lower than Aberdeen City Council, it is still considerably higher than the proportion of social housing in the city. Demand for 2-bed properties, similarly to Aberdeen City Council's waiting lists, is significantly lower than the proportion of 2-bed properties in the city.

Table 1.6: Number of bedrooms per dwelling in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire

	% Owner-Occupier				% Social Housing				% Private Rented			
	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4+ bed	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4+ bed	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4+ bed
Aberdeen City	11%	32%	38%	19%	33%	53%	14%	-	40%	48%	11%	2%
Scotland	**5%**	**28%**	**43%**	**24%**	**27%**	**45%**	**25%**	**3%**	**24%**	**49%**	**21%**	**6%**

Source: Scottish Household Survey (2019)

The HNDA 3 suggested an undersupply of 1-bed properties in the social sector, as well as an oversupply of 2-bed properties. With the exiting social sector stock being

[1] These Homes operate within the Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray Council areas and the figures shown are for the whole area. They are unable to provide details for applicants only registering an interest in Aberdeen City areas.

unable to meet demand from those requiring 1-bed properties, this may place additional pressure on temporary accommodation, particularly where households are unable to afford the private rented sector.

The data also suggests that existing housing stock may be unable to meet the demand of those requiring larger family homes. 6% of RSL applicants require 4-6 bed properties according to These Homes data, and 3.7% of Aberdeen City Council's waiting list is for 4 and 5 bed properties. There is a very low proportion of 4-bed+ properties in the social sector, meaning that this demand is unlikely to be met by social housing providers unless additional larger homes are delivered through the Strategic Housing Investment Plan.

Evidence was presented in the HNDA 3 to suggest that families arriving as part of refugee, asylum seeking and resettlement groups may increase demand on larger family homes in the city. Arrivals from these groups may continue at the current level or even grow in the near future, as discussed in the Independent Living chapter of this Local Housing Strategy, potentially resulting in a sustained demand for larger family homes from these groups. There was also a growing trend identified in the HNDA 3 for international students to arrive in the city with their families, further increasing the demand for these properties, however immigration rules surrounding this have now changed which should ease some of the future pressures.

While there is a shortage of certain property sizes and a suggested oversupply of others in the city, Aberdeen City Council recognises that there is a need for a diverse supply of housing built in the future which will assist in developing sustainable, mixed communities for the people of Aberdeen. The council will work with property developers to ensure that current stock insufficiencies in the city are remedied in a way which is deliverable and promotes community living.

Self-Build/Custom Build

Aberdeen City Council has a self-build register which can be found on the council's website. It includes a link to fill in the register and details of the published register. The register is refreshed every two years, after which time the Council will contact those on the list to check if they wish to remain on it, or alter any details held. The published register is updated monthly and is open to view on the website. The published list contains a name, location required, what type of plot, number of plots required, house type, and intended build start time. This information is used to develop planning and housing policy and guidance for Aberdeen.

A planning application for 19 plots was approved in June 2024 in the west of the city which means that anyone hoping to build their own property could start work without the need for land acquisition or planning permission from the council.

Empty Homes

Aberdeen City Council recognises the key role that privately owned empty homes play in meeting housing need and demand and have two full time Empty Homes Officers in place to work with owners of long-term empty properties to help bring

them back into use. Empty homes can cause significant challenges not only for homeowners but also for residents, local authorities, and other relevant stakeholders. There can be significant disrepair and blight which has a negative impact on the local environment and quality of life for neighbours. From a wider community perspective, empty homes can have a negative effect in terms of place, undermine regeneration efforts and prevent common repairs from taking place. Furthermore, properties which are inactive within the housing market do not contribute to economic activity within communities and do not help with homelessness prevention or meeting housing needs within Aberdeen city.
The definition of a long-term empty home is a privately owned residential property that has been empty for six months or more and is liable for Council Tax.

In the Aberdeen City Council area, empty homes have been classified using the following definitions:

- **Long term empty properties**: These are dwellings that have been empty for 6 months or more and are liable for council tax. The most recent figures published by the Scottish Government show that there were 5,793 long term empty properties in the Aberdeen City Council area in 2023.
- **Unoccupied exemptions**: These are properties which are empty and exempt from paying council tax. The most recent figures published by the Scottish Government show that there were 2196 unoccupied exemptions in the Aberdeen City Council area in 2023. There is no requirement for a property to have been empty for more than 6 months before it can be included in this category.
- **Second Homes**: Homes which are furnished and lived in for at least 25 days in a 12-month period but not as someone's main residence. The most recent figures published by the Scottish Government show that there were 686 second homes in the Aberdeen City Council area in 2023.

Table 1.7 illustrates the number of long-term empty dwellings in Aberdeen City, and the areas within the local authority with the highest concentration of long-term empty dwellings.

Table 1.7: Long-Term Empty Homes

Area	Long Term Empty homes	Total stock	% of homes that are long-term empty homes	% of housing stock In local authority	% of long-term empty homes in local authority
Aberdeen City	5,631	124,368	4.53%	17.72%	1.56%
Area 1 City Centre West	463	3,429	13.5%	2.76%	8.22%
Area 2 George Street	356	5,025	7.08%	4.04%	6.32%
Area 3 Garthdee	298	2,852	10.45%	2.29%	5.29%

Source: National Records of Scotland (June 2023)

Table 1.8 below shows the scale of long-term empty homes in Aberdeen City is found to be in the city centre and south of the city. These areas are important due to the desirable central landmarks that the citizens of Aberdeen look to live in for reasons such as employment, studying, primary/secondary schools, train/bus

stations, and shopping. Tackling these priority areas can play a key part in meeting the demand and need for housing which is identified in the Local Housing Strategy.

Table 1.8: Number and Percentage of Long-term Empty Homes by Local Authority and Housing Market Sub Area

Area	Long Term Empty Homes 2021	Long Term Empty Homes 2022	Long Term Empty Homes 2023	% Increase/ decrease Year 2	% Increase/ decrease Year 3
Aberdeen City	6,024	5,785	5,631	3.97 % decrease	2.66% decrease
Area 1 City Centre West	602	463	463	23.09% decrease	23.09% decrease
Area 2 George Street	563	389	356	30.91% decrease	36.77% decrease
Area 3 Garthdee	123	168	298	36.59% Increase	142.28% Increase
Scotland	43,787	44,612	46,294	1.88% Increase	3.77% Increase

Source: National Records of Scotland (June 2023)

Table 1.8 above also shows there has been an overall decrease in the number of long-term empty properties in Aberdeen City as a whole. The areas above are those with the highest concentration of long-term empty properties in Aberdeen. The number of empty properties in City Centre West and George Street have also reduced from 2021-2023. In Garthdee, however, there has been an overall increase in the number of long-term empty properties. One reason for this might be the oversupply of Purpose-Built Student Accommodation. Aberdeen is home to several university and college campuses and Garthdee is close to Robert Gordon University.

City Centre West and George Street are close to Northeast Scotland College and the University of Aberdeen. According to the Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3 there has been a 23% increase in the total number of students across all campuses in Aberdeen. However, there is more online/outreach courses which have mitigated the pressures on student accommodation. Furthermore, the HNDA indicates that there is sufficient supply of purpose-built student accommodation in the city, this meaning that there is potentially a decline in students who are looking to utilise homes within the private rented sector.

To address the significant amount of long-term empty properties in Aberdeen city, the Empty Homes Officers utilise a range of tools to help owners bring their properties back into use. The key successes are:

Matchmake to Rent Scheme

This aims to introduce homeowners who are looking to rent their empty property who are on Aberdeen City Council's housing waiting lists. This scheme requires the property to meet the repairing standard. Properties that do not meet the repairing

standard will not be eligible for this scheme but can be referred on to the Matchmake to Sell Scheme.

Matchmake to Sell Scheme

This scheme aims to introduce long-term empty homeowners who are looking to sell their property with people who are looking to purchase an empty property. The scheme can be used whether the property requires some form of repair work, or the property is in a condition that is ready to move in.

The scheme is free of charge for those wishing to advertise their empty properties in Aberdeen City and offers increased exposure by highlighting it on the visitors of Aberdeen City Council's Empty Homes website. The scheme is also non-exclusive: The property can remain for sale or to let with an estate agent and the sale can continue through this agent if a 'match' is made via the scheme.

Genealogists

The Empty Homes Team have partnership agreements with two genealogist companies, Fraser and Fraser and Finders International. The Empty Homes Officers will also discuss with relevant departments within Aberdeen City Council to gather contact information on an owner. The working relationship has been a key component for tracing owners, or relatives of owners for the Empty Homes Officers to begin communication with the owners to provide the assistance to bring their empty homes back into use.

Advice and Information Service

The Empty Homes Team provide information about the range of options available to help owners select the solution that is right for them. The Empty Homes Officers look at what can be done about problematic properties, and those where the owner has no intention of returning a property to use.

Value Added Tax (VAT) Discounts

The Empty Homes Officer can provide a VAT (currently 5%) letter for properties that have been evidenced as being empty for two years and the owner wants to bring it back into use. The discounts are set out in Buildings and construction (VAT Notice 708) .

Furthermore, the Empty Homes Officer can also supply a VAT letter for a property that has been evidenced as being empty for ten years or more and is intended to be brought back into use as a dwelling, these types of properties may be eligible for zero rated VAT.

Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs)

As a last resort, the Council will seek to address disrepair, dereliction and in some cases where there are significant amounts of Council Tax debt by the means of a compulsory purchase order. A CPO is a legislative power that allows the local authority to take enforcement action to purchase. This process may be the correct

route of action to take if the owner has not engaged with the relevant services such as the Empty Homes Team and has made no effort to bring their properties back into use or to pay their debt.

Council Tax Generation

Further to the above measures Aberdeen City Council also utilises The Council Tax (Variation for Unoccupied Dwellings) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2016 which allow local authorities to charge increased Council Tax on certain homes that have been empty for one year or more. To encourage owners to bring their empty property back into use the Council Tax team can apply a 100% Council Tax levy. An additional Council Tax levy may be charged to properties that have been empty for one year or more without being actively marketed for sale or rent, and two years or more if being actively marketed. The Council Tax levy will remain applied to a long-term empty property until it is brought back into use. As of 01 April 2024, Aberdeen City Council along with 28 other local authorities can now choose to apply up to double the rate of council tax on second homes to encourage those with second homes to bring these back into full use. The additional 100% Council Tax levy will be applied to each long-term empty property on an ongoing basis until the property is brought back into use.

The power contained in the Regulations is intended as an additional tool to help local authorities encourage owners to bring empty properties back into use, both to increase the supply of housing for those who need homes and to reduce the blight on communities caused by houses being left empty and allowed to fall into disrepair. These Council Tax monies are used to fund the Empty Homes Officer posts and contribute towards the council's new build housing programme.

Addressing Local Housing Need

Empty homes activity contributes to increasing housing supply to meet the demand for affordable and market housing in Aberdeen City. Bringing empty homes back to use can also support Aberdeen City Council to meet its statutory duty to prevent homelessness wherever possible and to mitigate the impact of homelessness where it cannot be prevented and to increase provision of specialist housing units across categories such as wheelchair accessible homes. Where the private rented sector plays a large part in market housing provision, long term empty homes may be of interest to private investors. Equally where supply has outstripped demand for privately rented properties, former rental properties may be of interest for buy back or acquisition schemes in Aberdeen city. This section will be updated when the review of the buy-back scheme has been completed.

Key Issues

- Competing priorities, a lack of resources such as grant investments for empty homes, balancing operational workload issues with new projects, initiatives, and reporting requirements. Furthermore, small number of empty homes brought back into use annually compared to costs/time involved in doing so.
- Challenging cases where homeowners cannot be traced, or ownership is in dispute can be extremely time consuming. Furthermore, the inability to use Compulsory Purchase Orders due to costs involved in purchase and/or legal resourcing being limited to pursue cases.

Key Actions

- Increase the supply of housing across all tenures
- Work with owners of empty homes to bring their properties back into residential use.
- Develop, maintain and monitor robust empty homes data and information.
- Raise awareness of empty homes as a wasted resource and develop effective partnerships with key housing-related stakeholders both locally and nationally.
- As a last resort, address disrepair and dereliction in empty homes through enforcement activity available through other Council services.

Priority 2: Place Making and Communities

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the role of housing in placemaking and developing sustainable communities. Placemaking is a collaborative approach that foster a sense of belonging, which helps to create vibrant, inclusive, and resilient communities.

Engaging local people in decision making processes ensures developments are tailored to their specific circumstances, creating environments that are not only functional but also enjoyable and meaningful. Successful placemaking relies on strong partnerships between various stakeholders, including local authorities, community groups, and private sector partners, ensuring that the diverse needs of the community are met and resources are used effectively.

The Placemaking Standard tool is a valuable resource for assessing the quality of a place and identifying areas for improvement, providing a structured framework for evaluating various aspects of the built environment. This is has been used extensively in the development of the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP), which informs the Local Housing Strategy.

The City Centre and Beach Masterplan outlines a vision for the regeneration of the city centre and beachfront areas. Overall, the plan envisions “a revitalised Aberdeen with well-designed housing and vibrant town centres that contribute to the city’s economic recovery and long-term sustainability”. This strategy recognises the important role of housing in the delivery of this aim.

Strategic Priority

We will use a place-based approach to encourage lesser heard voices to shape their communities and the community offering, focusing on the unique circumstances of a particular place and involving local people in decision making.

This strategic priority for the duration of this Local Housing Strategy was developed in consultation both with internal and external stakeholders for this sector. This priority encapsulates the approach that stakeholders wish to see over the next five years.

Aberdeen Context

Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP)

The Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) outlines several key aspects relating to placemaking and housing. It recognises housing as a critical component in creating a prosperous place where people want to live, encouraging community involvement in developing sustainable communities. The LOIP identifies a number of strategic outcomes and stretch outcomes in relation to placemaking shown in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1: LOIP Stretch outcomes and improvement projects relating to placemaking

Stetch Outcome	Key Drivers
Stretch Outcome 10	
Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026.	Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people, families and groups.
	Provide individuals and communities with the social resources needed to reduce feelings of loneliness and social isolation
	Encouraging the adoption of healthier lifestyles through a whole family approach
Stretch Outcome 12	
Reduce homelessness by 10% and youth homelessness by 6% by 2026, ensuring it is rare, brief, and non-recurring with a longer-term ambition to end homelessness in Aberdeen City.	Reduce the number of evictions and increase the percentage of people supported to sustain their tenancy across private and social landlords.
	Increase education and skills relating to tenancy management and housing rights for young people.
	Increase accessibility to a wider range of housing options to people at risk of homelessness.
Stretch Outcome 13	
Focuses on addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by at least 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of	Reducing emissions across the city through delivery of Aberdeen's Net Zero Vision and Route Map.

the changing climate	Contributing to the delivery of Aberdeen Adapts by developing a bottom up approach to community resilience to encourage greater ownership and independent action towards understanding communities' risks from climate change and adapting them to it.

Source: Aberdeen City Council Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-2026 (2024)

Aberdeen Local Development Plan

Planning authorities must prepare a local development plan for their area. This shows how local places will change into the future, including where development should and should not happen.

The Aberdeen Local Development Plan was adopted in June 2023 and is used to guide decisions on planning applications alongside Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance.

Social Determinants of Health – Placemaking and Communities

The social determinants of health play and important role in the placemaking and community. These determinants include economic stability, quality and accessibility of housing, community engagement, education, transportation and access to health and social care services. Taking a holistic approach to ensure the provision of housing that is high quality and affordable can reduce health inequalities and enhance wellbeing.

National Context

The national legislative framework for housing supply in Scotland is designed to ensure that everyone has access to good quality, affordable housing that meets their needs. Here are some key components of this framework:

Housing to 2040 sets out a vision for housing in Scotland to 2040 and a route map to get there. It aims to deliver the Scottish Government's ambition for everyone to have a safe, good quality and affordable home that meets their needs in the place they want to be.

The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 and the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) aim to integrate housing and planning systems to increase the speed and efficiency of the planning process. The overall intent is for the planning system to encourage, promote and facilitate the delivery of more high quality, affordable and

sustainable homes, in the right locations, providing choice across tenures that meet the diverse housing needs of people and communities. This includes identifying a generous supply of land for housing and through the delivery programme establish a deliverable housing land pipeline. NPF4 acknowledges that good quality homes are at the heart of great places and contribute to strengthening the health and wellbeing of communities. It supports high quality, sustainable homes that meet the needs of people throughout their lives. In particular, it supports proposals for new homes that improve affordability and choice by being adaptable to changing and diverse needs, and which address identified gaps in provision. In summary, to deliver the right type and mix of homes in the right locations.

National Planning Framework (NPF) 4 - Placemaking Principles

National Planning Framework 4 outlines the importance of placemaking and notes the following definition: “Placemaking is the process of creating good quality places that promotes people’s health, happiness and wellbeing. It concerns the environment in which we live; the people that inhabit these spaces; and the quality of life that comes from the interaction of people and their surroundings. Placemaking is a collaborative approach involving the design and development of places over time, with people and communities central to the process.”

To ensure placemaking is embedded within decision making, six qualities of successful places are highlighted as being paramount for spatial strategy and for development proposals. The six qualities of successful places are to be used to assess all development proposals; so development in both existing and new communities will be critiqued against the six qualities.

The six qualities of successful places within National Planning Framework 4 are:

Healthy: Supporting the prioritisation of women’s safety and improving physical and mental health.

Pleasant: Supporting attractive natural and built spaces.

Connected: Supporting well connected networks that make moving around easy and reduce car dependency

Distinctive: Supporting attention to detail of local architectural styles and natural landscapes to be interpreted, literally or creatively, into designs to reinforce identity.

Sustainable: Supporting the efficient use of resources that will allow people to live, play, work and stay in their area, ensuring climate resilience, and integrating nature positive, biodiversity solutions.

Adaptable: Supporting commitment to investing in the long-term value of buildings, streets and spaces by allowing for flexibility so that they can be changed quickly to accommodate different uses as well as maintained over time.

Quality placemaking has been at the core of planning in Aberdeen for a number of years. All development must ensure high standards of design, create sustainable

and successful places and have a strong and distinctive sense of place which is a result of detailed contextual appraisal. Proposals are required to ensure:

- Quality architecture, craftsmanship and materials
- A well-considered layout, including biodiverse open space, high quality public realm and landscape design
- A range of sustainable transportation opportunities ensuring connectivity commensurate with the scale and character of the development.

The Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 also notes criteria for successful placemaking. Although these differ slightly to the criteria noted at a national level through National Planning Framework 4, both sets of criteria are used to make decision on placemaking for both existing and new communities. Successful places will sustain and enhance the social, economic, environmental, wellbeing and cultural attractiveness of the city.

A design strategy will be required to be submitted as part of the planning process that demonstrates how a development meets these qualities. The design, scope and content will be proportionate to the scale and/or importance of the proposal. Aberdeen Planning Guidance: Aberdeen Placemaking Process provides guidance where the production of planning briefs, development frameworks and masterplans are required.

Aberdeen City Council has a developed a series of planning briefs, development frameworks and masterplans in conjunction with landowners and developers. These long-term placemaking documents cover greenfield and brownfield sites within the city. They encompass a range of scales, from large mixed used communities, to business and industrial land, through to the redevelopment of single buildings. The documents provide an overview of the places to be created based on the context of the specific site, whilst ensuring distinctiveness and identity, and good internal and external connections. Phasing and infrastructure requirements are also outlined. Placemaking is ingrained within the documents.

Further to this, National Planning Framework 4 promotes and encourages the development of local living, whereby connected and compacted neighbourhoods can allow people to meet the majority of their daily needs within a reasonable distance of their home, preferably by walking, wheeling or cycling or by using sustainable transport methods. An understanding of the make-up of a place is required to meet this ask. New and existing communities being planned together in terms of homes and key local infrastructure will be fundamental to achieve local living.

Partnership Working

Creating the Local Development Plan 2023 relied on partnership working and local community engagement. Partnership working internally with different teams across Aberdeen City Council and externally with key agencies, community councils, Aberdeen's citizens and other organisations lad to the successful adoption of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan in June 2023.

Finalising the content of the Local Development Plan 2023 relied on a number of non-statutory and statutory engagements and consultations. Initial themes on “how Aberdeen could be by 2040” and the positive and negative aspect of Aberdeen were explored during the Pre-Main Issues Report, before options on how changes could be implemented and potential policy approached were consulted on during the Main Issues Report. The creation of polices and allocation of development sites involved collaborative working, before a final consultation on the content of the Proposed Local Development Plan took place. Determining planning applications also requires partnership working and local community engagement though consultation and neighbour notification. The outcome of these conversations along with assessing developments against the placemaking policies of National Planning Framework 4 and the Local Development Plan 2023 ensure the best outcomes when creating or improving places.

Place Standard Tool

The Place Standard Tool provides a framework to assess the quality of places. It supports community engagement and community planning, and was used to gather input from citizens and stakeholders, to identify areas for improvement and the stretch outcomes included in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP), which forms the part of the evidence base for this strategy. Housing and Community was identified as one of the five highest ranking themes, along with natural space, identity and belonging, feeling safe, and play and recreation.

The tool uses 14 themes, scored on a scale of 1 – 7, where 1 means ‘lot of room from improvement’ and 7 ‘very little room for improvement’. Housing and Community scored 4.0. Along with a quantitative score, the Place Standard Tool also asks qualitative questions to elicit more information on things that are good and things that need to improve. The Housing and Community comments are detailed in Table 2.2 below.

Table 2.2: Place Standard Assessments, Housing and Community Comments

Theme	Good now	Improve for the future
Housing and Community	• Good range and mix of housing available. • Good community with good neighbours, and has a good community spirit and range of reasonable facilities.	• Availability and affordable housing options • General maintenance of housing, and insulated and energy efficient housing • Disadvantaged areas should be the focus of more green and community spaces • Improvements to appearance/maintenance of neighbourhoods • Anti-social behaviour (adults) focus of tenants/in community • Improving community spirit/social integration/reduce isolation through increasing events and activities for all •Too much house building, lack of quality and space and amenities in new developments

		• Too many empty homes • The type of housing available was not necessarily suitable for what people need i.e. not enough social housing. • Increases to, and improvements for, making neighbourhoods 'look' better • Some areas have too many "private lets" or "short term lets which can have a negative impact on community

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2023)

City Centre

The city centre is the commercial, economic, social, civic and cultural heart of Aberdeen. The Local Development Plan supports a strong and thriving city centre to deliver transformational projects identified in the City Centre and Beach Masterplan.

Regeneration of city centre sites and other brownfield sites throughout the existing built-up area for appropriate uses is encouraged in the Local Development Plan.

The long-term ambition is to make the city centre in Aberdeen a more attractive place to live in; a healthy place where people want to live, work, and socialise. The aim is to create a city centre that takes advantage of under-utilised space and brings vitality by creating the conditions for a change in, or new uses for buildings.

Significant investment is taking place in the city centre as part of the City Centre and Beach Masterplan. Encouraging city centre living is a key part of this and actions have been taken to stimulate development. In September 2018, approval was given for the introduction of a waiver on affordable housing in the city centre. City Centre Living is supported by both the National Planning Framework 4 and the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023.

Since the affordable housing waiver has been introduced, 1,034 homes have been approved, 53 applications are pending a decision and a further 417 homes have been completed. Prior to the interventions, planning applications for 37 homes (1 application) was submitted between January - September 2018, 18 homes (2 applications) during 2017, and 42 homes (1 application) were submitted during 2016. The data therefore shows that there has been a direct increase in the number of applications for homes submitted and consented within the city centre since the introduction of the interventions has resulted in existing buildings being converted into residential use in the city centre.

Town Centre First Approach

The Town Centre First Approach to help centres adapt positively to long-term economic, environmental and societal changes and by encouraging town centre living. The Town Centre First Principle asks that government, local authorities, the wider public sector, businesses and communities put the health of town centres at the heart of decision making. It seeks to deliver the best local outcomes, align policies and target available resources to prioritise town centre sites, encouraging vibrancy, equality and diversity.

Significant footfall generating developments will be located according to the town centre first approach and proposals sequentially assessed against the network of centres as outlined in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023, and National Planning Framework 4. As can be seen from Table 2.3 below, the current network of centres consists of a regional centre (city centre), two town centres, five district centres, 32 neighbourhood centres and five commercial centres.

Table 2.3: Regional, Town, District, Neighbourhood and Commercial Centres

Regional Centre	Town Centre	District Centre	Neighbourhood Centre			Commercial Centre
City Centre	Rosemount	Danestone	Bieldside	Haudagain	Rosemount	Garthdee
	Torry	Dyce	Braehead Way	Holburn	Sclattie Park	Kittybrewster Retail Park
		Middleton Park	Bucksburn	King Street	Scotstown	Links Road/ Boulevard Retail Park
		Rousay Drive	Byron	Kingswells	Seafield	Denmore Road
		Berryden	Chatton Place	Kittybrewster / Clifton	Seaton	Bridge of Don Retail Park
			Cornhill	Lang Stracht	Sheddocksley	
			Cove	Leadside Road	St Swithin Street	
			Cults	Mastrick	Urquhart Road	
			Culter	Hayton	Victoria Street, Dyce	
			George Street	Mannofield	Woodside	

Source: Aberdeen Planning Guidance 2023: Hierarchy of Centres

Key Issues

- Understanding the place-based issues of Aberdeen's communities, while ensuring the six qualities of successful placemaking are paramount in decision making.
- Facilitating a town centre first principle for the city centre.
- Supporting a local living strategy in conjunction with the place principle.

Key Actions

- Work with partners to achieve the ask of delivering high quality, affordable and sustainable homes, in the right locations, and providing choice across tenures that meet the diverse housing needs of people and communities.
- Continuing to support the redevelopment and regeneration of the city centre and encourage city centre living.
- Support wider place-based planning for infrastructure and services.

Priority 3: Homelessness

Introduction

This chapter details the approach taken by Aberdeen City Council and its partners to provide housing options and advice, working towards preventing and alleviating homelessness across the city while ensuring high quality housing support is available.

Over the last 20 years, there has been a noticeable change in emphasis in successive strategies regarding homelessness, aligning with the shifts in legislation and national guidance. While the focus was previously on increasing the provision of temporary accommodation and the lack of affordable housing, this has shifted to providing a person-centred service in the prevention and alleviation of homelessness, recognising that homelessness is often a symptom of other complex issues.

Aberdeen City Council is dedicated to addressing homelessness through a comprehensive and proactive housing options approach. The objective is to ensure that every resident has access to appropriate housing support, preventing homelessness and ensuring it is a rare, brief, and is not repeated. It is recognised that a person-centred service tailored to individual needs, supported by collaboration with various stakeholders is essential.

Strategic Priority

We will support a proactive housing options approach and will work collaboratively to provide a person-centred service to make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring.

This strategic priority for the duration of this Local Housing Strategy was developed in consultation both with internal and external stakeholders for this sector. This priority encapsulates the approach that stakeholders wish to see over the next five years.

National Context

Scotland has been at the forefront of progressive homelessness legislation and policy, with the Housing Scotland Act 1987 and subsequent amendments setting the standard for homelessness prevention and support. The introduction of the Homelessness etc.(Scotland) Act 2003 significantly strengthened the rights of homeless people and placed a duty on local authorities to provide permanent accommodation to all unintentionally homeless households.

The Scottish Government's approach to homelessness is underpinned by the Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan, which focuses on prevention, providing rapid rehousing, and ensuring that homelessness is brief and not repeated. This is supported by the Ending Homeless Together Monitor.

The Scottish Government developed the Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan in collaboration with local authorities, third-sector partners, and people with lived experience of homelessness. The plan was created in response to recommendations from the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) and aims to prevent homelessness, provide rapid rehousing, and ensure homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring. It focuses on prevention, person-centred approaches, and cross-sectoral collaboration to tackle homelessness across Scotland. The plan is part of a long-term commitment to transform homelessness services.

These documents detail strategic priorities and indicators to measure progress towards ending homelessness in Scotland. The action plan is underpinned by equality and human rights and includes a total of 98 actions that align to the 5 key drivers to end homelessness. The plan was most recently updated in October 2020, with new actions identified and the introduction of a monitor in 2024 to measure the impact of the plan. Key points include:

- A focus on 5 keys drivers to end homelessness, these are embedding a person-centred approach, prevent homelessness from happening in the first place, joining up of planning and resources to tackle homelessness, respond quickly and effectively whenever homelessness happens, prioritise settled homes of all.
- Indicators are selected based on relevance, validity, distinctiveness, practicality, clarity, credibility, and public interest. This ensures that the data collected is meaningful and can effectively track progress towards ending homelessness.
- The monitor outlines specific indicators and data sources to measure progress. These include metrics on social and affordable housing supply, poverty levels, and the number of homelessness applications and assessments. The monitor emphasises the importance of collaboration between local authorities, health and social care partnerships, social landlords, and third-sector organisations to achieve the strategic priorities.

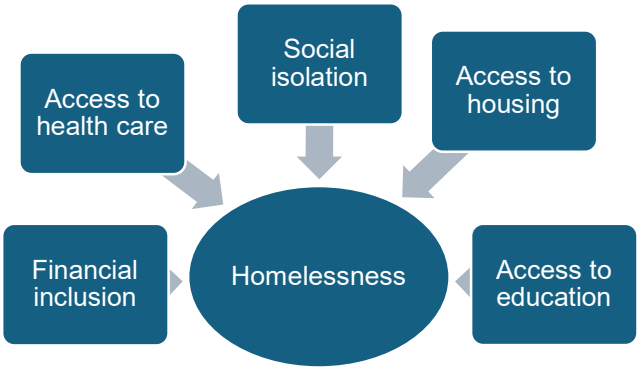
The housing options approach, introduced in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014, emphasises early intervention and comprehensive support to prevent homelessness before it occurs.

The Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) Scotland Order also extended the duty on local authorities to ensure that those experiencing homelessness have access to suitable accommodation and it details the criteria that this must meet. Any breaches in this are reported monthly to the Scottish Government.

Homeless Persons (Suspension of Referrals between Local Authorities) (Scotland) Order. This order suspended the ability of local authorities to refer homeless applicants to another local authority area based on the applicant's local connection. The change was part of Scotland's ongoing efforts to make homelessness services more accessible and to remove barriers that could prevent individuals from receiving the assistance they need, regardless of their connection to a particular local authority area. The aim was to ensure a more person-centred approach to homelessness support, emphasising the individual's needs over geographic considerations.

Social Determinants of Health

The Healthy Housing for Scotland document focuses on the intersection of housing and health, highlighting the importance of providing healthy, safe, and affordable housing for all. Key points include:



- The emphasises that housing conditions have a direct impact on health and well-being. Poor housing can lead to various health issues, including respiratory problems, mental health issues, and chronic illnesses.
- Goals to improve housing quality, increase the availability of affordable housing, and ensure that housing policies support health and well-being.
- Specific actions include improving the quality of existing housing stock, building new affordable homes, and integrating health considerations into housing policies and planning.
- Highlights the need for robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks to track progress and ensure that housing initiatives effectively contribute to improved health outcomes

Health challenges are often exacerbated in homeless populations who frequently face unstable and inadequate living conditions. Addressing homelessness requires not only providing shelter but also ensuring that the housing is of high quality and conducive to good health.

In Aberdeen, aligning the Local Housing Strategy with the principles outlined in the "Healthy Housing for Scotland" report is crucial. By ensuring that housing provided to those at risk of homelessness meets high health and safety standards, the city can help mitigate some of the health disparities faced. Furthermore, integrating health considerations into homelessness prevention strategies can reduce the burden on health services and improve overall well-being for individuals transitioning out of homelessness.

This approach not only supports those at risk of homelessness but also contributes to broader public health goals by addressing the underlying causes of health inequalities related to poor housing conditions.

Aberdeen Context

Aberdeen faces unique challenges due to its economic landscape, housing market dynamics, and demographic trends. The city's housing market has experienced fluctuations, with recent economic uncertainties impacting residents' ability to maintain housing.

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 requires statutory community planning partners to work together to achieve improved outcomes and reduce inequalities resulting from socio-economic disadvantage. As required by the Act, Community Planning Aberdeen meets this duty through the development and delivery of the Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) 2016-26. (LOIP)

The ten-year plan sets out priority local outcomes which member organisations are committed to improve for and with local people. The city wide LOIP is underpinned by three area-based Locality Plans, as well as member organisation's single system plans.

The recent rise in homelessness applications highlights the need for robust prevention and support mechanisms, the recent refresh of the LOIP saw the addition of stretch outcome 12, key drivers are showing in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: LOIP Stretch outcomes and improvement projects relating to homelessness

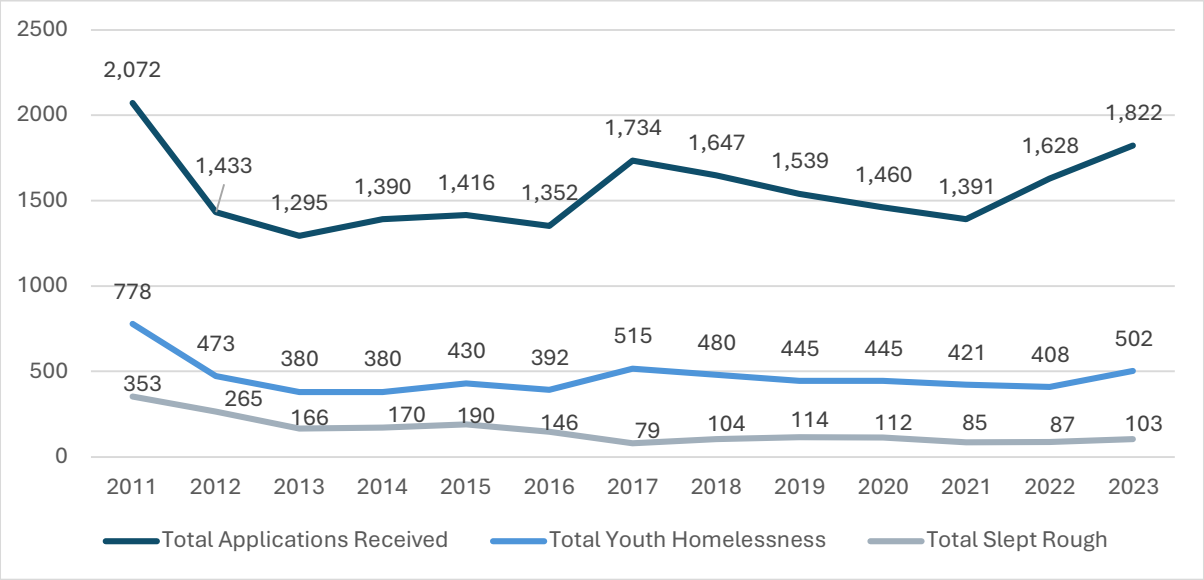
Stretch Outcome 12	Key Drivers
Reduce homelessness by 10% and youth homelessness by 6% by 2026, ensuring it is rare, brief, and non-recurring with a longer term ambition to end homelessness in Aberdeen City.	Reframing perceptions of homelessness.
	Universal prevention of homelessness and addressing root-causes.
	Ensuring adequate supply of housing across all tenures and homes are the right size, type and location.

Source: Aberdeen City Council Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-2026 (2024)

Local Data

Aberdeen City Council monitors the number of homeless applications it receives, see Figure 3.1 below. The 2023/24 period saw applications from households applying as homeless in Aberdeen City to be at their highest level in 12 years after a sustained period of decline. Applications have risen by almost a third since 2021. Data released by the Scottish Government show that Aberdeen City experienced the third largest increase in homeless applications across Scotland in 2022/23 with 166 households per 10,000 applied as homeless which was higher than the national average of 152 per 10,000.

Figure 3.1 Number of Homeless Applications Received



Source: Aberdeen City Council - Quality Assurance and Performance Management (2023)

Single member households continue to be overrepresented within the homeless applicant profile. In 2023/24, 72% of applications received were from this group, up 4% on the previous 3 years where rates remained static at 68%, however these rates were atypically low, in comparison to typical historical patterns within the city.

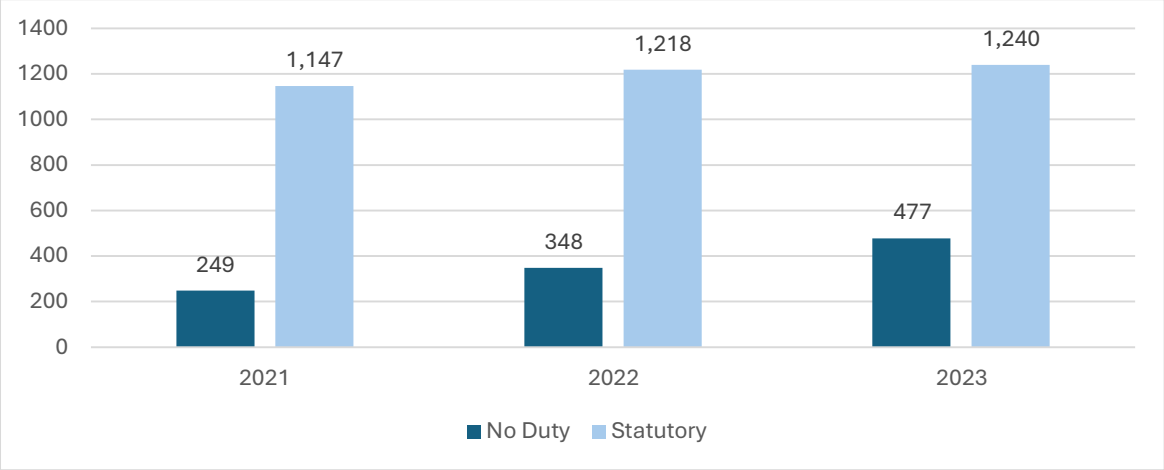
Youth applicant levels rose to 28% in 2023/24, up 3% on the previous year and the third highest of all local authorities across Scotland. Historically, rates have varied between 25% and 30% annually and are consistently higher than the national average which in 2022/23 was 22%.

Over a quarter (30%) of applications received in 2023/24 came from households who were not residents of the city, 11% of whom came from households who were last settled in neighbouring Aberdeenshire.

In contrast to the increases seen above, the proportion of applicants assessed and presenting with at least one support need has declined from the 67% recorded in 2019/20 to 39% (496) in 2023/24. The number of applicants requiring support with mental health continued to rise in 2023/24 with 17% (214) of the population indicating an unmet need at the time of application. Support for mental health now accounts for just under half of the homeless population assessed as in need of support.

Despite the increase in applications over the last 3 years, levels of homelessness are falling. In 2023/24, 72% of applicants assessed were determined to be statutory homeless, the lowest level seen in eleven years and a fall of 10% compared with 2021/22. Figure 3.2 below shows the number of applicants assessed with a 'no homeless duty' or 'statutory duty' between 2021/22 – 2023/24. The increase in applicants being assessed with no homeless duty is driving this change, rising by 92% between 2021/22 and 2023/24. At 8% the number of households assessed as statutory homeless has grown at a much slower pace than the overall rate of applications received.

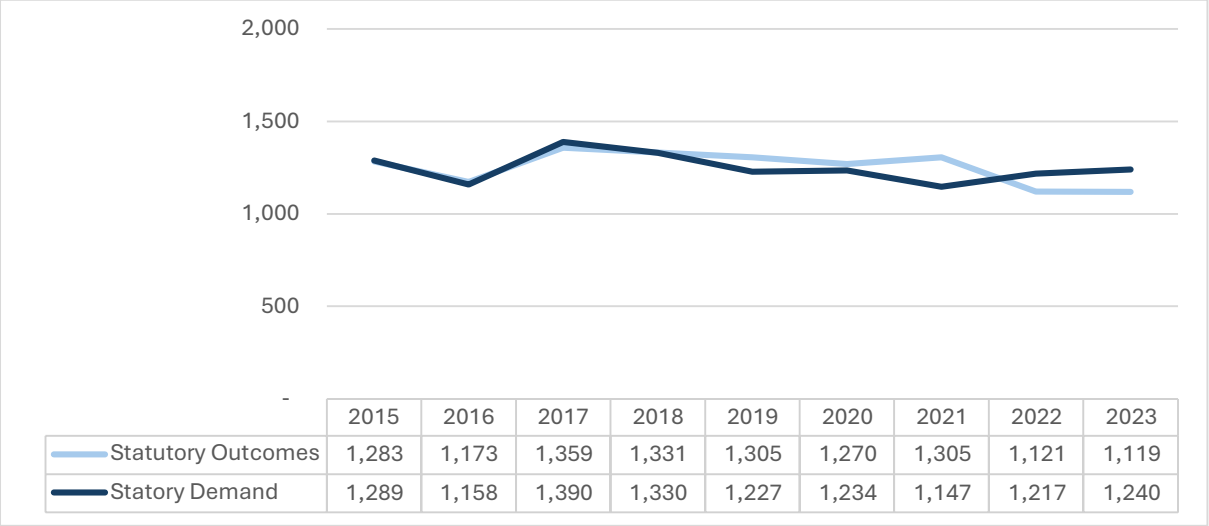
Figure 3.2 Number of Statutory and Non-Statutory Homeless Applicants



Source: Aberdeen City Council, Quality Assurance and Performance Management (2023)

Figure 3.3 below shows that the number of outcomes being secured for statutory homeless households between 2015/16 and 2023/24 each year were in keeping with or exceeded levels of new homeless demand.

Figure 3.3 Homeless Demand and Outcomes, number of cases



	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Statutory Outcomes	1,283	1,173	1,359	1,331	1,305	1,270	1,305	1,121	1,119
Statory Demand	1,289	1,158	1,390	1,330	1,227	1,234	1,147	1,217	1,240

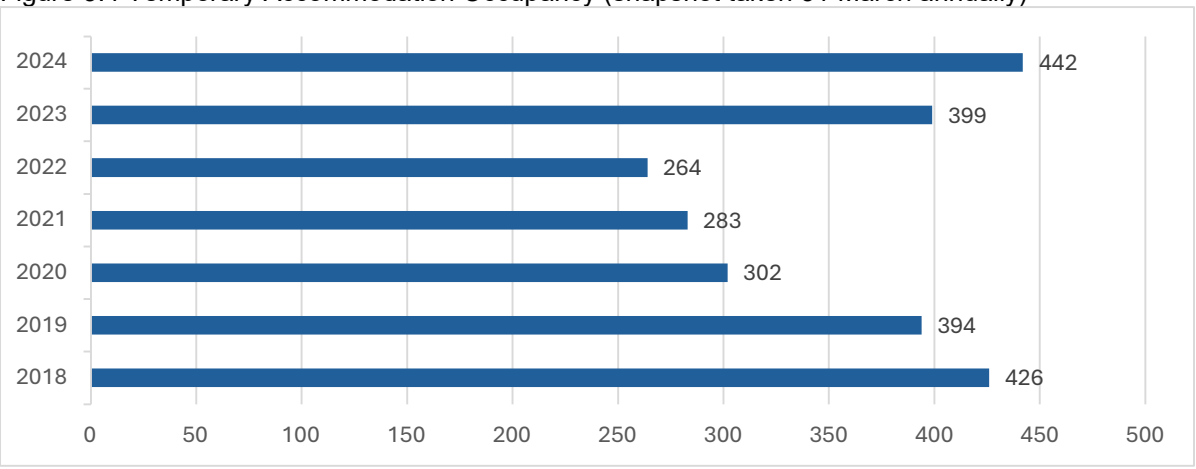
Source: Aberdeen City Council, Quality Assurance and Performance Management (2023)

Since 2022/23 statutory homeless case closure rates have slowed whereupon new demand has outstripped outcomes by a ratio of 10%. The slowdown is attributable to a fall in households securing a local authority tenancy where outcomes in 2023/24 are down 20% when compared with 2021/22.

Due to the increase in demand on the homeless service, demand for temporary accommodation also grew, leading to a 22% upturn in the number of applicants requiring and provided temporary accommodation between the 2021/22 period and 2023/24 period.

Figure 3.4 below shows a snapshot of temporary accommodation occupancy on 31 March 2024 and shows the significant increase in the requirement for temporary accommodation experienced over the last few years, where there are now more homeless households accommodated than there was five years earlier.

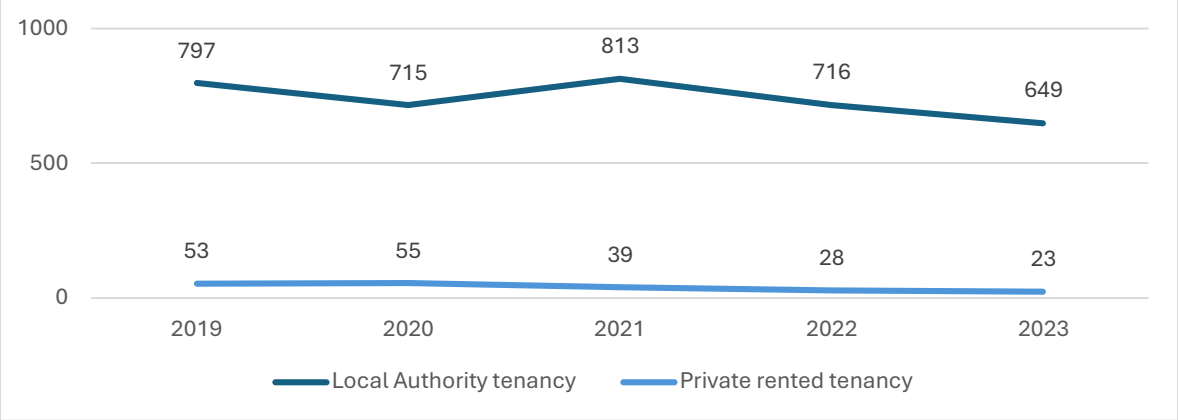
Figure 3.4 Temporary Accommodation Occupancy (snapshot taken 31 March annually)



Source: Aberdeen City Council, Quality Assurance and Performance Management (2024)

With a lettable stock capacity of over 23,000 properties, Aberdeen City Council is the largest supplier of social housing in the city and the primary provider of permanent accommodation to homeless households. At the end of the 2023/2024 period, homeless general need allocation rates were operating at 38%, the lowest level recorded throughout this period. Figure 3.5 below shows statutory homeless households securing accommodation in the private rented sector also fell by 41% during this period.

Figure 3.5 Homeless Applicants Tenancy Outcomes



Source: Aberdeen City Council, Quality Assurance and Performance Management (2023)

After a period of decline and stagnation, market rents in the city began to rise again in 2022/23, once again making it more difficult for households to access the private rented sector. Table 3.2 below provides a breakdown of current market rent compared with the local housing allowance rates for the city.

Table 3.2 Average Rent Comparison for Aberdeen City in comparison with Local Housing Allowance.

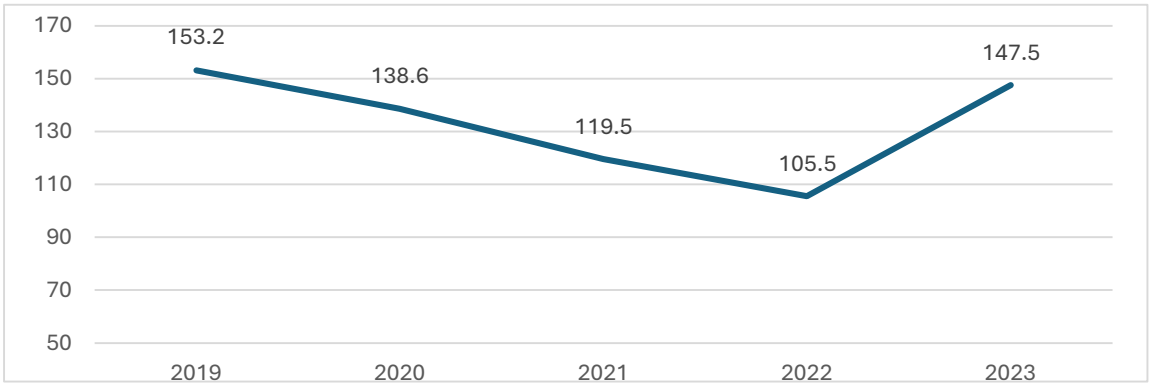
Bedsize	Average Market Rent (Monthly)	Local Housing Allowance (Monthly)	Local Housing Allowance Shortfall (Monthly)
1 bedroom	£527.00	£423.84	-£103.16
2 bedrooms	£757.00	£593.35	-£163.65
3 bedrooms	£1,108.00	£747.93	-£360.07
4 bedrooms	£1,610.00	£997.27	-£612.73

Source: Aberdeen City Council data Quality Assurance and Performance Management (2023)

Due to the recent surplus created, the gap between supply and demand continues to grow. Estimates suggest that as of 2024, there is a supply shortage of approximately 556 properties required to bridge the gap and ensure all homeless rehousing demand is met in full each year. The slowdown is now beginning to affect the

homeless journey see Figure 3.6 below, with a 42-day increase recorded in 2023/24. The 2023/24 period saw operating times at their slowest level since 2019/20.

Figure 3.6 Aberdeen City Council's Homeless Journey Time



Source: Aberdeen City Council – Quality Assurance and Performance Management (2023)

Due to the backlog of open cases that has developed, it is predicted that the homeless journey will continue to increase over the coming years as these households successfully secure rehousing outcomes. On 31 March 2022 there were 240 statutory homeless applicants waiting to be rehoused, on 31 March 2024, this had increased to 408 with an additional 179 waiting to be assessed.

Key Issues:

Rising Demand for Homelessness Services:

- Evidence of an increasing number of homeless applications and demand for temporary accommodation.
- The limited availability of social housing, particularly for high demand bedsit and 1-bedroom properties. The reduction in the funding for the affordable housing supply programme significantly impacts on ability to increase the provision of social housing.

Economic Pressures:

- Lack of clarity around long term guarantee's regarding discretionary housing payments and the introduction of benefit caps and benefit sanctions impact the underlying drivers of homelessness.
- Prisoners in Scotland face significant challenges in sustaining tenancies due to the limited options available during incarceration, particularly for those serving longer sentences. Housing support through Universal Credit continues for up to six months if the individual has an active claim and is either on remand or serving a short sentence. However, new claims cannot be initiated while in prison, and support ceases for sentences longer than six months, increasing the risk of rent arrears and eviction.

- Rising living costs and economic instability affecting housing affordability.
- The cost-of-living crisis and cessation of emergency legislation put in place to protect tenants during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Complex Needs of Homeless Individuals:

- While there has been a notable decrease in the proportion of applicants presenting with support needs in recent years, a significant number of individuals continue to face complex challenges. Issues such as mental health difficulties, substance use, and other personal vulnerabilities remain prevalent among those experiencing homelessness in Aberdeen. Providing tailored support to address these underlying issues is essential to improving long-term housing outcomes and reducing the risk of recurring homelessness.
- Need for coordinated and accessible support services.

Provision of Temporary and Supported Accommodation:

- Ensuring sufficient supply and quality of temporary accommodation.
- Transitioning from supported accommodation provision to a Housing First model where applicants are supported in secure tenancies as opposed to being held in unsecure supported accommodation.

Current Approach to Homelessness

Aberdeen City Council monitors the number of homeless applications it receives and has identified key trends and challenges. The rise in the number of applications which result in the council having a duty to rehouse has placed further pressures on the demand for social housing, particularly bedsit and 1-bed properties. Aberdeen City Council is heavily reliant on the use of its own stock to discharge its duty in full to unintentional homeless applicants. The majority of homeless applicants qualify for general needs housing, which places further restrictions on the availability of stock to meet demand.

Reason for Homeless Presentation

Table 3.3 below shows that homelessness can happen for various reasons. The most common reason in Aberdeen is due to being 'asked to leave', which matches the theme across Scotland, where it accounted for 26% of applications in 2023/24.

While demands for homeless assistance is increasing, the underlying drivers for making an application remain relatively unchanged. The main cause for submitting a homeless application is still individual/households having to leave their accommodation due to relationship breakdown, presenting due to abuse, or presenting due to harassment. Households applying for the below reasons accounted for 64% of all applications in 2023/24.

Table 3.3 Top Reasons for Homeless Presentations

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Asked to leave	348	345	401
Dispute within household – violent/abusive	207	178	211
Dispute within household/relationship breakdown nonviolent	301	334	355
Fleeing non-domestic violence	67	46	74
Harassment	48	76	122

Source: Aberdeen City Council – Quality Assurance and Performance Management (2023)

In line with this increase there has also been an 11% increase in the number of households becoming homeless from parental home, relative, family or friends during this period. While there has been an increase in numbers, the proportion of applicants becoming homeless from these accommodation types has fallen from 49% in 2021/22 to 42% in 2023/24.

Alongside this reduction there has been a slight shift in households becoming homeless from permanent accommodation which has increased across all accommodation types and accounted for 44% of all applications received in 2023/24, up 4% on 2021/22. Table 3.4 below shows the changes over a three-year period.

Table 3.4: Type of accommodation homeless referrals

	2021/22	**2022/23**	**2023/24**
Own property – Local authority tenancy	209	241	296
Own property – owning/buying	57	64	77
Own property – private rented tenancy	209	321	304
Own property – RSL tenancy	92	101	117

Source: Aberdeen City Council -Quality Assurance and Performance Management (2024)

The increase among this group coincides with an upturn in the number of applicants experiencing financial difficulties, which has almost doubled during this period, rising from 64 in 2021/22 to 136 in 2023/24. The cost-of-living crisis and cessation of emergency legislation put in place to protect tenants during the COVID -19 pandemic have contributed towards this incline.

Housing Options Approach

The Scottish Government set out guidance in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 that the focus should be the prevention of homelessness through a housing options approach. All applications for council housing are screened through the online housing options checker and proactively contacted by the council's Housing Access Service to identify potential issues that could lead to homelessness. The success of any housing options approach will be determined by the knowledge, skills, attitude, and understanding of those delivering services and the overall organisational awareness of the housing options approach. Staff receive ongoing training to ensure their knowledge is up to date, enabling them to deliver effective housing services for all customers.

The Housing Options Toolkit has been launched across Scotland to provide comprehensive guidance and resources for local authorities and housing professionals. This initiative aims to improve the consistency and quality of housing advice, offering tailored support to individuals facing housing challenges. By promoting early intervention and prevention of homelessness, the toolkit plays a key role in enhancing housing options and improving long-term outcomes for people at risk of losing their homes across Scotland.

Developing a flexible prevention service that meets the needs of all households at risk of becoming homeless will remain a key theme to future service development. Housing Options and Prevention activity is monitored through the 'Prevent 1' Scottish Government statistical return. Table 3.5 below shows the number of approaches for housing options advice initially reduced from 2017/18 period to 2021/22 period but increased in the following years.

Table 3.5: Number of approaches for housing options advice in Aberdeen

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Number of PREVENT1 cases recorded	4,574	3,911	3,261	2,925	2,920	3,167	3,077

Source: Aberdeen City Council, Quality Assurance and Performance Management (2024)

Partnership Working

Partnership working includes entering into nomination agreements with Registered Social Landlords where they have vacancies or making Section 5 referrals which place a duty on the Registered Social Landlord to house a homeless household within their housing stock. Aberdeen City Council has nomination agreements with several registered social landlords, most of which operate a choice-based lettings model to allocate 50% of their vacant properties to applicants from the council's waiting lists. The choice-based lettings and homelessness protocol adopts a proactive approach to housing applicants with priority need and aims to meet the

statutory obligation to allocate a minimum of 50% of properties referred to within the protocol.

The Royal Foundation's new programme Homewards was launched in the UK in 2023 with Aberdeen selected as one of 6 areas of the UK to demonstrate that it is possible to end homelessness. In Aberdeen City Council's bid, it was stated that a better understanding of some of the underlying causes of homelessness is required to allow work to be built together with our communities to provide a response to this. At each location, Homewards are supporting local partners to form locally led coalitions of committed individuals, organisations, and businesses who will work together to create and deliver a tailored plan to prevent homelessness in their areas, based on local needs and local expertise.

Homewards will support its six flagship locations by:

- Providing access to an unprecedented network of best-in-class expertise, partners and funders at a local and national level to unlock new ideas and further investment.
- Providing up to £500,000 of flexible seed funding in each location that can be accessed to support the delivery of their action plan.
- Appointing a local lead to support the locations to drive forward their coalitions and Action Plans and spot new opportunities; and
- Working with an independent research partner that will support with capacity building, evaluation and sharing what works throughout the programme.

Homeless Prevention

Aberdeen City Council aims to help people stay in their existing accommodation or make a planned move into alternative accommodation. Homelessness prevention can resolve uncertainty for families more quickly. Tools used to prevent homelessness include discretionary housing benefit payments, mortgage rescue schemes, and a rent deposit scheme. Developing a flexible prevention service that meets the needs of all households at risk of becoming homeless will remain a key theme for future service development.

In March 2022, the housing service transformed to a new way of operating and merged the previous roles of Housing Support Officer and Housing Officer. The role of a Housing and Support Officer within Aberdeen City Council is central to preventing homelessness by offering tailored, person-centred support to vulnerable individuals. The Housing and Support Officers are qualified with (or working towards) an SVQ Level 3 and are registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and can work to ensure tenants can sustain their tenancies by providing practical assistance and addressing any challenges early on. By focusing on trauma-informed care and smaller caseloads, officers can dedicate more time to those needing additional support, helping to prevent homelessness before it escalates. Housing and Support Officers also collaborate with other agencies to ensure a holistic support system, aimed at improving the overall quality of life and preventing long-term reliance on public services. This new structure is part of a broader strategy by

Aberdeen City Council to improve housing outcomes and reduce homelessness by focusing on early intervention and support tailored to individual needs.

Prevention Fund

Aberdeen City Council's prevention approach includes:

Prevention Fund: Financial resource to help prevent homelessness, providing assistance such as:

- Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme.
- Travel expenses to prevent homelessness, such as paying for an applicant to return to an area where they have accommodation available.

Financial Inclusion Team: Provides a free and impartial money advice to residents of Aberdeen.

Empowering Customers

The starting point for delivering housing options services is looking at a customer's rights, needs, and aspirations, as well as the local authority's duties towards them. Whatever housing options are pursued, this decision must be made by the customer and be fully informed and supported by services.

Effective and efficient housing options require suitable online technology, allowing customers to access information about their housing options online and in accessible locations. Self-assessment tools enable customers to input their individual circumstances and produce a tailored list of housing options for their circumstances.

In 2023, Aberdeen City Council introduced a Choice Based Lettings system to allocate properties. Properties available to let are advertised through the Aberdeen City Council website, and applicants can register an interest in the properties they wish to be considered for by bidding through the Housing Online portal. Due to the difficulties around digital access when experiencing homelessness, along with having a priority need, applicants are registered for up to 10 automatic bids per week, which are placed on their behalf on any suitable properties available.

Properties are advertised on a 7-day cycle with a closing date for bids marked against each property. During the cycle, applicants can register their interest in up to ten properties, with the option to withdraw or change their bids until the closing date. Following the closure of the advert, a shortlist is drawn, listing all applicants who registered an interest. The applications are ordered based on their assessed priority, and the applicant with the highest priority will be considered for the property.

Where an applicant is unable to manually place a bid, due to reasons such as a lack of digital access or ability, an 'auto bid' can be set on their application so that up to 10 bids are placed on their behalf each week on any properties that meet their

housing needs. Those applicants who are going through the homeless process are also placed on ‘auto bid’ after 21 days of their application going live to ensure that any properties that meet their needs are identified and an offer of accommodation made. While this aims to assist those who may struggle to place bids, it does not stop applicants from making their own bids on properties they feel would be suitable.

Private Sector Housing Options

Working with private landlords to raise the standard and availability of private rented accommodation across the city gives customers greater choice in the type and location of their housing. Aberdeen City Council aims to develop stronger links with local estate agents and landlords to provide up-to-date information on the availability of housing in the area. Initiatives include help with the deposit needed to secure privately rented properties, which is a cost-effective method for delivering assistance.

A Private Landlord Support Officer (PLSO) post was recruited to within Aberdeen City Council in April 2023. Since then, the post has been a success where specifically the postholder is liaising with private tenants and landlords, ensuring each are aware of their rights and responsibilities. Aims of the post include:

- Establishing relationships with key stakeholders
- Tenant support and advice -raising awareness of tenants’ rights in the Private Rented Sector
- Landlord support and advice - Providing advice and guidance on tenancy management
- Improving the standard of private rented accommodation
- Assisting with the prevention of homelessness from the Private Rented Sector

Planning for Known Milestones

Effective partnership working is essential to ensure a joined-up approach to planning for known milestones, such as looked after children leaving care or those leaving institutions like prison or hospital.

Care Leavers

Aberdeen City Council’s Corporate Parenting Policy ensures that the needs of children and young people are at the centre of decisions around housing and any housing support offered to families. A Care Experienced Young Person Housing & Support Officer Role was recruited for in April 2021 and provides housing support and advice to Care Experienced Young People (CEYP). The aims of this role are as follows:

- Building networks between housing and social work
- Meeting with young people before they start housing transition and developing a relationship
- To assess support needs and support networks before moving
- Liaise with housing staff when there are issues around tenancy management
- General housing support – tenancy set up, removals, utilities, furnishings
- Developing housing resources for CEYP
- Housing Support for unaccompanied minors coming to Aberdeen
- Managing emergencies

Leaving Prison: Aberdeen City Council works closely with the Scottish Prison Service to prevent homelessness and provide support to prisoners on their release. A full-time staff member is based at HMP Grampian to support prisoners in managing their housing situation and planning for their release. The SHORE protocol is followed to prevent prisoners from becoming homeless on release.

Housing Support: Aberdeen City Council provides a range of commissioned housing support services, including:

- **Foyer Accommodation Based Support**
  This provides supported accommodation for 27 Young People within a supported block in Trinity Court. The service also provides resettlement support for young people for a short period after their service within supported accommodation has ended.
- **Foyer Nightstop**
  This provides a service for young people who are threatened with becoming homeless. It provides short-term support within host homes for young people who are unable to stay in their family home.
- **Instant Neighbour Furniture Storage and Removal**
  This service provides storage facilities for the property of those who are in temporary accommodation. It also provides removal services for those who are changing their address such as decants.
- **The Furnishing Service (TFS)**
  TFS provide domestic furniture. This is used for the Furniture Leasing Scheme and for the furnishing of temporary accommodation.
- **Instant Neighbour Furniture provision**
  Instant Neighbour provide reused furniture for the Furniture Leasing Scheme. They are the local representatives of Circular Communities Scotland, who hold the contract at a national level.
- **Outreach Housing Support Service:**
  Contract provides medium to long term housing support to those either at threat of homelessness or going through the homeless process. Support is also provided to those in mainstream council tenancies who have been identified as needing longer term housing support need by their housing and

support officer. While the service supports those with other needs (mental health, financial, criminal justice etc), support is tailored to maintaining and sustaining tenancies. As such, identified support needs must be relevant or in the context of tenancy support. The contract is provided by Turning Point Scotland and supports in the region of 500 individuals across the course of a year.

- **Housing First Service:**
  Contract provides long term, open ended and intense housing support to statutory homeless individuals with a history of cyclical homelessness and multiple complex needs. This includes but is not limited to issues with alcohol and other drugs, offending behaviour and anti-social behaviours. Those referred are considered by a multi-agency triage panel and referrals are not made direct to the Housing First team. Those referred must be statutory homeless at the point of referral and must have access to public funds to be considered. The service is provided by Turning Point Scotland.

Domestic Abuse

Aberdeen is shifting towards a more holistic approach to domestic abuse support with less of a focus on refuge accommodation itself but rather ensuring that safe and suitable accommodation is provided, along with the appropriate support for the individual.

Aberdeen City Council approved the Domestic Abuse Policy in March 2021 which was later reviewed in 2023. The policy applies to current and prospective tenants and includes actions to increase awareness and training of staff and allows for perpetrators of domestic abuse to be rehoused away from the family home. Rehousing perpetrators in this way will provide an alternative to disrupting families by allowing them to stay in their own home preventing homelessness whilst the police and courts take appropriate action against the perpetrator.

There is a Delivering Equally Safe Funded Development Officer in post who is currently reviewing public protection policies to ensure that they have a gendered/equally safe lens applied to them. This includes housing policies, and the domestic abuse policy has already been reviewed with plans being made to review other relevant policies and strategies. This will ensure that services responses take into consideration the different experiences of women in not just housing and homelessness but in other public protection spheres.

Housing is a key partner at Aberdeen's Violence Against Women Partnership. The VAWP's Improvement Plan is directly influenced by Equally Safe and includes a specific action around access to suitable accommodation for women experiencing domestic abuse. Gender based violence and wider gender equality training will be offered to all Housing staff, with an aim of making this mandatory.

Secure Housing on Release for Everyone (SHORE Standards)

Prior to transitioning towards rapid rehousing, the number of applicants becoming homeless on release from prison was increasing, rising by 32% between 2016/17 – 2018/19. The RRTP identifies this as a key controllable area and in accordance with SHORE protocol sets out a range of strategic actions to prevent prisoners from becoming homeless on release. During 2019/20, the first year of transitioning towards rapid rehousing a 17% reduction in homeless applications among this group was achieved.

Coinciding with the early release of prisoner scheme announced early in 2020/21, the number of applicants becoming homeless from prison more than doubled during the first quarter, further fuelling the bleak homeless outlook painted for 2020/21. However, subsequent movements mirrored the general homelessness direction and by the end of 2020/21 a total of 62 applications were received, 21% (16) fewer than in 2019/20. Due to the progress made, applications from this group have fallen by a third since transitioning towards a rapid rehousing model commenced. A degree of caution should be urged here as there are examples of prisoners being released and placed in temporary accommodation on discretionary grounds and not recorded as homeless.

Homeless services, Housing, Criminal Justice, Prison and Alcohol and Drug Statutory Partners meet weekly to discuss potential releases. When COVID-19 restrictions started to ease at HMP Grampian, the Case Management Board (CMB) was re-established, this changed to a weekly meeting where planning for releases is co-ordinated, and the group also reviews the previous weeks releases to ensure that contact has been made with all people leaving prison. This is currently seen as complementary to the successful CMB held by HMP Grampian involving multiagency partners 8 weeks prior to release.

Aberdeen City Council Operational Delivery Committee also approved changes to the Allocations Policy to ensure that people experiencing homelessness from prison are afforded a higher priority to increase the likelihood of a permanent accommodation offer being made and a suitable property being ready for them upon liberation.

As part of this commitment to delivering on the Scottish Government SHORE standards, a project is being developed with the aim of reducing, by 90%, the number of people released from prison into Aberdeen City without suitable accommodation by 2026. This builds on the existing process which aims to reduce use of temporary accommodation stock and have persons released from custody signing for a mainstream tenancy once their sentence ends.

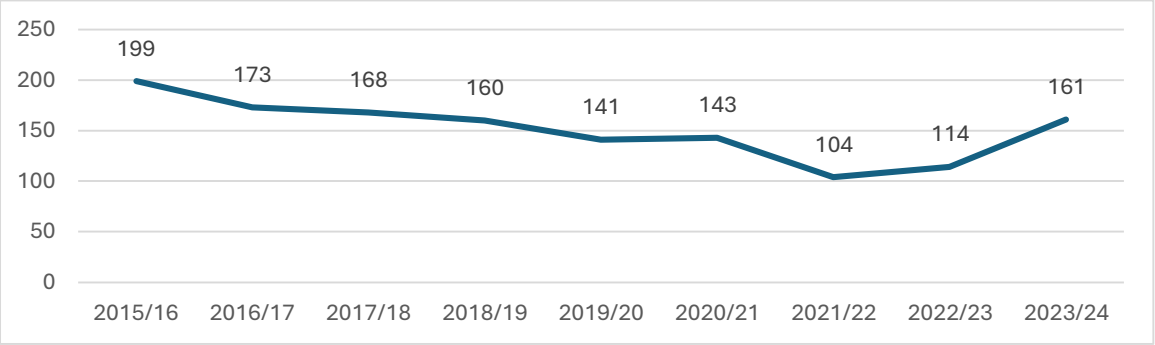
Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan

A main focus of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan is to resolve homelessness into secure, suitable and sustainable accommodation for those who are unintentionally homeless. This will solve their homelessness and hope to prevent it ever occurring again.

2022/23 proved to be a very challenging year where a seismic shift in the homeless landscape was observed. Driven primarily by increases in demand, performance across the 4 key rapid rehousing areas slipped, pushing levels back closer to the pre-transition levels where they first began.

The primary aim of rapid rehousing is to provide a secure, settled housing outcome for all unintentional homeless households as quickly as possible. Aberdeen City Council identified this as a key strategic area prior to the shift in national policy and has seen the average homeless journey time fall since 2015/16, see Figure 3.7 below. Despite the rise, performance is still significantly lower than the 287 days achieved nationally in 2022/23, Aberdeen City Council were among the top three performing authorities.

Figure 3.7: Homeless Journey Times



Source: Aberdeen City Council – Quality Assurance and Performance Management (2024)

Scottish Social Housing Charter

The Scottish Government's Social Housing Charter sets out clear standards and outcomes for homeless people or those threatened with homelessness. Aberdeen City Council reports annually to the Scottish Housing Regulator on performance against the Charter, including the sustainability of new tenancies. In 2023/24, the report showed that 87% of new tenancies to applicants who were assessed as statutory homeless were sustained for more than a year.

Monitoring and Evaluation

To ensure the effectiveness of this strategy, robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms will be implemented:

- **Quarterly progress reports**: Detailed progress reports will be published every quarter, highlighting key performance indicators, milestones achieved, and areas needing improvement.
- **Annual reviews**: Comprehensive annual reviews will be conducted to assess the impact of initiatives, gather feedback from stakeholders, and make necessary adjustments to the strategy.
- **Continuous improvement**: By collecting and using feedback from residents, service users, and stakeholders to continuously improve services and approaches.

Key Actions

Aberdeen City Council's key actions include:

- Reducing demand for temporary accommodation through a successful housing options and prevention approach.
- Ensuring the entire homeless journey is no more than 100 days.
- Utilising private rented sector and Registered Social Landlord housing to discharge accommodation duties where appropriate.
- Continuing work with Homewards
- Continuing working on Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan

Priority 4: Promote Independent living in communities
Priority 5: Promote health through housing

Introduction

This section straddles two priorities, promoting independent living in communities and promoting health through housing. It recognises the significant role that housing plays in supporting people to live independently and supporting good health outcomes.

This chapter examines the key issues and actions required to support people with particular needs, considering the housing needs of people in the following groups:

- Children and young people
- Older people
- Social care users
- Ethnic minorities
- Asylum seekers and refugees
- Gypsy/Travellers
- Travelling Showpeople
- Armed forces communities
- LGBTQIA+ community

This chapter will identify the key issues and actions required in relation to specialist accommodation that supports independent living and considers the needs of members of groups listed above. This chapter has close links and interdependencies with Priority 3: Homelessness.

Strategic Priority

Priority 4: Promoting Independent living in communities

We will use a multi-agency approach, technology and other innovations to enable the people of Aberdeen to live as independently as possible, for as long as possible in their community.

Priority 5: Promoting Health through housing

We are committed to reducing health inequalities by providing affordable, accessible, high quality and energy efficient homes that enhance people's health and wellbeing.

These priorities for the duration of this Local Housing Strategy was developed in consultation both with internal and external stakeholders for this sector. This priority encapsulates the approach that stakeholders wish to see over the next five years.

National Context

This section has particular relevance to the delivery of the outcomes relating to:

- Housing to 2040 sets out the Scottish Government's vision for housing in Scotland to 2040 and a route map to get there. The aim is to deliver access to safe, good quality homes that meet people's needs.
- The National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes framework sets out the nine health and wellbeing outcomes which apply to integrated health and social care. Outcome 2 states "People, including those with disabilities or long term conditions, or who are frail, are able to live as far as reasonably practicable, independently and at home or in a homely setting in their community".
- The Equality Act 2010 provides the legislative framework that protects people from discrimination. The Act covers several key areas including protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation).
- Guidance for setting of Local Housing Strategy (LHS) targets to support the delivery of more Wheelchair Accessible Housing (2019) outlines the need to ensure that a proportion of new housing is designed to wheelchair accessible standards.
- Guidance on the Provision of Equipment and Adaptations outlines the responsibility of NHS Scotland, local authorities, integration authorities, housing and education partners.
- Public Health Scotland, Healthy Housing for Scotland sets out how housing can influence health and wellbeing. It supports the implementation of Housing 2040.

Aberdeen Context

This chapter supports the targets set out within the Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Strategic Plan, 2020 - 2025[2]. The Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Strategic Plan includes the Housing Contribution Statement, outlining the priorities for adult health and social care services in Aberdeen.

This chapter is informed by Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership's Independent Living and Specialist Housing Provision, Market Position Statement 2024 – 2034. This sets out current provision and identifies short, medium, and long term future needs.

Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership Technology Enabled Care Plan 2023-2025. Technology Enabled Care (TEC) plays a key role in supporting independence and keeping people safe at home. The Plan sets out the priority areas to be addressed including helping people ensure their current homes meet their needs, enabling appropriate adaptations and encouraging the use of TEC.

This chapter links to the outcomes identified in Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016 - 2026 (LOIP). It is particularly relevant to the delivery of Stretch Outcome 10 outlined in Table 4-5.1 below. The provision of good quality, accessible and affordable housing can enhance good health and can contribute to this outcome.

Table 4-5.1: LOIP Stretch Outcomes relevant to independent living

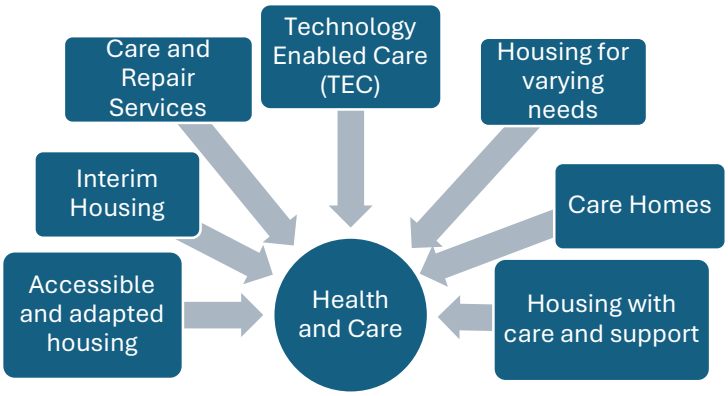
Stretch Outcome 10	Key Drivers
Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026.	Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people, families and groups
	Provide individuals and communities with the social resources needed to reduce feelings of loneliness and social isolation
	Encouraging the adoption of healthier lifestyles through a whole family approach

Source: Aberdeen City Council Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-2026 (2024)

[2] The Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership's Strategic Plan incorporates the Housing Contribution Statement.

Social Determinants of Health – Health and Care

The social determinants of health model highlights the importance that housing and support service play in improving health outcomes. Poor quality or inappropriate housing can lead to poor mental health, exacerbate long-term conditions, and increase the risk of challenging behaviours. Factors such as housing that is warm and accessible, housing with care and support services that meet people's needs and support mental health and wellbeing are considered throughout this chapter.



Health and Social Care Partnership

The Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 provided the framework for the establishment of Health and Social Care Partnerships across Scotland. Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership (ACHSCP) was formed in 2016 following publication of the Integration Scheme which sets out the delegated functions the partnership is responsible for. Housing functions that have been delegated to the partnership include the provision of adaptations in council housing and private sector housing[3] and garden maintenance for vulnerable people. Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership also commission some housing support services and Care and Repair services in the city.

The Independent Living and Specialist Housing Provision, Market Position Statement 2024 – 2034 sets out the vision, commitment, and expectations for accommodation for people with specialist requirements. The document looks at current provision, short term needs and longer term, future needs which have been used to inform this chapter.

Getting it Right for Everyone (GIRFE) proposes a multi-agency approach to health and social care, focusing on support from young adulthood to end-of-life care by providing a person centred approach to care. It builds on the success of Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC). Aberdeen City is one of the GIRFE place-based pathfinder areas.

Care and Support

Care and support provided in the right place, at the right time can enable people to live independently for longer. To meet the needs of an ageing population and the increase in the number of people living with long-term, disabilities and sometimes complex conditions requires a range of services and accommodation solutions.

[3] Registered Social Landlords receive adaptations funding directly from Scottish Government.

Older people

The number of older people living in Aberdeen is increasing. As people age, they may experience difficulties with day-to-day activities, mobility, or frailty that impact on their ability to live independently and they may require alternative housing that meets their varying needs.

Table 4-5.2 below shows the difference between the average life expectancy and average healthy life expectancy for males and females living in Aberdeen based on data from 2019 - 2021. It indicates a significant period of around 18 years where people may not experience 'good health' and may require additional support, adaptations, or alternative housing that can accommodate their health and support needs.

Table 4-5.2: Life expectancy averages, Aberdeen

	Male	Female	Average
Average life expectancy	76.9 years	81 years	79 years
Average healthy life expectancy	60.2 years	61.4 years	60.8 years
Difference	16.7 years	19.6 years	18.2 years

Source: Healthy Life Expectancy in Scotland 2019 – 2021, National Records of Scotland [4]

It is projected that there will be a 16.1% increase in the number of people aged 75 years and over by 2038. Scotland's Census (2022) reported that the percentage of the population aged 55 years and over and living alone in Aberdeen was 9.8%.

Whilst some people may require specialist accommodation with support[5], many can remain living independently in mainstream housing with appropriate support, aids, or adaptations.

People living with dementia

People living with dementia may require specialist accommodation and support. This can be provided at home, in specialist housing or in a care home setting.

The Independent Living and Specialist Housing Provision, Market Position Statement identified around 250 people with a medical diagnosis of dementia who are known to, and actively being supported by health and social care services. It also highlights the increase in the number of younger people, aged under 65 living with dementia indicating a need for specialist housing provision that enables independent living for this cohort of people.

The Housing and Dementia Practice Framework was launched in 2019. Aberdeen City was one of the first organisations to sign up to the framework and undertook a self-assessment that has influence the work to achieve a tenure neutral approach to the delivery of adaptations and incorporate dementia friendly design principles into

[4] Updated data for average life expectancy, published by NRS covering the period 2021 – 2023 shows average life expectancy for male was 76.9 years and female 80.9 years. Comparable data for health life expectancy is not available for the same time period.

[5] Specialist accommodation includes housing for varying needs (amenity, sheltered, very sheltered and extra care housing)

new build houses, for example clear signage, good lighting and the use of contrasting colours to help people navigate their homes.

Care Homes

The Independent Living and Specialist Housing Provision, Market Position Statement 2024 – 2034 reports that demand for care homes is declining nationally[6]. This may be due to a preference to remain at home with support and the availability of housing options such as very sheltered and extra care housing.

In Aberdeen, the number of registered places has reduced by 18%, which is higher than the national average. There are 30 care homes registered to support people aged 65 years and over and are operating at near capacity. The majority have dementia care units. The Market Position Statement concludes the combination of reducing demand and rising nursing care costs is likely to see an increase in the need for specialist housing provision to support independent living models.

Housing for Varying Needs

The housing for varying needs stock in Aberdeen includes amenity (amenityPlus with telecare[7]), sheltered housing, very sheltered and extra care housing. Castlehill Housing Association and Hanover Scotland also have independent living/enhanced housing management services. Table 4-5.3 below gives a breakdown of the stock in Aberdeen.

[6] Public Health Scotland, Care home census for adults in Scotland.
[7] Aberdeen City Council only

Table 4-5.3: Stock breakdown for Housing for Varying Needs – Aberdeen City.

Classification of Housing	Number of Units	% of total Stock	% stock per classification
Aberdeen City Council – amenity/amenityPlus (with telecare)	241	7.64%	100%
All amenity/amenity Plus	241	7.64%	100%
Aberdeen City Council – sheltered housing	1,873	59.37%	90.97%
Registered Social Landlord – sheltered housing	186	10.17%	9.03%
All sheltered housing	2,059	65.26%	100%
Aberdeen City Council – very sheltered housing/extra care	110	3.49%	39.29%
Registered Social Landlord – very sheltered housing[8]	170	5.39%	60.71%
All very sheltered/extra care	280	8.87%	100%
Registered Social Landlord - enhanced housing management service	253	8.02%	100%
All independent living/enhanced housing management service	253	8.02%	100%
Private Sector – retirement housing (estimate)	322	10.21%	100%
All Private Sector	322	10.21%	100%
Total	**3,155**	**100%**	**100%**

Source: Housing Strategy, Aberdeen City Council (2024)

Living in housing with the right support has been shown to produce better health outcomes for people, reduce loneliness and isolation, improve psychological health, and reduce the need for input from health and social care professionals, hospital stays and long-term care.[9]

The support provided in sheltered housing and independent living models can include onsite support staff, warden call type systems, while very sheltered housing and extra care housing may offer additional services such as meals provision and personal care.

A review of housing for varying needs stock is ongoing. Analysis of current supply and demand and suitability of the infrastructure will inform future provision. This also

[8] Includes VSA Extra Care Housing

[9] Health and Social Care Cost Benefits of Housing Older People

provides a opportunity to rethink how care and support services could be provided in this type of housing in the future.

Initial feedback suggests that there continues to be an overprovision of sheltered housing, which is being managed through the special letting's initiative. Demand for very sheltered/extra care housing remains consistent. Work is underway to ascertain the benefits of a more flexible hybrid model where support can flex up or down in accordance with the tenants' needs would provide a 'home for life' and better outcomes for individuals.

Key issues:

- Consultation feedback suggested that some of the existing sheltered housing stock is not suitable or desirable to applicants.
- Feedback from tenants suggests the special lettings criteria has seen the tenant profile change. The variety of age range, needs and abilities has caused some issues with compatibility[10].
- A review of the current provision is underway. Initial results suggest that there is scope to review criteria and redesign current stock profile to ensure it meets current levels of need.
- There is a surplus capacity within the existing sheltered housing stock but a limited provision of very sheltered housing.
- Very sheltered housing can deliver better outcomes for people and be more cost effective than the alternative care home provision.
- Evidence suggests that a more flexible hybrid model where support can flex up or down would deliver better outcomes for tenants.

Key actions:

- A review of current levels of needs is underway to inform future requirements.
- A project is currently looking at opportunities to enhance very sheltered housing stock.
- Assess the opportunity to develop a more flexible independent living model of care and support.

Care & Repair

Aberdeen Care and Repair[11] provides assistance to older homeowners and those with a disability or long-term illness to repair or adapt their homes. The ACHSCP funds the core elements of the service and additional funding is sought from a variety of charitable organisations.

The service supports independent living and provides the following services:

- Advice, information, and practical assistance relating to housing, home maintenance, repairs, improvements, adaptations, rehousing, benefits, mental health, and dementia support and operates a Trusted Trader scheme.

[10] Particularly relevant for properties let under special lettings initiative.
[11] Aberdeen Care and Repair – The Aberdeen Care and Repair Group

- Early intervention and prevention assessment
- Small repairs (Handyman service)
- Minor and major adaptations.

Key Issues

- Challenges with reaching people living in the private rented sector.
- Opportunities to expand and develop services.

Key Actions

- Examine potential to develop loan scheme for modular rails/ramps

Technology Enabled Care

Technology Enabled Care (TEC) is an umbrella term that describes telehealth and telecare services. This can include remote health monitoring and consultations, community alarm, warden call systems and telecare peripherals that reduce risks and support independence.

TEC plays an important role in keeping people safe at home. It is currently used in a variety of setting including amenityPlus[12], sheltered and very sheltered housing, housing with support services for people with physical disabilities, learning disabilities, mental health issues and complex care needs.

Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership's Technology Enable Care Plan 2023 -2025 informs the work that is taking place to promote the use of TEC in people's homes and care settings to help them manage their health and stay safe at home.

In 2017, telephony providers announced the decommissioning of their analogue networks with a move to digital, Internet Protocol (IP). This impacts the TEC services provided in housing settings. The switch off, of the analogue signal may impact on warden call services, fire alarms, lift alarms and other TEC peripherals, including how they communicate with the Alarm Receiving Centres. To address this, alternative digital solutions are being developed and existing systems are being upgraded or replaced. The Analogue to Digital Transition (A2DT) is due to be completed by 2025.

A project group is overseeing the implementation of a new Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC) and identify the risks and actions that need to be taken to ensure there is no impact or additional risks for people who currently benefit from TEC services.

[12] Amenity housing with integrated telecare/warden call system.

Key issues:

- This will impact a range of equipment and services that will require replacements or adaptors that 'translate' the signal from analogue to digital:
- Alarm receiving centres (ARC)[13]
- Warden call and telecare systems in sheltered and supported housing services
- Fire panel and lift alarms
- Cost of upgrading or replacing system will need to be met from existing budgets
- Alternative digital solutions that enable to analogue signal to convert to a digital signal are still in development.

Key actions:

- Continue to promote the TEC in Housing Charter[14]
- Continue to implement the A2DT switchover, highlight risks and issues that relate to the provision of TEC services in housing settings.

Accessible and Adapted Housing

Housing that is accessible and/or adapted plays a key role in enabling people to live independently. The range of adaptations or specialist features can vary depending on the needs of the individual.

Definition	
Accessible	Accessible housing is designed to enable people to live safely and independently. It includes features that may meet a wide range of needs. These can include but are not limited to accessible entrances to and from the property, adequate circulation space and accessible bathrooms and kitchens, wider door frames and can be easily adapted to meet changing needs. This type of housing is often described as 'ambulant disabled.'
Adapted	An adapted property may not have been purpose built but is one that has been altered/adapted to meet the needs of the occupant. This can include but is not limited to the installation of ramped access, level access shower, lowered kitchen units, installation of stair lifts widening of doors, etc. The responsibility for adaptations is a delegated function that is the responsibility of the Health and Social Care Partnership.

[13] In Aberdeen the ARC is known as the Regional Communication Centre (RCC).
[14] Aberdeen City Council signed up to the TEC in Housing Charter Pledges

Key Issues

The Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3 provided evidence showing that the demand for accessible and/or adapted properties continues to increase. Key issues identified include:

- Demographic challenges of an ageing population. Projections suggest Aberdeen will have fewer people of working age whilst the population of older people is expected to rise by 16.1% for people aged 75 and over by 2038
- Scotland's Census 2022 identified 6.1% (13,613) of one-person households living in Aberdeen included a person aged 66 and over. This represents an increase of 18.2% since the 2011 Census.[15]
- There has been a 25% increase in the number of people living with long-term conditions[16]
- The average life expectancy of adults in Aberdeen is 76.9 years for males and 81 years for females. The average healthy life expectancy is 60.2 years for males and 61.4 years for females, indicating that many will experience a period of ill-health during their lifetime.
- Pressures on adaptations budgets due to increasing demand as the result of an ageing population and reducing budgets.
- Lack of suitable accessible housing in both private and affordable housing sector. The Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3 shows only 14% of all stock is adapted, see Table 4-5.4 below

Table 4-5.4: Number of adapted properties by type, tenure, and household type

Local Authority	% Adapted	Characteristics		Tenure			Household type		
		House	Flat	Owner Occupier	Social Housing	Private Rented	Older	Family	Other
Aberdeen	14%	12%	15%	10%	27%	N/A	24%	6%	11%

Source: Scottish House Condition Survey Results (2017 – 2019)[17]

- There has been an increase in the number of people with bariatric conditions who may require properties with enhanced space standards.
- Despite the increase in provision of accessible housing demand remains consistent. Analysis of Aberdeen City Council's waiting list information is shown in Table 4-5.5 below.

[15] Figures not directly comparable: 2011 Census figure was based on one-person households where the person is aged 65 years.
[16] Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership's Strategic Plan.
[17] Most recent available publication which includes data at a local authority level.

Table 4-5.5: Number of people awaiting accessible housing in Aberdeen City on 31st March annually.

House type required	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Level Access	79	109	104	173	157
Ground Floor	1,202	1,260	1,296	1,503	1,514
First floor[18]	171	186	192	260	260
Extra Bedroom[19]	80	86	113	3	3

Source: Quality Assurance and Performance Management, Aberdeen City Council (2024)

Wheelchair Accessible Housing

The needs of wheelchair users and their families may vary. Some may use their wheelchair outdoors only whilst others require a fully wheelchair accessible property that could include low-level appliances, wider door openings, barrier free bathroom/shower access, enhanced external space, stair rails or ramps.

Key Issues

- Demand for wheelchair accessible social housing has remained, see Table 4-5.6 below.

Table 4-5.6: Demand for wheelchair accessible housing (Aberdeen City Council only).

Demand	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
1 bed	28	24	26	33	19
2 bed	25	26	16	16	19
3 bed	3	5	9	12	14
4+ bed	3	4	3	3	2
Total	59	59	54	64	54

Source: Aberdeen City Council's waiting list (31 March annually).

- Aberdeen City Council has 428 properties that are fully wheelchair accessible accounting for 1.8% of the total stock 23,255.
- The average total stock for Registered Social Landlords operating in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire is 1.8% of the total stock (102 properties from a total stock of 5,766)[20]
- 112 wheelchair accessible properties were delivered through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme. A further 67 homes were designed to housing for varying needs, accessible standard and 26 homes were delivered for specialist provision.

[18] This indicates a specific 'medical' recommendation for ground floor/first property, usually applied when a family member experiences mobility issues.
[19] Relates to specific 'medical' recommendation for people who require additional bedroom for medical equipment or where a family member is unable to share due to neurodiversity.
[20] Information not split for Aberdeen City only.

- There is no national data collection or analysis showing the number of wheelchair accessible properties.
- The Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3 applied the methodology applied in Horizon Housing's 'Still Minding the Step?' report. It estimates that there are 3,766 wheelchair user households in Aberdeen and 737 households with an unmet need with 0.9% of all households requiring wheelchair accommodation. This demand is projected to rise in line with the grown in the ageing population.
- Data for the private sector is not available, however the report suggests there is little evidence that private developments are taking steps to meet demand.
- The Strategic Housing Investment Plan include a 15% target for wheelchair accessible affordable housing. No target is set for the private sector due to planning colleagues being unable to enforce delivery of wheelchair accessible homes in the private sector.
- The target was set in response to analysis that showed consistent levels of demand. The impact of this decision is likely to become more evident with the delivery of sites agreed after the target was set.
- The Scottish Government's guidance in 2019 produced in response to the national shortage of wheelchair accessible accommodation.

Key Actions

- The affordable housing supply programme continues to deliver additional wheelchair accessible units. The delivery of these will be monitored to ensure
- The Strategic Housing Investment Plan includes plans for 376 specialist provision properties, which include a commitment for 317 wheelchair accessible properties and 59 specialist provision properties for people who require supported accommodation between 2024/25 and 2029/30.[21]
- Aberdeen City Council supports the Scottish Governments approach as set out in The fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4) to "work with planners and private developers to increase delivery of all-tenure wheelchair accessible housing targets."
- Setting a 5% target in the Strategic Housing Investment Plan for private sector housing will encourage private sector developers to improve the accessible of the houses the build to improve the stock.

Social Care Users

This section covers a wide range of supported, specified and housing with support services[22].

Children and young people

The needs of children and young people with lifelong conditions are reflected in the Independent Living and Specialist Housing Provision, Market Position Statement

[21] The Strategic Housing Investment Plan is reviewed annually. It should be noted that development plans may be subject to change.
[22] Excluded amenityPlus, sheltered, very sheltered and extra care housing for older people.

2024 - 2034. Table 4-5.7 below shows the number of specialist housing and care placements required to meet the current, short term and long-term needs.

Table 4-5.7: Future accommodation needs of children and young people with lifelong conditions

Young people who require:	Current	Short term	Long term
Specialist residential placement	20	11	10
Specialist care packages with future need for accommodation	18	23	27

Source: Independent Living and Specialist Housing Provision, Market Position Statement (2024)

Accommodation solutions for this group are linked to the wider planning around the provision of specialist housing. This data will inform future priorities identified in the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP).

Aberdeen City Council has a Corporate Parenting responsibility for care experienced children and young people and care leavers. When ready for rehousing, a joint assessment takes place and care experienced children and young people and care leavers are awarded an urgent/high priority for rehousing and housing support based on their needs.

Mental Health and Learning Disability

The Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership's Mental Health and Learning Disability Residential and Support Market Position Statement 2021-2026 was developed in response to changing needs. A survey of mental health and learning disability accommodation was carried out in 2021. This provided an insight into the condition and suitability of the supported living and residential care services. The survey identified 71 places that were not suitable for long-term use. These will be prioritised in future reprovisioning plans.

Learning Disability, Autism and Neurodiversity.

The housing needs of neurodivergent people and people with a learning disability are highlighted within the Learning Disabilities, Autism and Neurodiversity (LDAN) Bill consultation in December 2023.

The Bill aims to bring a focus on how public authorities' duties around housing and independent living can best meet the needs of neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities.

This could include:

- The introduction of specialist advocacy services for housing support.
- Require strategies produced by local authorities to set out how independent living principles are embedded into allocations policies, to ensure real choice and control.
- Require Local Housing Strategies to set out how the needs of neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities are met.

- Require Integration Authorities to set out how housing, care and health services are integrated; to supports people to live independently.
- Introduce a statutory requirement for training for professionals working in health, social care, and housing services.
- Consider improvement to data collection on housing and independent living.

The full implications of the Bill will be monitored and built into future workstreams.

Mental Health

The majority of people with mental health conditions live independently in their own homes, some live in supported living settings or care home facilities.

There is a strong link between mental health conditions and homeless presentations.

The Scottish Health Survey (2019) reported that around 23% of people living in Aberdeen who responded to their survey experience mental health issues. This is broadly similar to the Scottish figure of 24%.

Around 21% of homeless applications in Scotland came from people who experience mental health issues.

There are 8 care homes with 83 places for people with mental health conditions in Aberdeen. The occupancy rate in 2021 was 87%.

Complex Care – Coming Home Report

The Coming Home report was published by Scottish Government in 2018 and followed by the Implementation report in 2022. These reports recognised the challenges for people with complex care needs, those who were placed in inappropriate out of area placements and hospital related delayed discharge. This can often be due to the lack of suitable accommodation. Housing built to appropriate design standards that mitigates potential risk factors with the right support can enable a safe and secure home for people with complex care needs.

The Complex Care Market Position Statement set out some key points to be considered in relation to the housing and environmental needs. As part of the Coming Home implementation work the introduction of the Dynamic Support Register has been implemented to improve monitoring of people with learning disabilities and complex care needs. This register will provide more robust data to inform current and future needs and provide greater visibility in terms of strategic planning. It will monitor those in hospital as well as ensuring greater anticipation of the need for children transitioning to adult provision.

The register currently[23] has 35 people who require complex care provision across Aberdeen City under the Red Category of either: ‘In Hospital’; ‘Inappropriate Out of Area’; ‘At Risk of Support Breakdown; or ‘Enhanced Monitoring’. There are also 25

[23] Data as at August 2024

people being cared for out of Aberdeen who are being monitored. Quarterly data is extracted from the register and sent to Public Health Scotland.

This work meets the Scottish Government's wider ambitions around the Health and Social Care Standards – to deliver health and social care where services work collaboratively to support the wishes and needs of the individual.

Aberdeen has two specialist housing services with 24/7 support for people with complex care needs. A new site is being developed by Aberdeen City Council at Stoneywood. This will provide 8 new build, purpose built units for people with complex care needs.

Brian injury and neurological conditions

A neurological condition covers any condition that affects the brain, spinal cord and/or nervous system caused by a variety of factors including genetic conditions, medical conditions, or traumatic injuries. This may lead to the need for accessible housing and/or support.

Data from the Independent Living and Specialist Housing Provision, Market Position Statement identified that 75% of patients go home directly, some with support following their hospital stay.[24]

People requiring forensic mental health support

The Independent Living and Specialist Housing Market Position Statement reported the findings of the Forensic Services Steering Group. It suggested that there was an overall lack of appropriate accommodation in Aberdeen City to support people with a Forensic Mental Health need. In addition, many of existing facilities are no longer fit for purpose. Forensic patients may also experience delayed hospital discharge. Provision of additional bespoke/purpose built accommodation would alleviate some of the issues for this group.

Bariatric Care

Bariatric conditions can result in a loss of mobility and the need for additional space standards and robust fittings to enable people to live independently. Bariatric conditions typically occur in people with a BMI of 40 or higher, or those have a BMI of 35 and over and experience obesity related disease.

Two purpose built 'bariatric standard' properties were built as part of Aberdeen City Council's house new build programme and a further sheltered housing property was adapted to meet bariatric needs.

An evaluation report highlighted that tenants living in the new build properties experienced improved levels of independence and a reduction in their personal care and support needs.

[24] Based on data from NHS Grampian, ARI wards 203/204 taken in 2022.

Bariatric standard accommodation comes at a significant additional development costs, which has hampered further development. A survey of occupational therapists carried out to inform the Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3 identified 10 people experiencing difficulties in their current environment.

People living with Alcohol or Substance Use

The Independent Living and Specialist Housing Market Positions Statement highlights the need for additional residential accommodation for people living with alcohol and substance use issues.

Work has been ongoing to identify an alternative site for the reprovisioning of an existing care home to provide a specialist housing facility for people with alcohol addiction. The current care homes site has 17 places. The ambition is to provide alternative specialist housing with support to enable people to enhance their independence.

Phoenix Trust has secure funding for a new development of 23 units for residential rehabilitation with 3-year funding provided by Scottish Government.

Key Issues

- A wide range of housing is required to meet the needs of people with a disability who have additional support needs. This will include the provision of wheelchair accessible housing and specialist housing with support that is designed to enable people to live safely for longer.
- The needs of people with autism (LD & neurodiversity) need to be considered. This may include the need for specialist accommodation or sensitive letting arrangements.
- A proactive model of housing support and intervention needs to be considered to avoid people being a crisis point before receiving support.
- There continues to be a lack of robust data around the number of properties that have been adapted, the level of needs in the community.

Key Actions

- Clear and accessible information on housing options.
- Take action to address the shortfall identified in the Independent Living and Specialist Housing Provision Market Position Statement 2024 – 2034.

Non-permanent accommodation

This section deals with student accommodation needs and intermediate care housing. Temporary accommodation for homeless people is dealt with under Priority 2: Preventing and Addressing Homelessness.

Student Accommodation

Aberdeen is home to several university and college campuses. In 2022/23 there were 31,285 students were enrolled at The University of Aberdeen and Robert Gordon University. The Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3 and the recent

cross-party working group report on Student housing options and experiences of homelessness in Scotland was published by The Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) Scotland highlighted the key issues facing the student population in relation to housing and homelessness.

Key Issues

- There has been a 23% increase in the total number of students across all campuses in Aberdeen. However, more online/outreach courses have mitigated the pressures on student accommodation.
- The Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3 indicates that there is sufficient supply of purpose-built student accommodation in the city. This is finding is supported in the cross-party report that suggests the ratio of student to bedspace accommodation was 1.5 suggesting a slight oversupply.
- The cross-party report indicated that in 2022/23, 35% of full time students were owner-occupiers. This is significantly higher compared to other Scottish cities like Dundee (4%), Edinburgh (6%), and Glasgow (17%).
- There has been an increase in students travelling with family members resulting in the requirement for larger properties

Key Actions

- Aberdeen has a relatively balanced supply of student accommodation, with a slight over-supply of purpose-built student accommodation. There is a requirement to continue to monitor supply and work with the Planning authority in relation to the need for new purpose-built student accommodation.

Armed forces communities

Aberdeen is an armed forces friendly city that recognises the service of all British Armed Forces personnel and those of the Commonwealth of Nations. The Armed Forces Covenant is based on the premise that those who serve or have served, and their families deserve respect, support, and fair treatment. The Armed Forces Covenant includes a number of key commitments including:

“We will ensure up to 1% of our 2,000 council new build houses are offered to those leaving the armed forces. With adapt up to a further 0.5% for those injured in service.”

Key Issues

- The waiting list data from June 2024 shows 19 live applications from armed forces personnel, suggesting that there is no significant pressures at the current time.
- 9 new council houses have been allocated to armed forces personnel as part of the New Build Housing programme (0.9%), in line with the current policy.

Key Actions

- Continue to monitor and review the commitment included within the Armed Forces Covenant relating to council house new build housing allocations and adaptations.

Key workers

Key workers are employees who are considered to deliver essential services and can include doctors, nurses, teachers, police officers and may also extend to seasonal workers who are vital to private sector businesses.

Key Issues

- The Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3 concluded there is no evidence to support the provision of additional key worker accommodation.
- The provision of mid-market rent (MMR) properties has improved the supply of housing for key workers in the city, as seen in Table 4-5.8 below.
- The demand for these properties has been low a resulting in a change of use for some.
- Attracting qualified staff to the city can be challenging. Anecdotal evidence suggests areas where professionals, such as Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) who are less likely to graduate or originate from the Aberdeen area may benefit from the provision of short-term accommodation that supports a transition to the area.

Table 4-5.8: Provision key workers in Aberdeen.

Housing Provider	Number of properties designed for Key Workers	Location	Comments
Sanctuary Scotland	124 units	Craiginches	44% were let to key workers at initial allocation. (mid-market rent)
Grampian Housing Association	58 units	Burnside Village	Allocation for public sector workers. A further 43 units were 'converted' to social rent due to a reduction in demand. (mid-market rent)

Source: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3 (2024)

Key Actions

- Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership and NHS Grampian report that the numbers of key workers seeking accommodation is likely to be small.
- The requirement for additional key worker accommodation should continue to be monitored throughout the life of this strategy.

Minority Ethnic Groups

The minority ethnic population is not a homogenous group, it is an umbrella term that comprises numerous distinct communities with their own specific needs.

A research paper by GREC: 'Accommodation Needs of Ethnic Minorities, Gypsy/Travellers and Travelling Showpeople' (2022) indicated that Aberdeen City[25] has a relatively high percentage of residents from a minority ethnic background, 16% compared to 10 – 12% of the wider Scottish population.

The 2022 Census results show the percentage of the population with a minority ethnic background in Scotland has increased from 4.5% in 2001 to 12.9% in 2022.

Analysis showed 1.67% of Scotland's population had a Polish ethnic background. Aberdeen has the highest percentage of population with Polish ethnic background in Scotland's council areas 4.4%. The breakdown for the electoral ward areas is shown in Table 4-5.9 below.

Table 4-5.9: Percentage of population in Aberdeen with Polish ethnic background by ward.

Area name	Percentage (%)
Dyce/Bucksburn/Danestone	3.1
Bridge of Don	1.9
Kingswells/Sheddocksley/Summerhill	3.5
Northfield/Mastrick North	8.8
Hilton/Woodside/Stockethill	6.3
Tillydrone/Seaton/Old Aberdeen	13.2
Midstocket/Rosemount	2.6
George St/Harbour	4.8
Lower Deeside	0.7
Hazlehead/Queens Cross/Countesswells	1.4
Airyhall/Broomhill/Garthdee	2.1
Torry/Ferryhill	6.6
Kincorth/Nigg/Cove	4.3

Source: Scotland's Census 2022 (2024)

Key Issues

- The GREC research paper indicated there is an over representation of people from a minority ethnic background living in the private rented sector. This is in line with national trends.
- Affordable rents, particularly in the private sector caused concern
- Ethnicity was found to be a key characteristic increasing the likelihood of homelessness.

[25] Grampian Regional Equalities Council (GREC).

- Energy efficiency and fuel poverty remained challenging.
- Language barriers and discrimination presented challenges for this group.
- Family size was identified as a key issue, with the need for larger family homes identified.

Key actions:

- Ensure the needs of this group are considered in the development of policies and procedures.

Gypsy/Travellers

The term Gypsy/Travellers can refer to several distinct groups who consider a travelling lifestyle to be part of their cultural or ethnic identity. The population size is relatively unknown. Results from Scotland's Census 2022 showed that 3,343 people in Scotland identified as' White: Gypsy/Traveller' compared with 4,200 people in the 2011 census, a reduction of approximately 20%. This is likely to be an underestimate of the total Gypsy/Traveller population.

Area level data from the 2022 Census is not yet available[26]. The 2011 Census identified 279 people (6.6%) of the Gypsy/Traveller population residing in Aberdeen area, and 10.8% living in the wider Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire area.

Aberdeen City Council manage and run the Gypsy/Traveller site at Clinterty, which lies close to the border with Aberdeenshire. The site has recently undergone extensive refurbishment to bring the pitches up to current standards. The site has provision for 21 permanent pitches. There is one private Gypsy/Traveller site in Aberdeen with 8 places.

The Local Development Plan 2023 (LDP) identifies the lack of suitable, secure accommodation for Gypsy and Traveller community. Five Masterplan Zones are identified with the LDP as site with the potential to contribute towards the provision of sites as part of the affordable housing contribution. These include: Grandholme, Newhills Expansion, Countesswells, Greenferns and Loirston.

The GREC research paper indicated a preference for smaller sites of up to 10 pitches.

Key Issues

- The Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3 highlighted the lack of reliable data to provide accurate projections of population size.
- There has been a lack of progress on the provision of additional sites despite locations being identified in the Local Development Plan.
- Gypsy/Travellers are more likely to report long-term health problems and poor educations outcomes, which can be exacerbated by their living conditions.

[26] At the time of writing data was only available at Scotland wide level.

Key Actions

- Continue to work with developers in relation to the five sites identified in the Local Development Plan 2023 for Gypsy/Traveller site provision.
- Ensure the needs of Gypsy/Travellers are considered within the development of policies and procedures.

Travelling Showpeople

There is estimated to be around 2,000 Travelling Showpeople in Scotland. A recent data release from the 2022 Census showed 0.03% of the population identified as Travelling Showpeople. Information at a local level is not currently available.

GREC undertook research in 2022 to ascertain the land and location needs of Travelling Showpeople and inform the Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3. The finding suggests that whilst the beach area provides a traditional site for larger, international shows, there is a lack of smaller site across the city. The face-to-face research suggested that access to facilities such as water, waste and power sources can be problematic.

Key Issues

- Due to the transient nature of this group, it can prove difficult to estimate the true extent of the population size.
- The beach area hosts large/international shows but there is a lack of smaller sites around the city for smaller groups of Travelling Showpeople.
- Additional sites of around 10 pitches in other areas of the city may encourage smaller shows to visit the city.
- Access to water and power sources can be problematic and resolving this would meet the needs of Travelling Showpeople.

Key Actions

- Reviewing opportunities for additional site provision across the city.
- Improving facilities at existing sites in relation to water/waste/power where practicable.

Asylum seekers and refugee resettlement

For many years, Scotland has welcomed refugees and asylum seekers that have been displaced due to various world conflicts. The Scottish Government recognises that it is a human right to be able to seek asylum in another country. Although asylum is a matter reserved to the UK Government, the Scottish Government is responsible for several devolved matters such as access to essential services which helps to ensure that refugees and asylum seekers can integrate in their new environment. Access to adequate housing is a crucial part of this, and Aberdeen City Council plays an integral role in providing this to displaced groups from various communities that arrive in the city.

The New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy supports the integration of refugees and asylum seekers into Scotland's communities. This strategy has been recently updated in March 2024 to better reflect the current landscape surrounding these groups, which has changed significantly since the strategy was first introduced in 2013. The strategy makes reference to the importance of access to appropriate housing for displaced people when integrating into their new communities.

Aberdeen City Council supports the overarching outcomes of this strategy through its work with displaced people and will collaborate with Scottish Government, third sector organisations and other local authorities to ensure the best outcomes for these groups. 'New Scots' is an inclusive term and refers to people living in Scotland who have been forcibly displaced or are making a claim that they have a well-founded fear of persecution.

As reported in the Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3 there is an established New Scots community in Aberdeen City living in mixed tenure accommodation, with an estimated 30 displaced families at the time living in the private rented sector.

The housing needs of asylum seekers and refugees who have arrived into the UK through resettlement schemes was considered in the Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3 for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. The housing needs of these groups was explored in Chapter 5 – Specialist Provision, with both local authorities also factoring in the various displaced groups in their areas in Chapter 4 – Estimating Future Housing Need and Demand. The data used in both of these chapters is already relatively outdated due to the constantly shifting landscape surrounding displaced groups. A commitment was made in the Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3 for both local authorities to further consider the needs of these groups in the development of this Local Housing Strategy by utilising more recent data, particularly with regards to Ukrainian groups as there was very limited data available at the time of writing the Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3.

The UNHCR[27] (United Nations Refugee Agency) produce an annual report on the global trends relating to refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced and stateless people worldwide. Table 4-5.10 below shows the total number of people who have been displaced worldwide as of the end of 2023.

[27] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Table 4-5.10: Total Number of Displaced People Worldwide by the end of 2023

Displaced Group	Number of Displaced People (in millions)
Internally Displaced People	68.3m
Refugees Under UNHNCR's Mandate	31.6m
Asylum Seekers	6.9m
Palestine Refugees Under UNHNCR's Mandate	6m
Other People in Need of International Protection	5.8m
Total	**117.3m**

Source: UNHCR, Global Trends in Forced Displacement (2023)

According to UNHCR, the number of displaced people has been increasing annually for the last twelve years and the increase between the end of 2022 and 2023 has been significant, as shown in Table 4-5.11 below.

Table 4-5.11: Number of Displaced People Worldwide

Period	Number of Displaced People (in millions)
End of 2022	108.5m
End of 2023	117.3m
April 2024 Projection	120m

Source: UNHCR, Global Trends in Forced Displacement (2023)

The number of displaced people increased by 8% over the course of 2023 and is projected to continue increasing over 2024. In their 2023 report, the UNHCR projected that this number would reach 120m people by April 2024. There has not been an updated number of displaced people confirmed by UNHCR, although their Global Appeal for 2024 makes reference to a projected planning figure of 130.8m displaced people[28]. It is likely that the number of displaced people will continue to increase worldwide, and that local authorities in the UK should anticipate and make provisions to cope with this additional demand.

The UK Home Office published statistics on the number of asylum applications made in 2023, as shown in Table 4-5.12 below. The number of asylum applications has decreased by 17% and the number of withdrawn applications has increased significantly. Despite this, the proportion of asylum decisions where protection was granted (grants of refugee status, humanitarian protection or alternative forms of leave) was 67% for 2023, resulting in the highest number of people being granted protection since records began in 1984. This rate is, however, a lower proportion than the 76% of decisions that were granted protection in 2022.

[28] UNHCR, Global Appeal for 2024, https://reporting.unhcr.org/global-appeal-2024-6383

Table 4-5.12: Asylum Applications Made to UK Home Office in 2022 and 2023

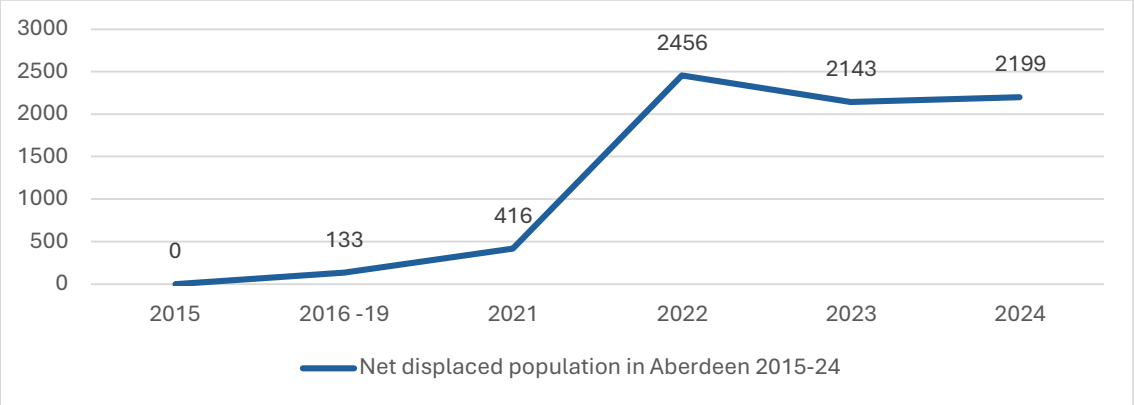
	2023	2022	% Change 2022 - 2023
No. of Asylum Applications	67,337	81,130	-17%
Number of People the Applications Relate to	84,425	99,939	-15.5%
Applications from Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children	3,412	5,783	-41%
Withdrawn Applications	24,027	5,255	357%

Source: Home Office, February (2024)

While the level of asylum applications has decreased, there is still great demand from asylum seeking groups due to the proportion of these applications being granted some form of protection.

Along with other local authorities across the UK, Aberdeen has strived to meet the challenges presented by the rapid influx of displaced people seeking support and refuge and is currently home to circa 2,000 displaced people, having witnessed a ten-fold increase in arrivals over the last 2 years as shown in Figure 4-5.1 below.

Figure 4-5.1: Net Displaced Population in Aberdeen 2015-24



Source: UK Home Office and Scottish Government Funding Quarter Returns (2024)

Aberdeen City Council remains committed to welcoming and supporting displaced people and will strive to meet its agreed integration outcomes to better support people who arrive here. The vision outlined in the New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy is for:

"a welcoming Scotland where refugees and people seeking asylum are able to rebuild their lives from the day they arrive."

While Aberdeen City Council will continue its work to support displaced communities in order to contribute to this vision, it is important to note that the significant increase in migration potentially presents additional challenges to local authorities in a time where they are under existing pressure due to public sector spending cuts. There are several existing challenges which may be exacerbated by the increase in migration such as pressure on housing supply, increases in homelessness presentations, lack

of school places and the provision of primary care and mental health services. It is imperative that the council's efforts focus on minimising the impact of a disparity between levels of demand and capacity of services through the provision of preventative services.

Despite these challenges, Aberdeen City Council remains committed to fully supporting the UK's various humanitarian programmes, as detailed in Table 4-5.13 below.

Table 4-5.13: UK Humanitarian Programmes and their Impact on Aberdeen, August 2024

Programme	Purpose	Impact on Aberdeen
Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS)	Launched in 2014, the scheme helps displaced people who have the greatest need, including people requiring urgent medical treatment, survivors of violence and torture, and women and children at risk.	Circa 130 Syrian and Kurdish individuals have been successfully settled in the city since 2016.
United Kingdom Resettlement Scheme (UKRS)	The UKRS launched in 2021 and reaffirms the UK's ongoing commitment to refugee resettlement. The scheme is accessible to refugees who have been assessed for resettlement by UNHCR.	Aberdeen City Council is committed to providing resettled homes for 6 families.
Afghan Bridging Accommodation	Accommodation procured by the Home Office to provide temporary accommodation to those arriving in the UK who were displaced a result of events in Afghanistan following the fall of Kabul in August 2021. Those in bridging accommodation were resettled under the ACRS or ARAP schemes. In May 2023, the Home Office announced the staggered closure of all bridging hotels, with the Scottish hotels closing on 31st August 2023.	In September 2021, 3 hotels accommodating circa 350 Afghans were set up. Aberdeen was only one of 3 LAs in Scotland who offered this provision. One hotel closed leaving 2 hotels, with 300 Afghans who resided for up to 2 years. Aberdeen City Council and Home Office staff worked intensively to ensure Afghan households secured long term settled accommodation across the UK.
Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS1/ ACRS2/ACRS3)	The ACRS was launched in 2022 with the aim of resettling up to 20,000 people in the UK. The scheme prioritises those who have assisted the UK efforts in Afghanistan as well as people considered to be vulnerable.	A small number of families have been rehoused to date.
Afghan Assistance and Relocation Policy (ARAP)	ARAP is for Afghan citizens who have worked for or with the UK	Aberdeen City Council has committed to providing settled

Programme	Purpose	Impact on Aberdeen
	Government in exposed or meaningful roles. If deemed eligible, an offer to relocate to the UK is made.	accommodation and integration support. However, a Home Office decision to commission Mears to procure property in local authority areas for those Afghan households evacuated to the UK from Pakistan has necessitated the allocation of further properties and support packages.
Welcome Hub Accommodation	The purpose of welcome accommodation is to provide a temporary place of safety for displaced people with Scottish Super Sponsor visas on their initial arrival to Scotland.	13 hotels/accommodation blocks were provided to accommodate (at capacity) circa 1,300 individuals who arrived on the Super Sponsor Scheme and required immediate accommodation. Over 2,000 Ukrainian Displaced People (UDPs) were placed in WA accommodated from May 2022 through to closure in April 2024. The vast majority are now settled in Aberdeen in the 500 properties refurbished with the Ukraine Long-Term Resettlement Funding. A further 80 ACC tenancies were also made available and RSLs provided 40 tenancies.
Homes for Ukraine Sponsor Scheme	Guests are pre-matched with local hosts prior to arrival and provided with accommodation, either in self-contained properties or the host's own home.	ACC and Partners provide comprehensive integration support and administer Thank You Payments to sponsors on behalf of the UK Government.
Warm Scottish Welcome Super Sponsor Scheme (SSSS)	Displaced Ukrainian households or the local authority source a match sponsor to accommodate displaced families, either in self-contained properties or in the host's own home.	ACC and Partners provide comprehensive integration support and administer Thank You Payments to sponsors on behalf of the UK Government.
Contingency Accommodation	This accommodation is used to accommodate asylum seekers who are deemed destitute. Contingency accommodation is used due to the Home Office having statutory responsibility to provide essential living needs to all asylum seekers.	Aberdeen has contingency accommodation comprised of 2 hotels with capacity for up to 396 asylum seekers.

Programme	Purpose	Impact on Aberdeen
Full Dispersal	Full Dispersal was announced in April 2022 and Regional Plans were agreed. Local authorities were informed that they would be housing people from asylum seeking groups and become dispersal areas.	Aberdeen's allocation was for 96 dispersal properties in the city by the end of 2023. Currently, 51 bedspaces are live. In May 2024, V2.0 of the National Accommodation Plan was introduced by the UK Government, confirming future intentions to close Contingency Accommodation in favour of dispersed accommodation.

Source: Programme details provided by UK Government, figures for Aberdeen provided by Aberdeen City Council's Resettlement Team (2024)

In 2025, the number of arrivals from displaced groups in Aberdeen is projected to increase by around 20% due to the National Accommodation Plan V2 increasing dispersed bedspaces in the city, asylum backlog decisions and further UKRS and Afghan arrivals. There is also the significant possibility of a surge of further Ukrainian arrivals due to imminent visa changes which will likely require residency in the UK as a prerequisite for extending current visas and the requirement to trigger outstanding visas which have, as yet, not been used.

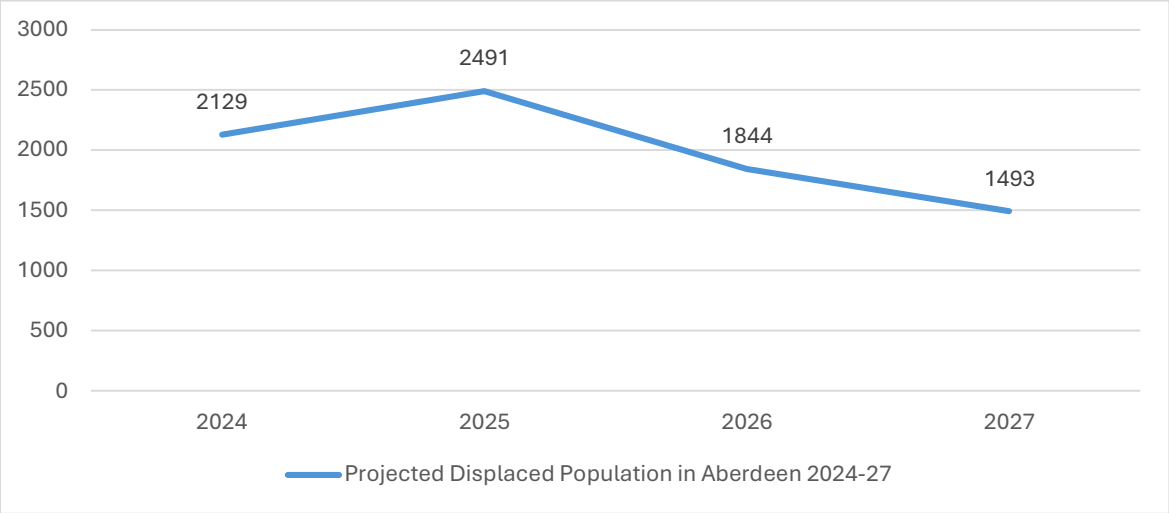
It is expected that there will be reductions in support provision to displaced Ukrainians as extension visas begin to expire, with current expiration dates for their visas dated between 2026 and 2028. The Ukrainian Government currently expects displaced citizens to return to the country once it is safe to do so. Recent research suggests that a significant proportion of displaced Ukrainians in the UK intend to remain in the country, with a survey from the Migration Observatory indicating that 68% of respondents intended to remain even when it was safe to return to Ukraine[29].

As the existing Ukrainian community becomes more accustomed to life in the city and new arrivals have a wider Ukrainian community to support them, the pressure on public services from this population should reduce. Aberdeen City Council will however be required to offer full integration support to any new arrivals.

Increased demand is expected from ARAP, UKRS and asylum refugees, as well as a significant growth in the asylum seeker population. The Resettlement Team at Aberdeen City Council have estimated the projected displaced population for Aberdeen from 2024-2027 based on current schemes and visa conditions, as shown in Figure 4-5.2 below.

[29] "Ukrainian Migration to the UK", The Migration Observatory.

Figure 4.-5.2: Projected Displaced Population in Aberdeen 2024-27 Based on Current Schemes and Visa Conditions (Scenario 1)



Source: Aberdeen City Council Resettlement Team (2024)

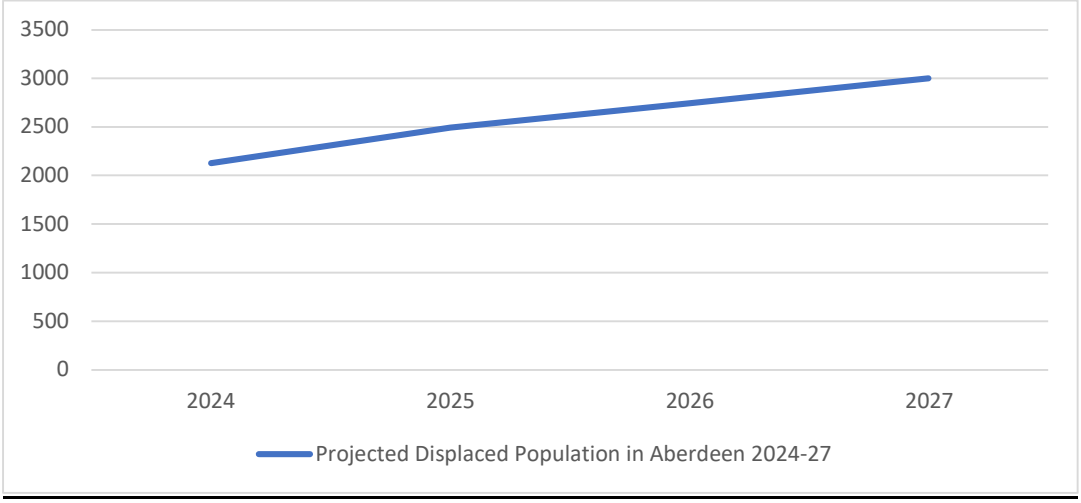
It is important to note that the above projection only takes account of existing programmes and does not take account of any future migration related to civil war, international conflict, climate or economic change or natural disasters. The assumption in this scenario is also that there will be no further extensions to visas for those from Ukraine and that those whose visas end, will return to Ukraine.

If there are no further extensions to Ukrainian visas beyond the Permission Extension scheme, as in the above scenario, then there will likely be reduced pressure on public services due to the gradual return of Ukrainians to their home country. This may also increase capacity of public services to support the Ukrainian households still residing in Aberdeen. Aberdeen City Council housing stock occupied by these households will also gradually return to general stock which will help to alleviate current housing pressures in the city.

There will however still be support required for Ukrainian arrivals from 2024 onwards, and the number of people arriving from ARAP, UKRS and asylum-seeking groups will likely result in continued pressure on public services due to these groups typically having high support needs.

Aberdeen City Council's Resettlement Team have also produced projections of the displaced population should there be further extensions to the Homes for Ukraine scheme, as seen in Figure 4-5.3 below.

Figure 4-5.3: Projected Displaced Population in Aberdeen 2024-27 Based on Further Extension to the Ukrainian Schemes (Scenario 2)



Source: Aberdeen City Council Resettlement Team (2024)

This scenario assumes that there will be further provision to those on the Homes for Ukraine scheme beyond current extensions and that the arrivals under this scheme will continue at the current rate, as well as that approximately 95% of Ukrainians living in Aberdeen will choose to remain in the city. As with Scenario 1, Scenario 2 accounts for increased demand from ARAP, UKRS and asylum refugees.

If Scenario 2 were to occur, the current pressure on public services will likely increase concurrently with the demand from displaced groups. Support will continue to be required for new arrivals as well as the Ukrainian households already residing in the city which require ongoing support. There will also likely be a delay in the return of Aberdeen City Council properties occupied by Ukrainian households to general stock. Demand from ARAP, UKRS and asylum refugees will also exacerbate pressure on public services.

There is currently great uncertainty regarding the level of demand that can be expected from these groups in the coming years and the future of these communities in the city. The above scenarios present two potential contrasting projections for how the demand from displaced communities could change in the coming years, however it is important to note that the landscape surrounding refugees, asylum seekers and resettlement is constantly evolving which makes it difficult to accurately predict the long-term impact that they will have on services in Aberdeen.

All households arriving through humanitarian routes who have recourse to public funds will be offered the service of Aberdeen City Council. Resettlement workers assess the needs of each displaced person and ensure that the service they receive supports them to achieve successful outcomes within the city. Support offered includes:

Short-term Support

- Emergency provision to meet immediate needs in crisis situations
- Provision of temporary accommodation
- Access to the necessary basic provisions such as clothes and food

- Access to health services

Long-term Support

- English language support
- Access to settled housing
- Access to education
- Employment support
- Building community networks and social connections
- Assisting with participation in democratic services

These services are provided in a manner which is culturally aware, and trauma informed with the goal of helping displaced people settle, integrate and work towards positive outcomes in all aspects of their life within Aberdeen. Direct household support will end once a family's needs are assessed as being met. Aberdeen City Council will continue to provide information and advice to resettled households for as long as required.

The arrival of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and young people (UASYP) also poses challenges as these individuals also typically have high support needs due to their young age and the likelihood that they have experienced some form of trauma prior to arriving in the UK. Table 4-5.14 below shows the number of UASYP that have arrived in Aberdeen as well as the route of referral.

Table 4-5.14: UASYP in Aberdeen City as of 31 December 2023

Route of Referral	UASYP
Spontaneous Arrival	3
Hotel Dispersal	21
National Transfer Scheme	25
Total	49

Source: Social work service provision for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children and Young People (UASYP), CFS/24/045 (2024)

UASYP have the same status as other looked after children and Aberdeen City Council will fulfil its duty to provide care and support as a corporate parent to this group. UASYP can be from a wide range of age groups, however the majority of UASYP in Aberdeen are between 16-18 years of age. Aberdeen City Council has worked with RSLs and other housing providers to source accommodation for UASYP, as well as with third-sector organisations to ensure that these groups receive appropriate aftercare support.

The care of UASYP requires a multi-agency approach to ensure that support is tailored to their cultural background and any trauma they have experienced. Pathway planning is in place to allow Aberdeen City Council to support UASYP to transition from children's homes and closely supported accommodation to live more independently with less support and eventually in their own tenancies. Aberdeen City Council is utilising all available funding from the UK Government to meet the needs

of UASYP and to provide the staffing resources to support the level of demand from this group.

Key Issues

- Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire has seen a growth in refugee and asylum seeking population.
- Aberdeen City hosts the second largest population of asylum seekers in Scotland, with Glasgow hosting the highest numbers. This is expected to grow in coming years.
- There continues to be growth in demand for accommodation, particularly large family homes to meet the needs of refugee families.
- Finding permanent homes can be challenging as many families choose to be rehoused in larger cities and hubs in England where they have family connection or better economic prospects.

Key Actions

- Aberdeen City Council will continue to monitor trends in displacement activity to ensure that it services can meet demand and support displaced groups to integrate in the city.
- Continue to take a cross service, coordinated strategic approach working with partners in Community Planning, NHS Grampian, Police and other council services.
- Continued liaison with Home Office, UK and Scottish Government regarding collation of data to inform future needs.
- Implement the New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy: 2024 at a local level.

LGBTQI+

The housing needs of LGBTQI+[30] community are diverse and multifaceted. Research suggests that the LGBTQI+ people may face discrimination and challenges in relating to finding safe and secure housing and accessing housing support services designed to meet their specific needs[31].

Scotland's Census 2022 gathered data relating to trans status or history and sexual orientation. The results showed 19,990 people identified as trans or having a trans history and 184,000 people aged 16+ identified and LGB+.

Table 4-5.15 shows the areas with the highest percentage of trans people relative to the population aged 16 and over. This included Dundee (0.91%), Edinburgh and Glasgow (0.77%) and Aberdeen City (0.58%). All of these council areas have large student populations and relatively high numbers of young people

[30] Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, + (representing other sexual identifies).
[31] Housing issues for LGBTQ+ people - Shelter Scotland

Table 4-5.15: Percentage of population who identify and LGB+, Trans or have a Trans history

Council Area	% of population aged 16 and over who identify as trans or having a trans history	% population aged 16 and over who identify as LGB+
Aberdeen	0.58%	5.2%
Dundee	0.91%	6.6%
Edinburgh	0.77%	7.6%
Glasgow	0.77%	7.1%

Source: Scotland's Census 2022 results (2024)

Key Issues:

The LGBTQI+ may face discrimination and additional challenges in meeting their housing needs. This can include:

- Younger people facing homelessness
- Older people accessing housing with care and support
- People living in the private rented sector
- Discrimination faced when buying a home (due to health related insurance questions around HIV/AIDs)

Key Actions:

- Ensure that the needs of the LGBTQI+ community are consider in the development of services, policies and strategies.

Priority 6: Housing quality and energy efficiency

Part 1: House condition

Introduction

This chapter sets out Aberdeen City Council's approach to house condition in both the social sector and private sector across the city. The quality of housing and the maintenance of its condition can impact on the look and perception of an area as well as the health and general wellbeing of residents.

The provision of good quality housing is one of many factors that impact health inequalities, education and quality of life. This chapter will also set out in detail the two main drivers which determine the quality of social housing, namely the Scottish Housing Quality Standard and Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing.

The condition of properties in the private sector is often dependent on action taken by property owners. The influence of Aberdeen City Council to improve property condition in this sector are limited, however the council's Private Sector Housing Team offers support to homeowners, private tenants and private landlords to assist in raising condition standards and resolving issues related to property condition. The council also has several policies related to property condition in this sector as required by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006.

Strategic Priority

We will improve the condition of existing homes across all tenures and improve their energy efficiency to help to alleviate fuel poverty and address climate change and support a just transition to net zero.

This Strategic Priority for the duration of this Local Housing Strategy was developed in consultation with both internal and external stakeholders for this sector. This priority encapsulates the changes that stakeholders wish to see in the sector over the next five years in order to improve outcomes for both tenants and landlords.

National Context – Social Housing

There are two minimum levels of housing quality that all social housing must meet which are:

- Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS)
- Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing 2 (EESSH2)

The Scottish Housing Quality Standard requires all social landlords to achieve a minimum level of housing quality, including energy efficiency of the home.

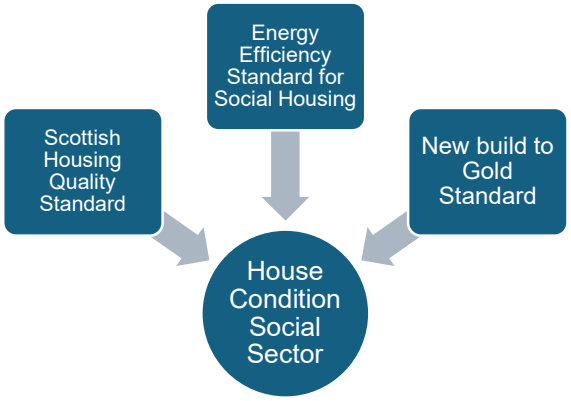
The Scottish Housing Quality Standard is set out in the Scottish Social Housing Charter and progress towards meeting this target is monitored by the Scottish Housing Regulator. The Scottish Government has issued Technical Guidance for social landlords. The guidance consists of annexes that lay out the detail of the Scottish Housing Quality Standard elements.

The Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing sets out the minimum energy efficiency ratings that landlords are expected to meet across their housing stock. The first Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing milestone is that all social housing meet a minimum energy efficiency rating, by house type and fuel, by December 2020. The second Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing milestone is that all social housing meets or can be treated as meeting, Energy Performance Certificate Band B, or is as energy efficient as practically possible, within the limits of cost, technology and necessary consent, by December 2032. Additionally, no social housing should be re-let below Energy Performance Certificate Band D from December 2025, subject to temporary exemptions.

The Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing does not prescribe measures to take, as ratings vary depending on the accommodation and fuel type. It is for individual social landlords to identify the most cost-effective measures for their stock, and to determine what level of investment is sustainable, to ensure that the standard is achieved. All Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing milestones are on hold pending a review as per Scottish Government Guidance.

Social Determinants of Health

The social determinants of health model highlights the importance of good quality affordable, and energy efficient housing in improving health outcomes. Poor quality or cold and draughty housing can lead to poor mental health and exacerbate long-term health conditions. The Scottish Housing Quality Standard and Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing ensure, as far as possible, that homes in the social sector are maintained to a high standard this includes repairs and improvements. These standards help to provide tenants with a safe, energy efficient, warm and comfortable environment to live in. The new build council homes are built to the "Gold Standard" which are designed with energy efficient technologies that make homes greener and cheaper to run, enhanced space standards, and increased natural light. This type of social housing provides a base where families can thrive and will help to improve the health outcomes of tenants.



Aberdeen Context – Social Housing

Social Housing Stock in Aberdeen

In Aberdeen there are two main types of providers of social housing, Aberdeen City Council and Registered Social Landlords. Social housing is a type of housing that is provided and managed by public bodies or non-profit organisations. It is designed to be affordable and accessible to people with low incomes or those who might struggle to find housing in the private sector.

Applications for social housing are based on housing need, with applicants prioritised or awarded points for criteria such as overcrowding or medical conditions. These criteria are usually set out in a landlord's allocation policy.

Table 6.1.1 below, shows the social housing stock provision in Aberdeen as of March 2024. Aberdeen City Council provides most of the social housing in the city (80.44%) with the remaining 19.56% supplied by the ten Registered Social Landlords that operate in the city.

Table 6.1.1: Social Housing Stock in Aberdeen City

Landlord	Stock	Percentage of Social Stock in City*	Percentage of Total Housing Stock in City[32]
Aberdeen City Council	23,255	79.93%	18.69%
Ark Housing Association	14	0.05%	0.01%
Blackwood Homes	84	0.29%	0.07%
Castlehill Housing Association	1,109	3.81%	0.9%
Grampian Housing Association	1,445	4.96%	1.16%
Hanover Scotland	121	0.41%	0.1%
Hillcrest Homes	628	2.15%	0.50%
Langstane Housing Association	1,451	4.98%	1.17%
Osprey Housing	80	0.27%	0.06%
Places for People/Castlerock	206	0.71%	0.16%
Sanctuary Scotland	700	2.41%	0.56%
Total	**29,093**	**100%**	**23.27%**

Source: Aberdeen City Council Survey (March 2024)

Aberdeen City Council Housing Stock Profile

As of March 2024, Aberdeen City Council has a housing stock of 23,255, The stock is ageing, as can be seen in Table 6.1.2 below with almost 23% built more than 80 years ago (pre-1945) and a further 66% of the stock was built between 1945 and 1982 with only 11% built after 1982. The majority of the stock, built post 2002 has been tenements and flats rather than houses.

The combination of an ageing stock, a high proportion of older tenements (44%) and multi-storey blocks (17%) poses challenges in terms of ensuring these properties continue to be well maintained and meet the Scottish Government criteria in terms of Scottish Housing Quality Standard and Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing.

[32] Dwellings in Aberdeen 124,369 NRS 2023

Table 6.1.2: Aberdeen City Council Stock Profile and Year of Construction

	House	Tenement	High-Rise	4 in a block	Other Flat/Maisonette	Total
Pre 1919	4	1,225	0	0	0	**1,229**
1919 - 1944	237	2,210	0	1,648	0	**4,095**
1945 - 1964	3,055	2,133	252	426	211	**6,077**
1965 - 1982	1,848	3,231	3,613	29	444	**9,165**
1983 - 2002	151	365	58	9	685	**1,268**
Post 2002	228	1,048	0	48	97	**1,421**
Total	**5,523**	**10,212**	**3,923**	**2,161**	**1,437**	**23,255**

Source: Aberdeen City Council (March 2024)

Registered Social Landlords Housing Stock Profile

Registered Social Landlords, also known as housing associations, make up almost 20% of the stock of social housing in Aberdeen. Table 6.1.3 below shows the stock profile for Registered Social Landlords in the city. The largest Registered Social Landlord providers operating in Aberdeen are Castlehill Housing Association, Grampian Housing Association and Langstane Housing Association, which accounts for 70% of provision. Hillcrest Housing Association and Sanctuary Scotland make up around 23% of the total Registered Social Landlord stock. Ark Housing Association and Blackwood provide a range of specialist housing for people with a disability and Hanover Housing Association which provides housing for older people.

In general, Registered Social Landlords stock tends to be newer and more modern in design compared to Aberdeen City Council's stock. The council's housing stock also has a number of granite tenements and a large number of high-level multi-storey blocks that are typically 12 to13 storeys high and can be challenging to maintain and to meet current standards.

The small multistorey properties owned by Registered Social Landlords are usually around 4 or 5 storeys high which may mean they are less challenging in terms of maintenance and meeting the SHQS requirements.

Table 6.1.3: Registered Social Landlords Stock Profile

Registered Social Landlord	House	Flats	High-Rise	Four in a Block	Other Flat/Maisonette	**Total**
Ark Housing Association	0	14	0	0	0	**14**
Blackwood Homes	15	36	0	0	33	**84**
Castlehill Housing Association	122	132	91	0	767	**1,112**
Grampian Housing Association	395	990	18	20	20	**1,443**
Hanover Scotland	10	0	44	8	59	**121**
Hillcrest Homes	84	0	124	12	408	**628**
Langstane Housing Association	30	1227	151	1	86	**1,495**
Osprey Housing	13	63	0	0	4	**80**
Places for People	0	0	0	0	206	**206**
Sanctuary Scotland	504	113	20	24	0	**661**
Total	**1,173**	**2,575**	**448**	**65**	**1,583**	**5,844**

Source: Aberdeen City Council, Survey (March 2024)

Table 6.1.4 below shows the stock by date of construction for Registered Social Landlords in Aberdeen. Registered Social Landlords have more modern stock generally than local authorities; currently over 70% of their stock was built after 1983, compared to Aberdeen City Council which has 11%. It is worth noting that Langstane Housing has 18.6% of its stock constructed pre 1919 in areas such as Old Aberdeen and King Street, and these will be granite tenement properties. Evidence suggests that more modern stock is generally easier to adapt and more likely to comply with the Scottish Housing Quality Standard.

Table 6.1.4: Registered Social Landlords Stock by Construction Time

Registered Social Landlord	Age					
	Pre 1919	1919-1944	1945-1964	1965-1982	1983-2024	**Total**
Ark Housing	0	0	0	0	14	**14**
Blackwood Homes	0	0	0	3	81	**84**
Castlehill	0	132	0	96	884	**1,112**
Grampian	0	25	434	101	883	**1,443**
Hanover	0	0	0	121	0	**121**
Hillcrest	0	0	0	0	628	**628**
Langstane	278	1	2	0	1,214	**1,495**
Osprey	4	0	0	11	65	**80**
Places for People	0	0	0	0	206	**206**
Sanctuary	0	6	142	163	389	**700**
Total	**282**	**164**	**578**	**495**	**4,364**	**5,883**

Source: Scottish Housing Regulator (March 2024)

Housing Finance

All social housing providers, including Aberdeen City Council and the Registered Social Landlords must ensure their finances are maintained in a healthy order to provide services such as repairs and maintenance, improvements and new build.

Registered Social Landlords are funded through a combination of public and private sources. The primary source of income comes from rents and service charges paid by their tenants. They can also receive grants and financial assistance from the Scottish Government to support the construction and maintenance of social housing. They can also raise funds from private finance, including loans from banks and financial institutions. This is monitored by the Scottish Housing Regulator who carry out an analysis of loan portfolios as part of the annual assurance returns.

Housing Revenue Account 30 Year Business Plan

Aberdeen City Council's Housing Revenue Account Business Plan sets out the strategy for delivering housing services for the 30-year period 2024 to 2054. The Business Plan has been refreshed and is fundamental to the success of improving the council's housing stock.

The business plan sets a broad context for financial planning and investment decisions. The business plan must ensure that the council's housing stock related priorities and programmes are supported and delivered whilst demonstrating sound financial management within existing budgets and through the use of prudential borrowing where necessary.

Asset Management Plan

Aberdeen City Council's Asset Management Plan gives more detail on the investment and management of the assets within the Housing Revenue Account. The Asset Management Plan is currently being refreshed with the assistance of consultants. Any actions which come from this will be incorporated into the Joint Delivery Action Plan.

Registered Social Landlords should also have Asset Management Plans or Strategies. They are usually high level and are supported by stock condition surveys and financial projections. The Scottish Housing Regulator provides guidance to support landlords in developing their approach to developing such plans to ensure consistency the long-term viability of the landlord. RSLs will usually have a five or ten year plan which is a detailed forecast of when their properties will need upgrading, this can include new kitchens, bathrooms or rewiring.

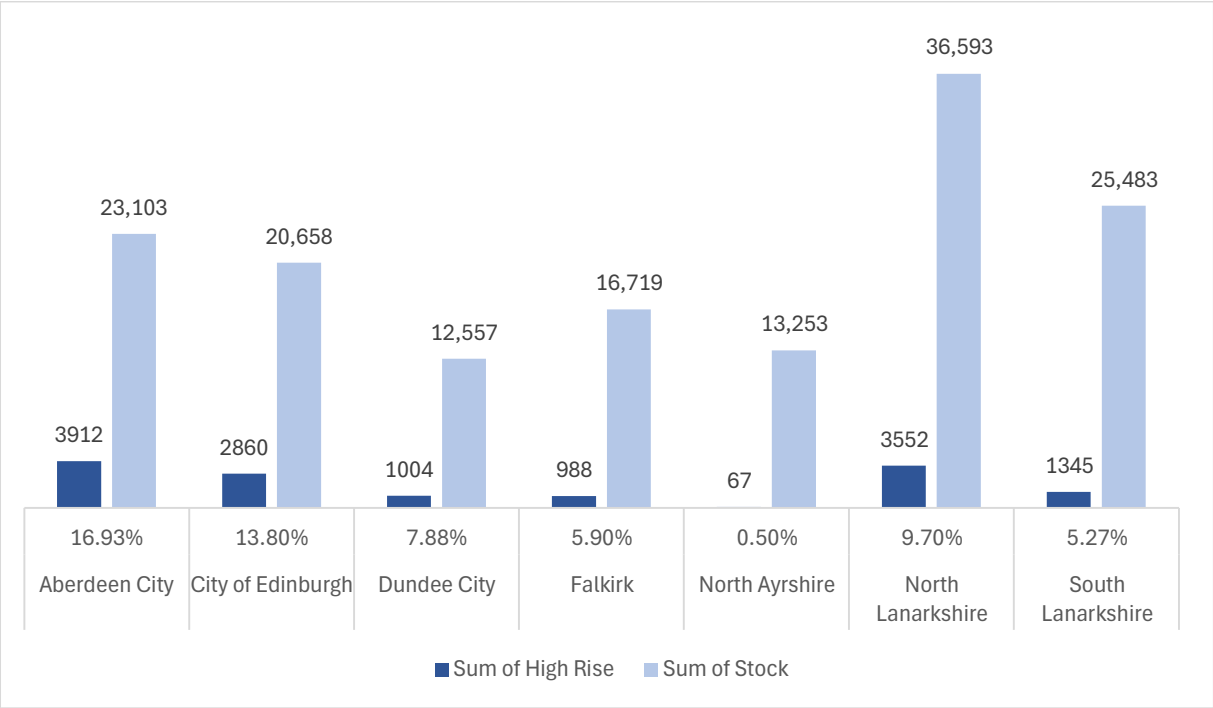
Challenges of Stock Profile

Multi-Storey Housing

Aberdeen City Council has a high percentage of multi-storey blocks compared to other local authorities, as shown in Figure 6.1.1 below. Aberdeen City Council's retention of its multi-storeys stock is in contrast to some of the other local authorities in Scotland who have undertaken a programme of demolition.

The design of multi-storey housing inevitably results in higher expenditure on improvements, maintenance and other building related costs. This can include high-cost elements such as replacement of lifts, repairs, maintenance and cleaning to common areas, and over-cladding.

Figure 6.1.1: Multi-Storey Stock by Local Authority, 2023



Source: Scottish Housing Regulator- All social landlords 2019/20 - 2022/23 (2024)

Eight multi-storey blocks in Aberdeen have been designated as Category A-listed buildings by www.historicenvironment.scot. These concrete buildings were constructed as part of the city's post-Second World War housing programme and are considered by Historic Environment Scotland to be outstanding examples of Brutalist architectural style. The buildings were found to meet the criteria for listing and were designated by Historic Environment Scotland on 18 January 2021. This poses challenges for the council in terms of maintenance and improvements such as over cladding and upgrades to common areas. Any alterations either to the interior or exterior requires consent, since it is imperative to preserve the character of the building

There was an update provided to Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee in May 2024 on the progress of a full options appraisal of the eight-city centre multi storey blocks to consider future development and investment opportunities. Aberdeen City Council also launched a public consultation in October 2023 as part of the production of a full options appraisal for the future of the city centre multi storey blocks. The results of the consultation are still being analysed. The outcome of the preferred option will be implemented during the lifespan of this Local Housing Strategy to determine the future of the city centre blocks.

Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete

Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) is a lightweight construction material that was used in the construction of some public buildings like schools and hospitals and some housing between the 1950s and 1990s. It was used mostly in flat roofing, but also in some pitched roofs, floors and walls.

This construction method produced quicker results, was easier to install, and cheaper than standard concrete. Despite its name, it is very different to traditional concrete although it looks similar. It is aerated, or ‘bubbly’, and it has now been found to be less durable than traditional concrete.

Concerns raised nationally around the safety of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete resulted in inspections being carried out by Aberdeen City Council in August 2023. This confirmed that there were a significant number of properties in the Balnagask area of the city containing Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete. This included 366 council properties and 138 privately owned properties. Aberdeen City Council is working with the tenants and owners affected to assist with rehousing.

At a council committee meeting in August 2024, it was agreed that the optimum option is the demolition and rebuild of homes on the site. Options on new build will be reported to council in due course which will include opportunities to work with partners to meet the masterplan aspirations.

Assessing Social Housing Standards

There are two main criteria by which social housing landlords assess the quality of their homes, they are the Scottish Housing Quality Standard and Energy Efficiency Standard in Social Housing.

Scottish Housing Quality Standard

Scottish Housing Quality Standard is a common standard for assessing the condition of Scotland's social sector housing. All social landlords have capital programmes, which are designed to improve and maintain the quality of their stock. Social housing capital programmes are funded by a package of capital receipts, borrowing and income from rents, service charges and grant funding.

Typical works within the capital programme include new heating systems, kitchen and bathroom upgrades, new windows, doors, rewiring and major structural works.

In addition to the capital programme of works, it is vital to have a cyclical maintenance programme in place to ensure common areas of properties are well maintained. It is also vital to ensure that procedures are in place in order to deliver an effective and adaptable repairs service including emergency and non-emergency repairs.

Assessment of Scottish Housing Quality Standard

Dwellings are assessed on 55 different elements which are broken into five broader criteria. Failure of one of these criteria results in an outright Scottish Housing Quality Standard fail; the criteria themselves can be failed in many cases on a single

element. A full list of Scottish Housing Quality Standard criteria is available on the SHQS website.

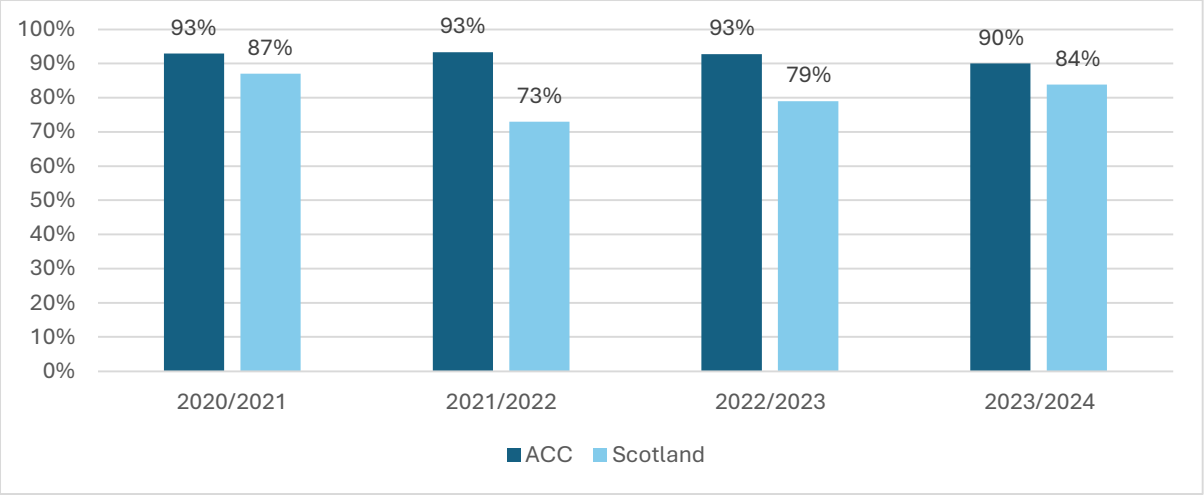
The Scottish Housing Regulator is responsible for monitoring the compliance of landlords in the social housing sector. There are some differences between the Scottish Housing Regulator and the Scottish Housing Quality Standard in the way data for assessing the standard is collected and reported which make the headline rates not immediately comparable.

The non-participation of tenants and owners in mixed tenure buildings has meant that full delivery of Scottish Housing Quality Standard works has not always been possible. In these instances, social landlords have used “abeyances”, for example where owners do not want work to go ahead. Social housing providers with stock in abeyance will monitor changes of tenancy and identify when ownership changes and reassess if the new owner wishes to participate in common works that would allow the social stock to meet Scottish Housing Quality Standard.

Scottish Housing Quality Standard Compliance

Figure 6.1.2 below shows details on the percentage of homes which meet Scottish Housing Quality Standard in Aberdeen City compared to the Scottish average. This average includes all local authorities and Registered Social Landlords. Aberdeen City has performed well when compared with Scotland as a whole. Aberdeen City compliance rates have been fairly consistent and have remained above the Scottish average.

Figure 6.1.2: Percentage of Aberdeen City Council properties meeting Scottish Housing Quality Standard compared to the Scottish Average[33]



Source: Scottish Housing Regulator (2024)

Table 6.1.5 below shows Registered Social Landlords stock compliance with the Scottish Housing Quality Standard. In comparison to Aberdeen City Council’s stock,

[33] The Scottish average includes all social housing providers

the compliance rates for Registered Social Landlords are slightly higher than Aberdeen City Council and even higher when compared to Scotland as a whole. This is due in part to the relative age and type of stock, where local authorities generally have older tenement style properties and multi-storey blocks, which can make compliance more difficult.

Table 6.1.5 - Percentage of Registered Social Landlords properties meeting Scottish Housing Quality Standard

	Compliance
Ark	100%
Blackwood Homes	94%
Castlehill Housing Association	99%
Grampian Housing Association	92%
Hanover	88.5%
Hillcrest	100%
Langstane Housing Association	90%
Osprey	97.99%
Sanctuary	94%
Place for People/Castlerock	100%

Source – Scottish Housing Regulator (2024)

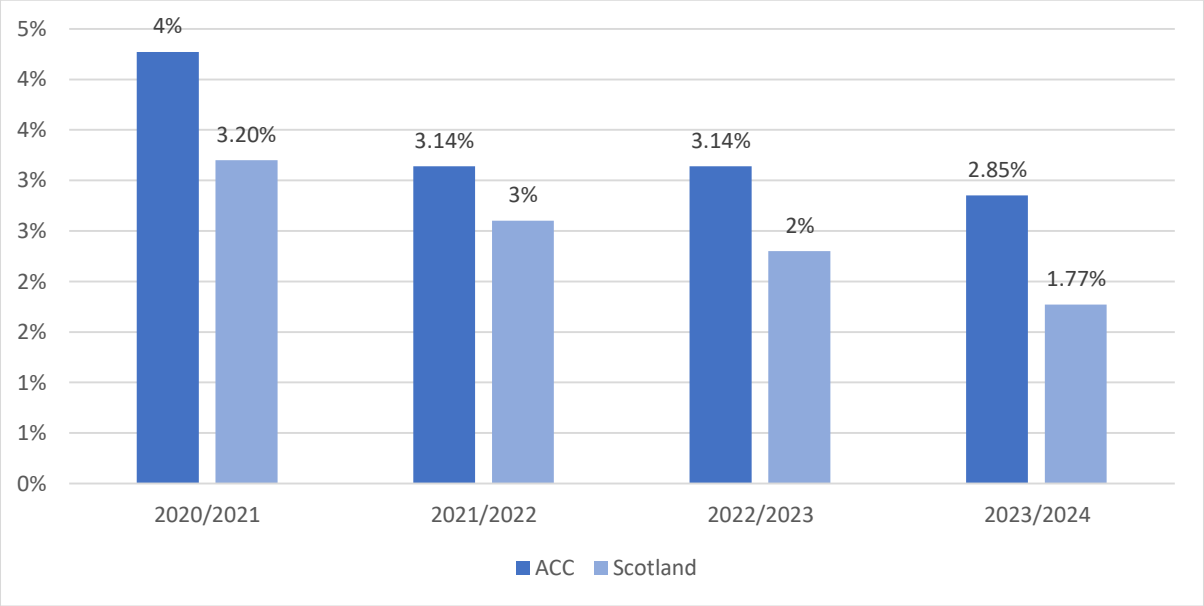
Exemptions

Exemptions occur when properties, often due to their layout and design cannot comply with the standard. Many of these properties do not meet the standard due to the small size of the kitchen which means that they cannot meet the criteria which relates to adequate food storage. Social housing providers are not able to put a process in place for these types of property since there is nothing practical that can be done to the property to ensure it meets the standard.

Figure 6.1.6 below shows the exemptions in Aberdeen City compared with the Scottish average[34]. The variances shown over the period are due to the increase in stock numbers, which include new build homes and properties purchased through the buy-back scheme, along with demolitions that took place.

[34] The average is for all social landlords

Figure 6.1.6: Aberdeen City Council Exemptions, Scottish Housing Quality Standard



Source: Scottish Housing Regulator (2024)

All social housing providers have a rolling programme to identify properties which are non-compliant and to make any necessary improvements or repairs in order to meet the standard. Aberdeen City Council will continue to monitor non-compliant properties and will take action through the void period and to re-engage with tenants to ensure ongoing compliance with Scottish Housing Quality Standard.

Table 6.1.7 below highlights the percentage of exemptions for Registered Social Landlords. Most are either zero or below one percent, however Langstane Housing Association is well above these figures. This is due to the make-up of their stock which includes some granite tenements, where it is not technically/financially feasible to bring the properties up to the required standard. There are also a small number of properties which do not meet the standard due to lack of kitchen storage, mainly in smaller flats and bedsits.

Table 6.1.7 Registered Social Landlords Exemptions

Landlord	Exemptions
Ark	0%
Blackwood	0.5%
Castlehill	0.17%
Grampian	0.55%
Hanover	2%
Hillcrest	0%
Langstane	3.58%
Osprey	0%
Place for People	0%
Sanctuary	0.41

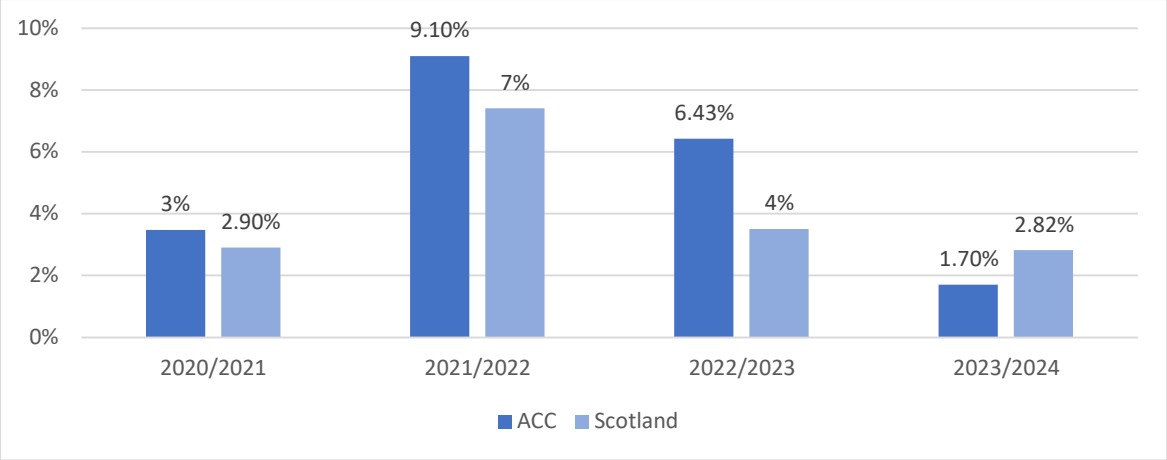
Source – Registered Social Landlords (2024)

Abeyances

Abeyances are where the works leading to compliance have been offered but the tenant will not allow access to the property or refuses to have the work undertaken. All social landlords within Aberdeen have a procedure in place to deal with such situations. Works can be undertaken when there is a tenancy change; this can either take place during the void period or once the new tenant has moved in. The abeyances are monitored, and statistics are provided to the Scottish Housing Regulator on social housing providers performance. They are published by the Scottish Housing Regulator through the Annual Return on the Charter.

Figure 6.1.4 below shows Aberdeen City Council abeyances compared to the Scottish average. The data shows a sharp increase in exemptions for 2020/21 which was due in part to tenants refusing access or no access being provided due to COVID -19. The Scottish average also increased during this period. However, 2022/23 showed an improvement and further improved in 2023/24 where Aberdeen City Council's performance was better than the Scottish average.

Figure 6.1.4 Percentage of properties in Abeyance from the Scottish Housing Quality Standard, Aberdeen City Council



Source: Scottish Housing Regulator (2024)

Table 6.1.8 below shows the percentage of Registered Social Landlord stock which are in abeyance. The performance of Registered Social Landlords is generally better than the council. This is due in part to the nature of their housing stock which tends to be newer and with less high-rise blocks. However Grampian Housing Associations performance at 2.83% is slightly higher than other RSLs, this is due mainly to out of date or unsatisfactory Electrical Installation Condition Reports which has had a detrimental impact in achieving the Scottish Housing Quality Standard.

Table 6.1.8 Registered Social Landlords Abeyances

Landlord	Abeyance
Ark	0%
Blackwood	0.1%
Castlehill	0.08%
Grampian	2.83%
Hanover	0%
Hillcrest	0%
Langstane	1.19%
Osprey	0%
Place for People	0%
Sanctuary	0.61%

Source – Registered Social Landlords (2024)

Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing

The Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing 2 (EESSH 2) is a policy introduced by the Scottish Government to improve the energy efficiency of social housing in Scotland. The main goals of the standard are to reduce energy consumption, lower fuel poverty, and decrease greenhouse gas emissions.

The standard was first introduced in 2014, setting a milestone for social landlords to meet specific energy efficiency targets by December 2020. A second milestone, known as Energy Efficiency Standard for Scottish Housing 2, was established in 2019, aiming for all social housing to meet an Energy Performance Certificate Band B rating by December 2032.

The policy is currently under review to align with Scotland's net zero targets, with interim guidance provided to social landlords during this period. The specifications for this new standard are yet to be issued.

The current standard will contribute to the requirements of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2019, which sets targets to reduce Scotland's emissions of all greenhouse gases to net zero by 2045 at the latest, with interim targets for reductions of at least 56% by 2020, 75% by 2030, and 90% by 2040.

Table 6.1.9 below shows Aberdeen City Council's stock which meet Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing in 2023/24, including the property types and fuel sources. 23,144 Aberdeen City Council properties, or 89% were assessed as meeting the standard in 2023/24. Scotland has set a target to achieve net zero by 2045, whilst there are a large number of properties which use gas and will continue to use gas for a number of years, efforts are being made to offset carbon emissions with new technology including such as single ground source heat pumps for numerous properties and energy from waste.

Table 6.198: Aberdeen City Council Homes Meeting EESSH2 2023/24

	Gas	Electric	Other Fuels	**Total**
Flats	14,544	1,044	2	**15,590**
Four in a Block	2,015	29	0	**2,044**
Houses	5,333	125	4	**5,462**
Detached	48	0	0	**48**
Total	**21,940**	**1,198**	**6**	**23,144**

Source: Aberdeen City Council Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing Voluntary Return to Scottish Housing Network (2024)

Table 6.1.10 below shows the number of Aberdeen City Council homes not meeting the standard. The properties failing to meet the standard are a combination of non-traditional house types, granite properties, and where improvement works has been refused by the current tenant. In addition, 351 properties of the 409 electrically heated properties are within the city centre listed multi-storeys, which are part of an ongoing options appraisal. Aberdeen City Council is refreshing its Asset Management Plan for the housing stock which should provide the correct supporting detail on the long-term sustainability of the housing assets and assist in the decision-making process of what and when provides the correct investment.

The data in Table 6.1.9 and Table 6.1.10 below is currently provided on a voluntary basis to the Scottish Housing Network. **The Scottish Housing Regulator** has paused the **collection** of **data** on **Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing** from 2020/21 until after the conclusion of the Scottish Government's review of the **Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing 2, to** a new standard which the Scottish government is working towards.

Table 6.1.10: Properties Owned by Aberdeen City Council not meeting EESSH2 2023-24

	Gas	Electric	Other Fuels	**Total**
Flats	340	387	1	**728**
Four in a Block	9	2	0	**11**
Houses	591	20	1	**612**
Detached	0	0	0	**0**
Total	**940**	**409**	**2**	**1,351**

Source: Aberdeen City Council EESSH 2, Voluntary Return to Scottish Housing Network (2024)

Table 6.1.11 below shows the Registered Social Landlord stock meeting Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing. Most Registered Social Landlords have a high pass rate this is due mainly to the nature of their stock which is of newer construction with less tenements and no high multi storey blocks.

Table 6.1.11 Registered Social Landlords Stock meeting the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing

Registered Social Landlord	Compliant	Percentage
Ark Housing Association	14	100%
Blackwood Homes	84	100%
Grampian Housing Association	1,414	97.8%
Castlehill Housing Association	1,096	98.8%
Langstane Housing Association	1,370	94.4%
Hillcrest Housing Association	628	100%
Sanctuary Housing Association	615	87.8%
Place for People/Castlerock	206	100%

Source: Registered Social Landlord Data (2024)

Key Issues – Social Housing

- The continued provision of homes that are fit for purpose, are healthy, energy efficient, safe, and secure.
- The introduction of damp, condensation and mould as part of the Scottish Housing Quality Standard will prove challenging, so social housing providers will need to put in place plans to comply with the new regulations.
- The pending Social Housing Net Zero reporting will not be reported until 2025/26 at the earliest.
- Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete - 364 council homes not fit for occupation due to the presence of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete. Tenants and owners to be re-housed and a plan to be developed for the demolition of the site and redevelopment opportunities

Key Actions – Social Housing

- Aberdeen City Council will continue to develop plans to ensure necessary improvements are made to council stock, in order to manage and monitor damp, condensation and mould.
- Provision of training to all relevant officers along with comprehensive procedures on dealing with any identified issues with damp, condensation and mould.
- To re-house all 364 tenants, re-housing may involve the use of Registered Social Landlords, other councils and the private sector. A plan will be needed to assist in the Compulsory Purchase Orders of the 138 owner-occupied homes. Support and assistance is being provided to all that are affected by RAAC.
- Refresh the Asset Management Plan
- Refresh the Housing Revenue Account 30 Year Business Plan

National Context – Private Sector House Condition

The National Context and Aberdeen Context for Private Sector House Condition has close links to the Private Rented Sector chapter of this Local Housing Strategy, which provides a more detailed analysis on trends and developments in this sector both nationally and locally.

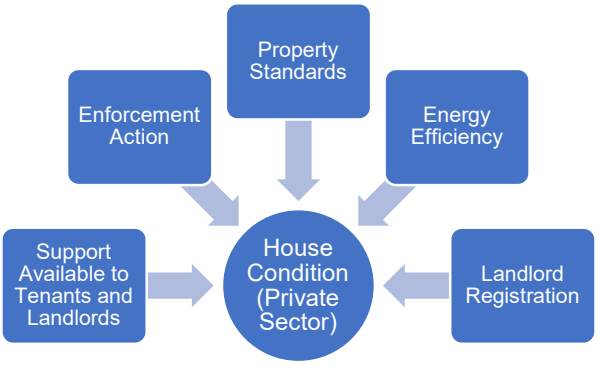
The strategic aims of the Scottish Government's Private Rented Sector Strategy specifically mentions the improvement of property condition and references the importance of meeting the needs of people living in the sector and landlords who are committed to continuous improvement. The 'New Deal for Tenants' Strategy, which is currently in draft form, also states that one of the Scottish Government's aims for the strategy is to deliver new cross-tenure housing standards.

In the draft strategy, the Scottish Government note that the condition of properties in the private sector are not as high as other sectors. Housing to 2040 details the development of a new cross-tenure housing standard as part of its route-map, with the Scottish Government specifically highlighting that "a shift towards greater partnership between Government and homeowners" is desired. The new standard is to be set in law and have no exemptions or acceptable levels of sub-standard home, signalling a strong commitment to the ambition that everyone in Scotland can have a warm, comfortable, and safe home.

Social Determinants of Health

In both the social and private sector, the condition of a person's home can have a significant impact on their physical and mental well-being.

Housing in the private sector can be more likely to be in disrepair than social housing as properties are not routinely assessed against prescribed standards such as EESSH and SHQS, although they are still expected to meet the Tolerable Standard and Repairing Standard to ensure they are in a habitable condition. Where properties fail to meet these standards, the council can utilise enforcement action to ensure remedial works are undertaken, such as through the issuing of work notices.



The council also provides support to tenants and landlords in the private sector to educate them on the standards required. Supporting stakeholders and taking enforcement action where necessary helps to improve standards in the sector, therefore having a positive impact on the health outcomes of those living in it.

Landlord registration can also contribute to positive health outcomes as it helps to ensure landlords are identifiable and can be held accountable where the condition of their property is affecting a tenant. The proposed introduction of minimum energy efficiency standards in the private sector could also improve health outcomes for stakeholders.

Aberdeen Context – Private Housing

Disrepair in the Private Sector

The private sector represents a significant proportion of Aberdeen City's housing stock, as seen in Table 6.1.12 below, with the total level of private sector stock being similar to the figure for Scotland as a whole. Aberdeen has a lower proportion of owner-occupied properties however, has a higher proportion of private rented and vacant/second homes. As discussed later in the chapter, house condition in the private rented sector tends to be poorer than in other tenures, and as Aberdeen has a higher proportion of these homes, there is potentially a higher level of properties at risk of being in poor condition than there is nationally.

Table 6.1.12: Private Sector Stock in Aberdeen City and Scotland, 2022

	Total Private Sector	Owner-Occupied	Private Rent	Vacant Private Dwellings or Second Homes
Aberdeen	77.0%	50.5%	20.5%	6%
Scotland	77.3%	60.6%	12.7%	4%

Source: Scottish Government, Housing Statistics: Stock by Tenure (2022)

While social housing providers must ensure that their stock meets regulatory standards such as Scottish Housing Quality Standard and Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing, property standards in the private sector are comparatively less stringent and homeowners have more autonomy in relation to the condition and energy efficiency of their property. This has resulted in a disparity in the condition of properties in the social sector and properties in the private sector. Properties in the private sector are still expected to meet other standards such as:

- The Tolerable Standard defined in the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, as amended
- The Repairing Standard defined in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006, as amended
- Obligations under the Private Landlord Registration (Information) (Scotland) Regulations 2019
- Obligations under the Tenements (Scotland) Act 2004
- The Energy Efficiency (Domestic Private Rented Property) (Scotland) Regulations 2020.

Further information on how these standards and obligations affect those living and operating in the private sector can be seen in Table 6.1.13 below.

Table 6.1.13: Private Sector Property Standards and Obligations

Standards/Obligations	Relevance to Private Sector Stakeholders
Tolerable Standard	It is a minimum standard which all dwellings in Scotland must meet. The criteria includes factors such as structural stability, water supply, lighting and fire detection. Where properties do not meet this standard, local authorities can exercise enforcement powers to remedy non-compliance. Landlords and homeowners must ensure that their properties meet this standard, while tenants and members of the public can complain if they believe a property falls below this threshold.
Repairing Standard	It is a minimum standard of repair which all properties let for private rent must meet, prior to and during the occupation of a tenant. The standard encompasses all elements of the Tolerable Standard, as well as additional criteria such relating to furniture, appliances, heating and power supply installations all being in good working order and safely usable. Landlords must ensure that their properties meet this standard and tenants can complain to Aberdeen City Council if they believe a property falls below this threshold or apply to the First-Tier Tribunal.
Private Landlord Registration Requirements	Those wishing to be a private sector landlord must register as a landlord by either contacting Aberdeen City Council or applying on the Scottish Landlord Register website. Landlords should inform either of the above parties if there are any changes to their landlord status.
Tenements (Scotland) Act 2004	Places maintenance obligations on owners of any part of tenement buildings. The local authority has the power to pay for missing shares of communal repairs in situations where an owner is refusing to pay and this is preventing necessary works.
Energy Efficiency Regulations	Draft regulations which will introduce minimum energy efficiency standards for properties in the private rented sector. Landlords will be obligated to ensure their properties meet these standards before they are let.

Source: Scottish Government (2024)

Some of these standards have been amended by the Scottish Government in the years since Aberdeen City Council's previous Local Housing Strategy to raise the threshold required for properties to meet them. The Tolerable Standard was last amended in 2019 and the Repairing Standard was amended as recently as March 2024, illustrating the Scottish Government's desire to improve property standards across all sectors. Reforms to tenement law are also being considered, with the Scottish Law Commission publishing a discussion paper on this in April 2024[35]. The paper makes recommendations to establish compulsory owners' associations in order to help tackle the level of disrepair in Scotland's tenement housing stock.

Regarding energy efficiency in the private sector, the Energy Efficiency (Domestic Private Rented Property) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 are draft regulations which were due to come into force on 01 April 2020, however their implementation was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These regulations would have required all properties in the private rented sector to have a minimum Energy Performance Certificate rating of E at the start of a tenancy from 1 October 2020, and to require a

[35] Discussion Paper on Tenement Law: Compulsory Owners' Associations, Scottish Law Commission, April 2024, https://www.scotlawcom.gov.uk/files/1317/1388/6261/News_release.pdf

standard of D from 2022. The intention is now for the regulations to require a minimum Energy Performance Certificate rating of C upon a change of tenancy from 2025, with remaining properties having until 2028 to reach this threshold.

Despite the recent regulatory focus on housing conditions in this sector, the onus is currently primarily on the owner of private sector properties to ensure that they are adhering to these standards and undertaking necessary repairs, as local authorities do not have the resources to inspect every individual property in this sector.

Aberdeen City Council's Private Sector Housing Team will respond to complaints regarding property condition and mediate between landlords and tenants in the event of a dispute to achieve positive outcomes for both parties. Where a tenant feels that their landlord is not meeting the required standards regarding property condition, they can apply to the First-tier Tribunal who may assess their case and require the landlord to make the necessary repairs.

Table 6.1.14 below shows the total number of complaints made to the Private Sector Housing Team since 2021/22, including how many of these related to property condition. A form was implemented on the Aberdeen City Council website in 2021/22 to monitor and record the number of complaints being received from various sources in the private sector. Since its implementation, the distribution of complaints between both of these categories has been relatively consistent, ranging from 24-28% for management standards and 72-76% for property standards.

Table 6.1.14: Tenant Complaints Made to Private Sector Housing Team, 2021/22-2023/24

Year	Total Complaints	Management Standards	Property Standards
2021/22	25	7 (**28%**)	18 (**72%**)
2022/23	74	18 (**24.3%**)	56 (**75.7%**)
2023/24	67	18 (**26.9%**)	49 (**73.1%**)

Source: Aberdeen City Council, Private Sector Housing Team (2024)

The Private Sector Housing Team works with Landlord Accreditation Scotland to deliver best practice training sessions to landlords regarding the management of their rental properties, including issues with repairs. There are strong links between the Private Sector Housing Team and Homelessness team within the council to ensure that in cases where the tenant is at risk of becoming homeless due to a landlord not adhering to their responsibilities, the Landlord Support Officer may assist to ensure that the landlord is educated on the necessary standards that their property should meet.

Other measures that the Private Sector Housing Team will take to assist owners with repairs and maintenance include:

- Delivery of the Scheme of Assistance
- Landlord Registration
- Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation properties
- Licensing of Short Term Let properties.

When a property owner applies to become a landlord with Aberdeen City Council, they must meet obligations under the Private Landlord Registration (Information) (Scotland) Regulations 2019. These obligations include safety requirements such as portable appliance testing, gas safety certificates and interlinked fire alarms, as well as duties regarding common repairs and property insurance. Further information on these obligations can be found on the Aberdeen City Council website. These obligations help to ensure that the condition of privately rented properties meet a sufficient standard.

The introduction of the Private Landlord Support Officer role has allowed for the implementation of safety sampling as part of the landlord registration process, where 10% of landlords who register are being asked to provide copies of safety certification in relation to their property. This allows Aberdeen City Council to proactively identify rental properties that are in poor states of repair.

Further proactive measures taken by the Private Sector Housing team to identify disrepair in private properties includes proactive visits to tenement properties to highlight communal areas which require improvement or repair. Between 2020 – 2023, a total of 1,202 properties have received a pro-active visit. If necessary, private owners are written to and advised of property repairs required.

Local authorities are also dependent on complaints from tenants or other members of the public to alert them to instances of disrepair in privately owned properties, and the required standards for these properties are relatively less demanding when compared to the Scottish Housing Quality Standard. In recent years, the Scottish Government has considered the prospect of defining housing standards for the private sector, as well as a Common Housing Quality Standard that would cover all sectors.

One of the key actions in the 'New Deal for Tenants' draft strategy[36] was to establish a regulator for the private sector to enforce defined standards, while also stating that they aimed to deliver new cross-tenure housing standards by 2025. A forum has also been convened previously to discuss a Common Housing Quality Standard[37], and the Chartered Institute of Housing conducted a members' survey which indicated support for a cross-tenure standard for physical property condition[38]. It is clear that

[36] "A New Deal for Tenants", Draft Strategy Consultation Paper Scottish Government, December 2021, pg 5, pg 10
[37] "Improving Housing Standards", Scottish Government, https://www.gov.scot/policies/social-housing/improving-standards/
[38] "The Whole Rented Sector", Chartered Institute of Housing, 2020

there is support for higher property condition standards in the private sector and this may be introduced in the future, however at present, the timescale for achieving this and the support that would be made available to homeowners and landlords has not been clearly defined.

Aberdeen City Council will continue to monitor legislative and regulatory developments in relation to property standards in the private sector.

Scottish House Condition Survey

The current primary source of evidence for the state of private sector house condition is found in the Scottish House Condition Survey. The Scottish House Condition Survey is the largest single housing research project in Scotland and runs from January to December each year, with key findings typically published two years later. The survey shows the proportion of properties that are in each of the various states of disrepair, with Table 6.1.15 below explaining how disrepair is defined in the survey results.

Table 6.1.15: Repair Category Definitions

Repair Category	Definition
Disrepair to a Critical Element	Critical element disrepair relates to disrepair to building elements central to weather-tightness, structural stability and preventing deterioration of the property.
Urgent Disrepair	Urgent disrepair relates to cases requiring immediate repair to prevent further damage or health and safety risk to occupants.
Extensive Disrepair	Extensive disrepair relates to cases where the damage covers at least a fifth (20%) or more of the building element area.
Any (Basic) Disrepair	Any (or Basic) disrepair relates to any damage where a building element requires some repair beyond routine maintenance. For example, a leaking tap would be considered any (or basic) disrepair.

Source: Scottish House Condition Survey (2024)

The latest survey data available is for the year 2022, however this only provides data on disrepair on a national level rather than local authority level. Local authority analysis is provided for three years and the latest data available is 2017-2019, with Table 6.1.16 below showing the levels of disrepair reported in Aberdeen City and Scotland in owner-occupied housing for this period. The previous two surveys have also been included for comparison.

Table 6.1.16: Disrepair to Owner Occupied Housing

Area	Survey Years	Any (Basic) Disrepair		Disrepair to a Critical Element	Urgent Disrepair	Extensive Disrepair
		No Disrepair	Some Disrepair			
Aberdeen	2015-17	33%	67%	53%	39%	3%
Scotland		34%	66%	47%	27%	5%
Aberdeen	2016-18	29%	71%	57%	38%	2%
Scotland		34%	66%	49%	26%	5%
Aberdeen	2017-19	25%	75%	58%	35%	4%
Scotland		33%	67%	49%	26%	5%

Source: Scottish House Condition Survey 2017-2019 (2024)

As seen above, while the level of basic disrepair in owner-occupied properties has remained relatively consistent for Scotland as a whole between 2015 and 2019, Aberdeen has experienced an increase in properties reporting some level of disrepair in the same period. Additionally, the proportion of properties in disrepair in Aberdeen has become considerably higher than the national level during this period, with an estimated 75% of properties being in disrepair. This trend is also apparent when measuring disrepair to critical elements and urgent disrepair, although extensive disrepair remains similar to the national trend.

Table 6.1.17 below illustrates that disrepair in the private rented sector appears to be at a higher level than in the owner-occupied sector, however this trend is echoed at a national level. Similar to the owner-occupied sector, levels of disrepair in Aberdeen across all repair categories appears to be steadily rising and is now higher than the level for Scotland as a whole.

Table 6.1.17: Disrepair to Housing in Private Rented Sector

Area	Survey Years	Any (Basic) Disrepair		Disrepair to a Critical Element	Urgent Disrepair	Extensive Disrepair
		No Disrepair	Some Disrepair			
Aberdeen	2015-17	26%	74%	58%	42%	*
Scotland		22%	78%	60%	37%	7%
Aberdeen	2016-18	26%	74%	62%	44%	10%
Scotland		21%	79%	63%	37%	8%
Aberdeen	2017-19	12%	88%	77%	48%	11%
Scotland		20%	80%	65%	38%	9%

Source: Scottish House Condition Survey 2015-17, 2016-18, 2017-2019 * base sample is too small to report, or the estimate represents 2 or fewer sampled households (2024)

The increase in the figures between 2015-17 and 2017-19 has been particularly significant in terms of basic disrepair and disrepair to critical elements, while urgent disrepair and extensive disrepair has experienced relatively less change. Again, this is similar to the owner-occupied sector and suggests that while more minor repairs issues appear to be more frequent, the occurrence of major repairs issues has remained relatively consistent in Aberdeen. Despite this, the level of urgent disrepair is still significantly above the national figure.

Aberdeen City Council will continue to monitor the available data in relation to property conditions in these sectors and is working to improve property conditions in the sector by educating landlords and tenants alongside exercising its powers under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 where necessary.

Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 - Enforcement

Work Notices

Under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006[39], Aberdeen City Council can serve work notices on the owners of privately owned properties in certain situations, such as if the property is considered sub-standard, unsafe or if the work is required in relation to the implementation of a Housing Renewal Area. The notice will typically require owners to bring the property back into a reasonable state of repair or improve any safety or security issues.

Aberdeen City Council must provide a specific timescale for the owners to complete the necessary improvements. If the work under the notice is not completed within the required timescale, the council may then undertake the work and recover the costs from owners once completed. The number of work notices issued between 2020/21 and 2023/24 is detailed in Table 6.1.18 below. In most cases, the work notice prompts the owners to take the necessary actions to improve their property's condition and no further intervention is required by the council.

Table 6.1.18: Number of Work Notices Served by Aberdeen City Council 2020/21-2023/24

Financial Year	Work Notices
2020/21	12
2021/22	8
2022/23	1
2023/24	7

Source: Housing Statistics Annual Return, Aberdeen City Council (2024)

The number of work notices issued by Aberdeen City Council has been decreasing in recent years due to efforts being made by the Private Sector Housing team to

[39] Housing (Scotland) Act 2006, s.30

communicate and co-operate with owners in relation to repairs required to improve their properties. Work notices are typically served as a last resort when owners are unwilling to co-operate and carry out the required work. The Private Sector Housing team will continue to focus on achieving improvements to properties in this sector by ensuring communication with owners is prompt, informative and offers the necessary support during the process.

Defective and Dangerous Buildings

Aberdeen City Council has powers under the Building (Scotland) Act 2003 to take action where buildings are not in a reasonable state of repair and/or pose a danger to members of the public. A range of enforcement action can be taken under this legislation, overseen by the council's Building Standards service, including:

- Engagement with the owner to communicate the work required on the building
- Serving a notice on the owner to require that the work be carried out within a specified timescale
- Ordering evictions
- Demolishing buildings where the danger is immediate.

The cost of any remedial action taken by the council in dealing with dangerous or defective buildings will be recovered from the owner(s) of the building. The powers that the council have under this legislation assist in ensuring that properties in the private sector remain in a reasonable state of repair and do not pose a danger to members of the public. A register of notices issued is made available on the Aberdeen City Council website, however the register does not specify the tenure of each property and as such there are no figures available for the number of privately owned properties where notices have been served.

Missing Shares

Aberdeen City Council has further powers of intervention under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 in situations where communal repairs are required in flatted accommodation where there are multiple owners within a block[40]. There can be instances where the majority of owners are prepared to undertake necessary communal repairs, however one or more owners are unable or unwilling to pay their share. Non-payment or lack of co-operation can hold up much needed repairs.

In situations such as these, the council may agree to pay the missing share on behalf of an owner and recover the contribution upon completion of the work. This means that owners can then proceed with getting much needed repairs carried out to keep their property in a good state of repair. Table 6.1.19 below shows the number of missing shares paid by the council between 2020/21 and 2023/24.

[40] Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 s.50

Table 6.1.19: Number of Missing Shares Paid by Aberdeen City Council 2020/21 – 2023/24

Financial Year	Number of Missing Shares Paid
2020/21	45
2021/22	34
2022/23	16
2023/24	35

Source: Private Sector Housing Team, Aberdeen City Council (2024)

The Missing Share process has recently been reviewed by the Private Sector Housing team. Information made available to the public in relation to the scheme has been improved and made clearer, with an application form now available. The council also promotes Novoville, a shared repairs app that can be used for the purposes of gathering funds from owners and receiving a missing share from the council. These measures should assist owners in managing instances of communal repairs and ensuring that their buildings are kept in a good state of repair.

Policies for Tackling Disrepair in Private Sector Housing

Aberdeen City Council has a number of policies and strategies linked to disrepair in the private sector, specifically in relation to:

- Housing Renewal Areas
- The Scheme of Assistance
- Housing that is below the Tolerable Standard

Scheme of Assistance

The council's Scheme of Assistance has been in place for a number of years and the document provides further detail on the types of assistance offered and the circumstances in which it will be granted. The Scheme of Assistance aims to offer a broad range of assistance that is tailored to the specific needs of homeowners, private landlords and their tenants. The Scheme of Assistance will be reviewed and updated as part of this Local Housing Strategy.

The enforcement powers mentioned previously in this chapter form part of the assistance offered under the Scheme of Assistance. With regards to repairs and maintenance, the council's Missing Shares Service is available to assist a majority of flat owners to carry out common repairs when the other responsible owners are unable or unwilling to pay their share of repair costs (common areas of a tenement or block of flats only).

Work notices may also be issued under the Scheme of Assistance to carry out repairs or improvements to a property. Aberdeen City Council can issue a work notice as part of the implementation of a Housing Renewal Area plan, or in order to bring a substandard home into a state or reasonable repair, whether or not it is in an Housing Renewal Area.

Below is a list of repairs that can be prescribed under a work notice:

Guttering:

- Blockage, damaged, broken

Roofing:

- Slates, tiles damaged, missing
- Ridge tiles
- Haunchings & pointing
- Facias & soffits
- Traditional & non-traditional dormers
- Chimney stacks & cans
- Overgrown vegetation

Building:

- Windows (wind & watertight)
- Doors front & back (secure)
- Door entry systems
- General fabric wind & watertight pointing etc.
- Granite tie-ins

Housing Renewal Area

The council's Housing Renewal Area policy was developed alongside the Below Tolerable Standard Strategy involving a similar consultation process and will also be published as an appendix to the Local Housing Strategy. The policy will be made available on the Aberdeen City Council website and will provide further information on the council's approach to the identification and implementation of Housing Renewal Areas.

Aberdeen City Council may consider the designation of a housing renewal area where a locality in the city has a significant level of housing that is viewed as sub-standard, or if the condition of specific properties is having a detrimental impact on the surrounding area. If either of these criteria were satisfied and a housing renewal area was to be considered an appropriate solution to these issues, Aberdeen City Council would consult with relevant stakeholders including owners of affected properties, representative groups within the area and any other parties who may be impacted by the designation. The purpose of the consultation would be to:

- Advise on how a housing renewal area operates and what it will mean for that particular area.
- Agree on the boundary of the area to be included.
- Agree on an appropriate action plan that will ensure that any agreed works can be carried out.
- Advise on what assistance, if any, can be provided.

Currently, Aberdeen City Council is proactively monitoring house condition in the city to determine if there are any concentrated areas of sub-standard housing in Aberdeen which would benefit from the designation of a housing renewal area. This will be carried out through the ongoing review of available evidence by the Private Sector Housing Team, Housing Strategy Team and Corporate Landlord.

Where individual properties are experiencing serious disrepair or are a blight on the surrounding area, these will be investigated by the relevant Council service and the appropriate action will be taken to resolve these issues.

If evidence emerges to suggest that a localised area is suffering from a significant level of sub-standard housing, the designation of an HRA will be investigated as a potential measure to improve the situation. Evidence that would prompt such an investigation would include:

- Complaints or concerns received from members of the public
- Relevant published data, such as Scottish House Condition Survey data
- Feedback from council officers or partner organisations

Aberdeen City Council will continually review available data and any complaints regarding housing blight and consider the designation of a housing renewal area as a solution where appropriate.

Below Tolerable Standard

The council's Below Tolerable Standard policy has been developed in consultation with various internal departments and is included as an appendix to the Local Housing Strategy. The Below Tolerable Standard policy details the approach taken by the council to identifying instances of Below Tolerable Standard housing within the city and will be made available on the Aberdeen City Council website alongside the Local Housing Strategy.

Table 6.1.20 below details the level of Below Tolerable Standard housing reported in the Scottish House Condition Survey. This evidence suggests that the level of Below Tolerable Standard housing in the city is low and similar in proportion to the national figures.

Table 6.1.20: Below Tolerable Standard Housing in the Private Sector

Area	2015-2017	2016-2018	2017-2019
Aberdeen	*	1%	2%
Scotland	1%	2%	2%

Source: Scottish House Condition Survey (2024)

Aberdeen City Council will take a proactive approach to resolving instances of Below Tolerable Standard housing by investigating any reports, reviewing available data, and providing assistance to homeowners and residents who are impacted by Below Tolerable Standard housing. The Private Sector Housing team work to proactively

identify any instances of sub-standard housing in the city, which includes Below Tolerable Standard housing.

Key Issues – Private Housing

- House condition in the private sector is generally poorer than the social sector due to the absence of prescribed standards on a similar level to Scottish Housing Quality Standard and Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing.
- There is limited data available regarding property condition in the private sector, with the Scottish House Condition Survey being the primary source of evidence, however their data at a local authority level is now outdated.
- The Scottish Government have proposed to make changes in this sector which may have an impact on house condition, such as new housing quality standards, Tenement Law reforms, and energy efficiency requirements. There is currently uncertainty over how tenants, landlords and local authorities will be supported through these changes and also the implementation timelines are not clear.

Key Actions – Private Housing

- Aberdeen City Council will continue to monitor developments in relation to proposals from the Scottish Government for a private sector/cross-tenure housing standards.
- The council will continue to monitor data in relation to house condition in the private sector as it becomes available and will investigate reports from members of the public regarding sub-standard private housing.
- The council's Private Sector Housing team will continue to provide education and support to both landlords and tenants to ensure the best outcomes for stakeholders in the private sector.
- The council will continue to actively participate in Scottish Government consultations in relation to reform in the private sector to ensure that potential challenges to local authorities are considered when implementing any changes.

Definitions

Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS)

The standard for all social rented homes which social housing landlords were required to meet by 2015, taking account of Scottish Government Guidance on Exemptions and Abeyances.

Energy Efficiency for Social Housing 2 (EESSH2)

This is an energy standard that all social housing meets, or can be treated as meeting, EPC Band B (Energy Efficiency rating), or is as energy efficient as practically possible, by the end of December 2032 and within the limits of cost, technology, and necessary consent.

Scottish Housing Net Zero

The Climate Change Act 2019 commits Scotland to net-zero emissions of all greenhouse gases by 2045. A zero-emission building including houses means that no greenhouse gases are emitted by it.

Exemptions

These are situations where certain properties are not required to meet specific elements of the Scottish Housing Quality Standard due to technical or other reasons. For example, if tenants or owner-occupiers do not agree to the necessary improvements, the property can be exempted from meeting those standards

Abeyances

These are excluded from the Scottish Housing Quality Standard as they occur when it is technically feasible to make an upgrade, but a social issue prevents the landlord from doing so. This means upgrades are put on hold until the issue is resolved.

Below Tolerable Standard

A term used to describe properties which fail to meet the basic minimum housing standard.

Housing Association

Organisations registered with the Scottish Housing Regulator to provide primarily affordable housing for social rent. Housing Associations are also known as Registered Social Landlords.

Housing Renewal Area (HRA)

An area identified as having poor housing conditions and designated for investment.

Mixed Tenure

A combination of different tenure types at the same location, for example social rented housing as well as owner occupied housing within the same block or on the same development.

Reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC)

RAAC is a lightweight construction material that was used in the construction of some public buildings like schools and hospitals and some housing between the 1950s and 1990s.

Scheme of Assistance

The Scheme of Assistance is managed by the PSH team and provides advice and practical support to private homeowners to carry out repairs and improvement to their property.

First-Tier Tribunal

The First-tier Tribunal (Housing and Property Chamber) is the forum for making decisions on disputes between stakeholders in the private rented sector, such as those related to repairs or rent.

Priority 6: Housing quality and energy efficiency

Part 2: Fuel Poverty, energy efficiency, climate change and Net Zero

Introduction

This chapter focuses on four key themes which are interlinked and sets out the strategic framework for delivering improvements.

Fuel Poverty: There are four main drivers behind fuel poverty including the cost of fuel, income levels, energy efficiency of the home and understanding of how to use fuel efficiently. This chapter will highlight the issues and what is being done to reduce incidents of fuel poverty in the City including the Victorian Tenement Project, Energy Efficient Scotland-Area Based Scheme and Heat Networks.

Energy Efficiency: Improving the energy efficiency of homes across Aberdeen is essential not only to comply with government targets and guidelines but to have a positive impact on the residents of the city in making their homes warm, comfortable by installing measures such as cavity wall insulation and solar panels.

Climate Change: Climate change is a long-term change in weather patterns, including higher average temperatures and higher sea levels due to polar melting. This chapter will highlight measures to be taken to increase resilience to the impacts of climate change.

Net Zero: refers to the balance between the amount of greenhouse gases emitted into the atmosphere and the amount removed from it. The chapter will highlight the energy efficiency and clean energy actions that are contributing to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the domestic sector in support of net zero targets.

Due to the close links between fuel poverty and energy efficiency a decision was made to combine these two priorities together into one section and likewise for climate change and net zero.

Strategic Priority

We will improve the condition of existing homes across all tenures and **improve their energy efficiency to help to alleviate fuel poverty and address climate change and support a just transition to net zero.**

This Strategic Priority was developed in consultation with internal and external stakeholders. This priority encapsulates the approach that stakeholders wish to see over the next five years.

National Context

The Housing Scotland Act 2001 set a statutory duty on the Scottish Government to eradicate fuel poverty, as far as reasonably practical, by 2016.

The Fuel Poverty (Targets, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Act 2019 introduced a new definition of fuel poverty: 'A household to be in fuel poverty if more than 10% of its net income (after housing costs) is required to heat the home and pay for other fuel costs, with not enough money left for a decent standard of living. If more than 20% of net income is needed, the household is defined as being in extreme fuel poverty'. This aligns fuel poverty more closely with relative income poverty. The Act required the development of a comprehensive strategy to show how targets will be met.

The Scottish Government's Fuel Poverty Strategy sets out policies and proposals for Scottish Government, local authorities and third sector partners to help meet the Act's targets, with actions to tackle each of the four drivers of fuel poverty.

The Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Target) Scotland Act 2019 sets a target for Scotland of net zero emissions by 2045. Greenhouse Gas statistics indicate buildings were the source of around 19% of emissions in Scotland in 2022, with direct fuel for home heating a primary source.

The Scottish Government's Heat in Buildings Strategy published in 2021 builds on the policies and actions set out in the Scottish Government's Climate Change Plan 2020. The strategy includes a vision by 2045 for homes and buildings to be cleaner, easy to heat and no longer contributing to climate change through a pathway of reduced energy use and zero emissions heating.

Policy 2 under the National Planning Framework (NPF4) covers climate mitigation and adaptation, with a policy intent to encourage, promote and facilitate development that minimises emissions and adapts to the current and future impacts of climate change.

The Heat Network (Scotland) Act 2021 sets requirements to identify and assess potential opportunity areas for district heating; and the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies (Scotland) Order 2022 sets requirements for councils to prepare and publish a Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy and Delivery Plan. Work is underway to develop this at a local level.

The Building (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2023 introduced the New Build Heat Standard. The Standard applies to building warrants granted from 01 April 2024 and applies to new build homes and some conversions requiring these developments to use clean heating systems, such as district heating and heat pumps, rather than fossil fuel heating, such as gas and oil boilers.

The Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESSH) was introduced by the Scottish Government to improve the energy efficiency of social housing in Scotland. The main goals of the standard are to reduce energy consumption, lower fuel poverty, and decrease greenhouse gas emissions.

The draft Energy Efficiency (Domestic Private Rented Property) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 aims to improve the energy efficiency of domestic private rented properties in Scotland and will introduce a minimum energy performance certificate level in the private rented sector.

More recently the Scottish Government Heat in Buildings Bill and Social Housing Net Zero Standard have been proposed; incorporating minimum fabric efficiency rating to be achieved by 2033 and the requirement for zero direct emissions from heating by 2045.

The Scottish National Adaptation Plan (2024-29) includes an objective for New and Existing Buildings, including for new buildings to be designed to future climate; and for opportunities for adaptation to be taken during maintenance or retrofit of existing buildings.

Further emerging changes will be relevant to the decarbonisation of heat for homes, including the planned update of Scotland's Climate Change Plan; the development of sectoral Just Transition Plans and changes to standards and building regulations.

Aberdeen Context

Table 6.2.1 below details the Aberdeen's Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) stretch outcomes that hold particular relevance to fuel poverty, energy efficiency, climate change and net zero. This is not an exhaustive list of every potential link to these topics in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, however it includes several of the improvement project aims that relate to fuel poverty, energy efficiency, climate change and net zero that can contribute to the achievement of the stretch outcomes.

Table 6.2.1: LOIP Stretch Outcomes and Improvement Project Aims Relevant to Fuel Poverty, Energy Efficiency, Climate Change and Net Zero:

Stretch Outcomes	Improvement Project Aims
1. 20% reduction in the percentage of people who report they have been worried they would not have enough food to eat and/ or not be able to heat their home by 2026.	Increase to 92% the number of homes that meet an EPC rating of C or better by 2026.
	10% of people seeking fuel poverty support are no longer in fuel poverty by 2026.
12. Reduce homelessness by 10% and youth homelessness by 6% by 2026, ensuring it is rare, brief and non-recurring with a longer-term ambition to end homelessness in Aberdeen City.	Improve the effectiveness of an increased number of public, private, third and faith sector organisations contributing to preventing homelessness in Aberdeen.
	Increase education and skills relating to tenancy management and housing rights for young people.
13. Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by at least 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate.	Reduce public sector carbon emissions by at least 7% by 2026.
	To have Community led resilience plans in place for the most vulnerable areas (6) in the City by 2025 and increase by 10% the % of people who know where to find information and resources to help prepare for severe weather events by 2025.
14. Increase sustainable travel: 38% of people walking; 5% of people cycling and wheeling as main mode of travel and a 5% reduction in car miles by 2026.	Increase % of people who walk and wheel as one mode of travel by 5% by 2026.
	Reduce car kms by 5% by 2026.

Source: Aberdeen City Council Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-2026, Refreshed Version (2024)

Stretch Outcome 1 and the associated improvement project aims to mitigate fuel poverty and support citizens currently experiencing it. Fuel poverty can also contribute to a citizen's risk of homelessness, it is important that Aberdeen City Council works collaboratively with partners in this sector to increase awareness and educate citizens of the support available in relation to these areas, as seen in the improvement project aims for Stretch Outcome 12.

Stretch Outcome 13 directly relates to climate change and how Aberdeen City Council will take steps to mitigate its impact. The overall aim is to significantly reduce carbon emissions being produced in the city and ensure that the city adapts to the ongoing effects of climate change. This will be delivered through improvement project aims such as reducing the carbon emissions produced by the public sector, as well as preparing for potential future impacts of climate change such as severe weather events.

There are many links to net zero targets throughout the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, with several stretch outcomes such as 1, 13 and 14 all having links to net zero. Progress towards these outcomes will contribute to the delivery of the Net Zero Aberdeen Routemap.

The Net Zero Aberdeen Routemap sets out Aberdeen's plan to become a net zero emissions city by 2045. It includes six themed strategies, Mobility, Circular Economy, Energy Supply, Natural Environment and Empowerment and Buildings and Heat Strategy. It sets out how collaboration, innovation and the importance of a just energy transition, aimed at creating a greener, cleaner and healthier environment in Aberdeen. It sets out how collaboration, innovation and the importance of a just energy transition, aimed at creating a greener, cleaner and healthier environment in Aberdeen.

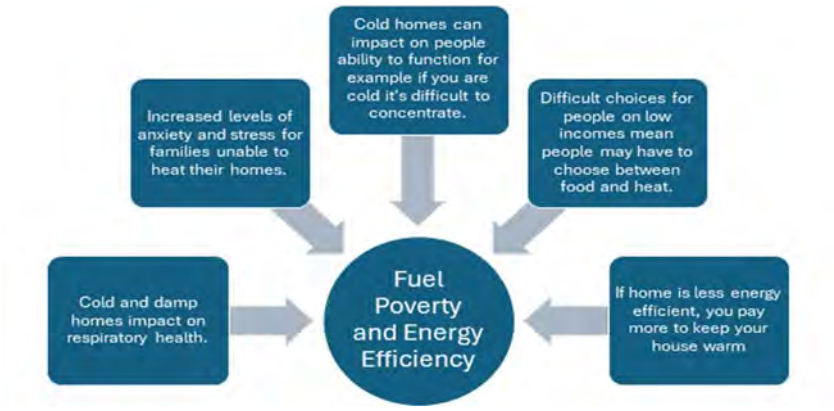
The Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy is currently being drafted and is close to completion. The four main aims are:

1. The continuation of the expansion of district heating network and how this will potentially link in with the existing network.
2. Where properties cannot be heated by the district heating network, alternative heating measures to be explored to allow for building level decarbonisation.
3. Ongoing projects such as Energy Efficient Scotland-Area Based Scheme; and
4. Internal city council projects such as Doric to improve building energy efficiency and alleviating fuel poverty.

A delivery plan is also nearing completion working to the same four aims as above.

Social Determinants of Health – Fuel Poverty and Energy Efficiency

The social determinants of health model highlights the importance that good quality and energy efficient homes plays in improving health outcomes. Poor quality or cold and draughty housing can lead to poor mental health and exacerbate long-term conditions. High quality housing that meets people's needs and is energy efficient that will help to reduce fuel poverty and improve wellbeing are considered within this chapter. More information can be found on the quality of housing in the private and social sector in Chapter 6: House Condition.



Fuel Poverty and Energy Efficiency

A key priority for Aberdeen City Council is to reduce fuel poverty and improve the energy efficiency of existing housing across all tenures and ensure that new homes meet the highest energy efficiency requirements.

The Bronze Standard in building standards typically refers to a baseline level of sustainability and compliance with building regulations and must meet to comply with the Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004. The Domestic Technical Handbook

provides guidance on sustainability this includes the details on what is required to achieve the Bronze to Platinum levels as outlined in Section 7.

New build council housing is currently built to a higher standard, the “Gold Standard” with minimum EPC - B energy efficiency rating. All new housing including Registered Social Landlords must comply with Scottish Building Technical Standards 2022: Domestic, Section 6: Energy.

Improving the energy efficiency of homes will assist in achieving reduced greenhouse gas emissions, help to meet climate change targets and tackle and mitigate fuel poverty.

Aberdeen City Council’s ongoing programme for the installation of loft and cavity wall insulation within the council’s own stock continues.

These measures assist to improve the Energy Performance Certificate scoring of the property with the measures required to meet Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing.

The council will also continue to apply for Scottish Government grant funding. Currently this is available through the Energy Efficient Scotland-Area Based Scheme to support measures like external wall insulation to be installed on private properties that meet the Scottish Government’s criteria.

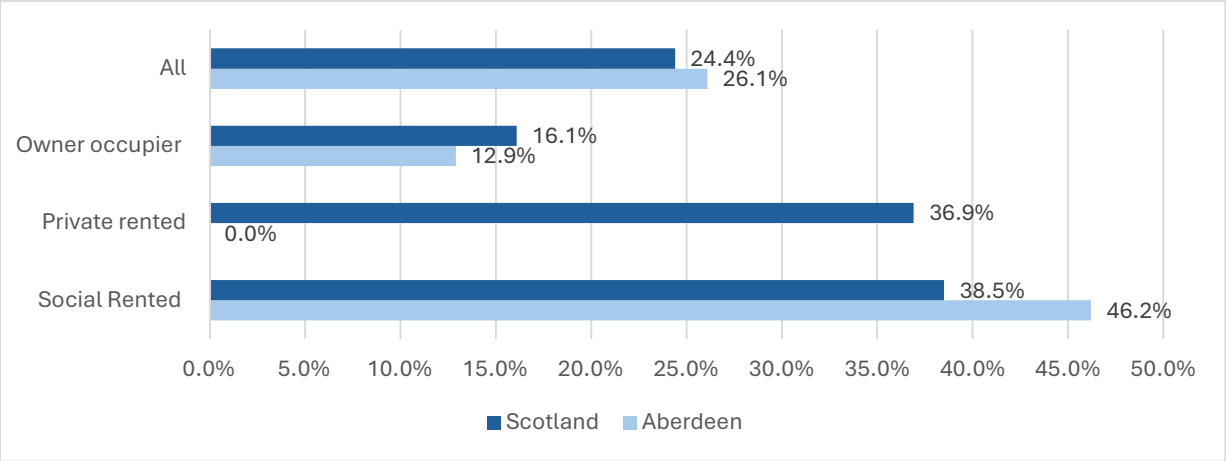
Registered Social Landlords undertake their own programme of energy efficiency measures. It is not possible to make direct comparison with Aberdeen City Council due to differences in how data is recorded.

Definition of fuel poverty: A household is defined as being in fuel poverty if, in order to maintain a satisfactory heating regime, total fuel costs necessary for the home are more than 10% of the household’s adjusted net income (i.e. after housing costs), and if after deducting those fuel costs, benefits received for a care need or disability and childcare costs, the household’s remaining adjusted net income is insufficient to maintain an acceptable standard of living. The remaining adjusted net income must be at least 90% of the UK Minimum Income Standard to be considered an acceptable standard of living with an additional amount added for households in remote rural, remote small town and island areas. If more than 20% of net income is needed, the household is defined as being in extreme fuel poverty.

Fuel poverty is a particular issue facing many households in Aberdeen. Fuel poverty can affect households across all tenures. Figure 6.2.1 below shows the percentage of households in fuel poverty, by tenure, for Aberdeen and compared to Scotland. The data shows that Aberdeen has a higher percentage of households in fuel poverty compared to Scotland, 26.1% compared to 24.4% respectively. 46.2% of households living in social housing in Aberdeen experience fuel poverty compared to 38.5% nationally. 12.9% of owner-occupied households in Aberdeen is lower than the national figure of 16.1%. Private rented sector data for Scotland shows 36.9% of households are experiencing fuel poverty, which is similar to 38.5% in the social rented sector. Comparable data is not available for the private rented sector in Aberdeen due to the small sample size recorded in the Scottish House Condition

Survey. The reason for Aberdeen City's higher percentage could be due in part to the downturn in the Oil and Gas sector which Aberdeen relies on heavily for jobs and wealth creation, this also impacts on the service sector such as retail and hospitality.

Figure 6.2.1: Percentage of households in fuel poverty in Aberdeen and Scotland all tenures.



Source: Scottish House Condition Survey: Local Authority Analysis 2017 - 2019. (2024)

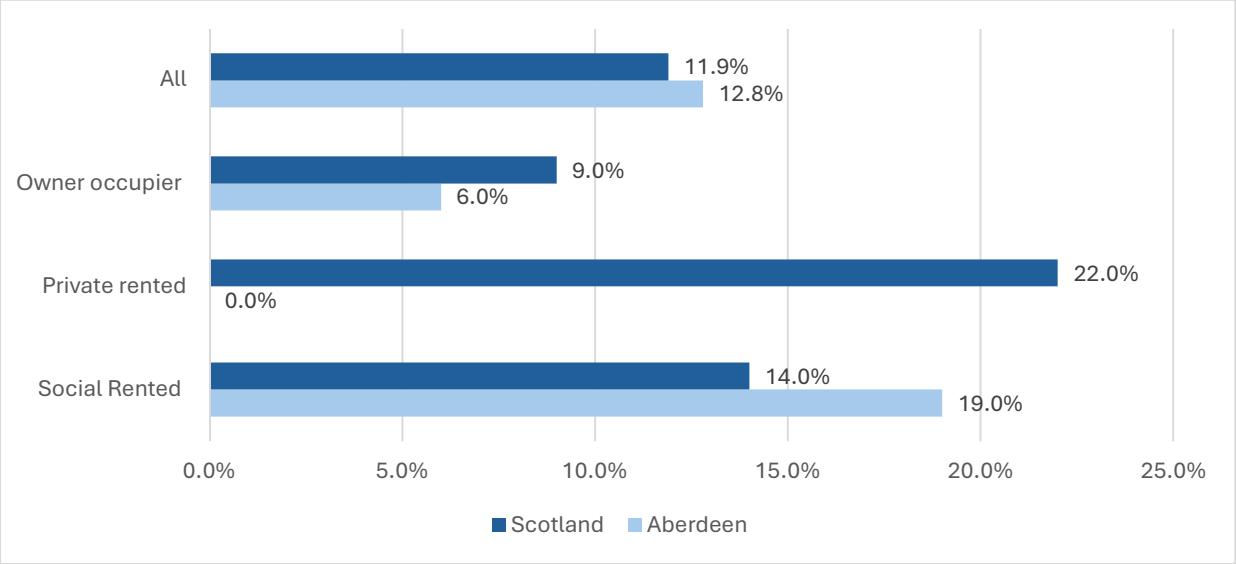
Figure 6.2.2 below shows the cross-tenure comparison for households living in extreme fuel poverty. It shows that 12.8% of households in Aberdeen experience extreme fuel poverty compared to 11.9% for Scotland as a whole. This also affects a higher percentage of social rented households in Aberdeen, 18.8% compared with 14.5% for Scotland.

In Scotland, 11.9% of households live in extreme fuel poverty, compared with 12.8% of households in Aberdeen which is comparable. 18.8% of households who live in social housing in Aberdeen are experiencing extreme fuel poverty, compared with 14.5% for Scotland. Whereas 6.4% of owner-occupied households in Aberdeen experience extreme fuel poverty, compared with 8.8% owner-occupied households across Scotland.

The colder climate in Aberdeen is a key factor contributing to the higher percentage of households experiencing extreme fuel poverty compared to other parts of Scotland. Aberdeen has also experienced a downturn in the oil and gas economy together with high energy costs and COVID-19 have had a negative impact on the city's economy including the retail sector. Many council tenants are claiming benefits or are on low wages which has made paying the energy bill challenging. According to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SMID) carried out in 2020, levels of deprivation have increased slightly compared to previous assessments. Aberdeen has areas that fall within the 20% most deprived in Scotland. These include areas such as Torry, Middlefield, Northfield, Mastrick and Stockethill, which have a high concentration of council homes.

As above, comparable data for the private rented sector in Aberdeen is not available due to the small sample size recorded in the Scottish House Condition Survey.

Figure 6.2.2 Percentage of households in extreme fuel poverty in Aberdeen and Scotland all tenures.



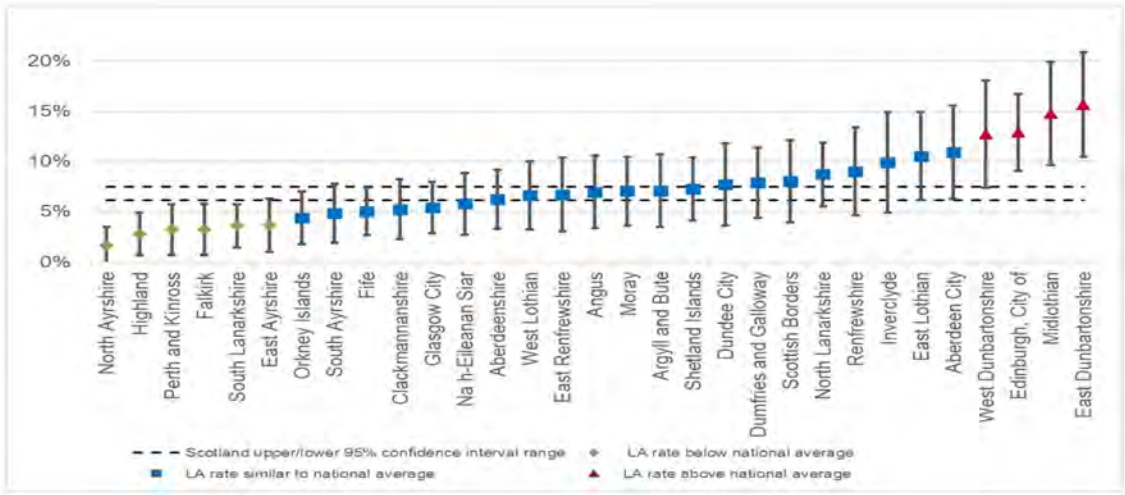
Source: Scottish House Condition Survey: Local Authority Analysis 2017 – 2019. (2024)

Main drivers of Fuel Poverty/Energy Efficiency

One of the main causes of fuel poverty is living in a home that is not energy efficient. The most recent Scottish House Condition Survey 2017- 2019[41] showed that, nationally and locally, the energy efficiency of the housing stock was improving, yet fuel poverty remains high, mainly due to high fuel prices and potentially lower household incomes in the social sector.

Figure 6.2.3 below shows the percentage of dwellings with less than 100mm loft insulation (where possible) by local authority, compared to Scotland average. SHCS 2015-2017.

Figure 6.2.3 Key results of the SHCS 2015-2017

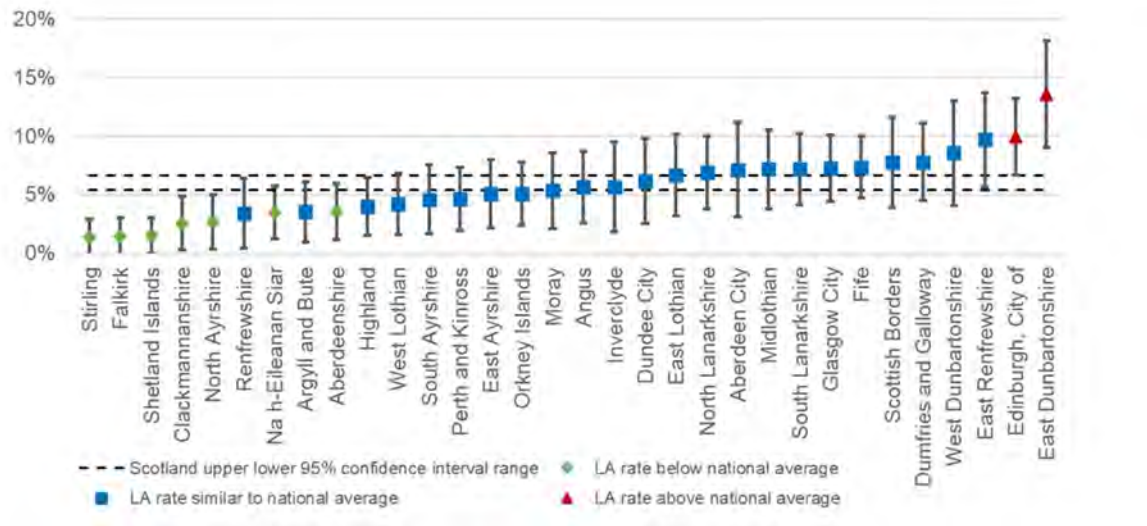


[41] Data collection for the Scottish House Condition Survey was affected by Covid-19, updated information showing local authority data is not expected until early 2026.

Source: Key results from the Scottish House Condition Survey (SHCS) Local Authority tables 2015-2017, (2024)

Figure 6.2.4 below shows the percentage of dwellings with less than 100mm loft insulation (where possible) by local authority, compared to Scotland average. SHCS 2017-2019

Figure 6.2.4 percentage of dwellings with less than 100mm loft insulation



Source: Scottish House Condition Survey: 2017-2019 Local Authority Tables (2024)

The proportion of solid wall dwellings with insulation was 16% in 2022, an increase of 5% on the 2012 figure. Likewise loft insulation has shown an increase. In 2022, 32% of lofts were insulated to a high standard of insulation (300 mm or more). Following year on year increases from the 2010 figure of 5%.

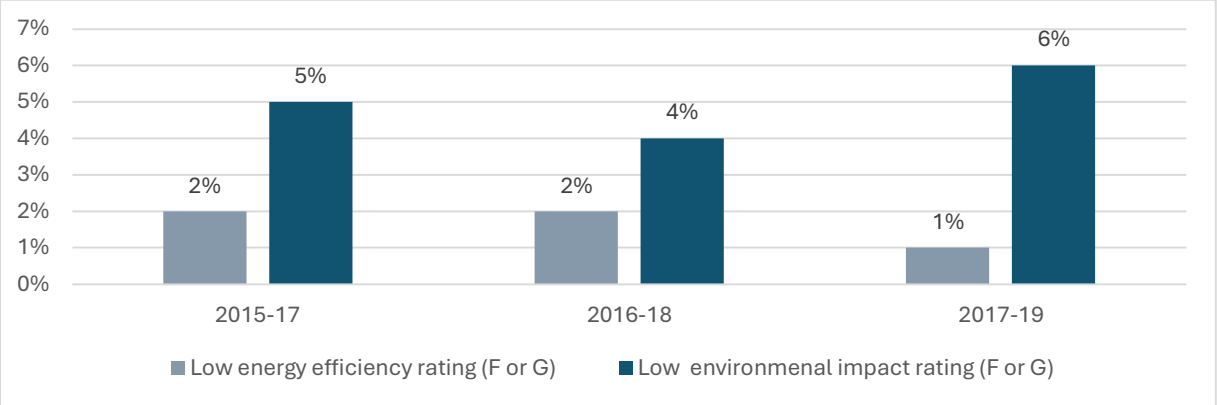
Aberdeen still faces many challenges:

- Aberdeen had one of the lowest rates of wall insulation at 45% compared with a national average of 59%.
- Almost all households in Aberdeen have full central heating systems, aligning with the national average of 96%.
- Aberdeen had a low proportion of dwelling in the lowest energy efficiency band (F or G) at 1%, which is significantly better than the national average of 4%. It also has a higher proportion of dwellings in the highest energy efficiency bands (B or C), indicating a better overall energy performance.

Figure 6.2.5 below shows the percentage change in the low energy efficiency rating and low environmental impact rating between 2015 and 2019 based on the local authority analysis for Aberdeen City carried out for the Scottish House Condition Survey.

The Environmental Impact Rating (EIR) represents the environmental impact of a dwelling in terms of carbon emissions associated with fuels used for heating, hot water, lighting and ventilation.

Figure 6.2.5 Percentage of dwellings with low energy efficiency rating (F or G) and low environmental impact ratings (F or G)



Source: Scottish House Condition Survey – Local Authority Analysis (February 2021)

SHQS and EESSH Compliance

Social housing is assessed by two main criteria, the Scottish Housing Quality Standard and the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing. Aberdeen City Council's performance against these criteria can have a direct impact on levels of fuel poverty and energy efficiency in the city. The Scottish Housing Quality Standard measures all aspects of housing quality, however there are parts of the criteria which directly relate to energy efficiency, e.g. ensuring that the properties meet the Energy Performance Certificate milestones outlined in EESSH for Scottish Housing.

The criteria also require properties to meet the tolerable standard, have modern facilities and be free from serious disrepair. These aspects of the criteria also have potential links to fuel poverty and energy efficiency, as failure against these could result in a property having poorer energy performance. For example, properties must have thermal insulation under the tolerable standard, and poor insulation can have a detrimental impact on the energy performance of the property.

Aberdeen City Stock

Aberdeen City Council's performance against both Scottish Housing Quality Standard and Energy Efficiency Standard for Scottish Housing is explored further in Chapter 6: House Condition of this Local Housing Strategy. In 2023/24, 89% of the council's stock was assessed as meeting Energy Efficiency Standard for Scottish Housing and 90% was assessed as meeting Scottish Housing Quality Standard.

The average for Registered Social Landlords complying with the SHQS is around 95.5% and around 97% meeting EESSH. The higher percentage for Registered Social Landlords is due in part to the newer stock which has built in items which meet or exceed the standards and are more easily updated if the standards are changed.

While a national compliance figure for Energy Efficiency Standard for Scottish Housing is not available, the proportion of Aberdeen City Council stock meeting Scottish Housing Quality Standard has been higher than the national figure between 2020/21 and 2023/24. Aberdeen City Council will continue working to ensure that the

compliance rate for these standards remains high and subsequently has a positive impact on the energy efficiency of its stock.

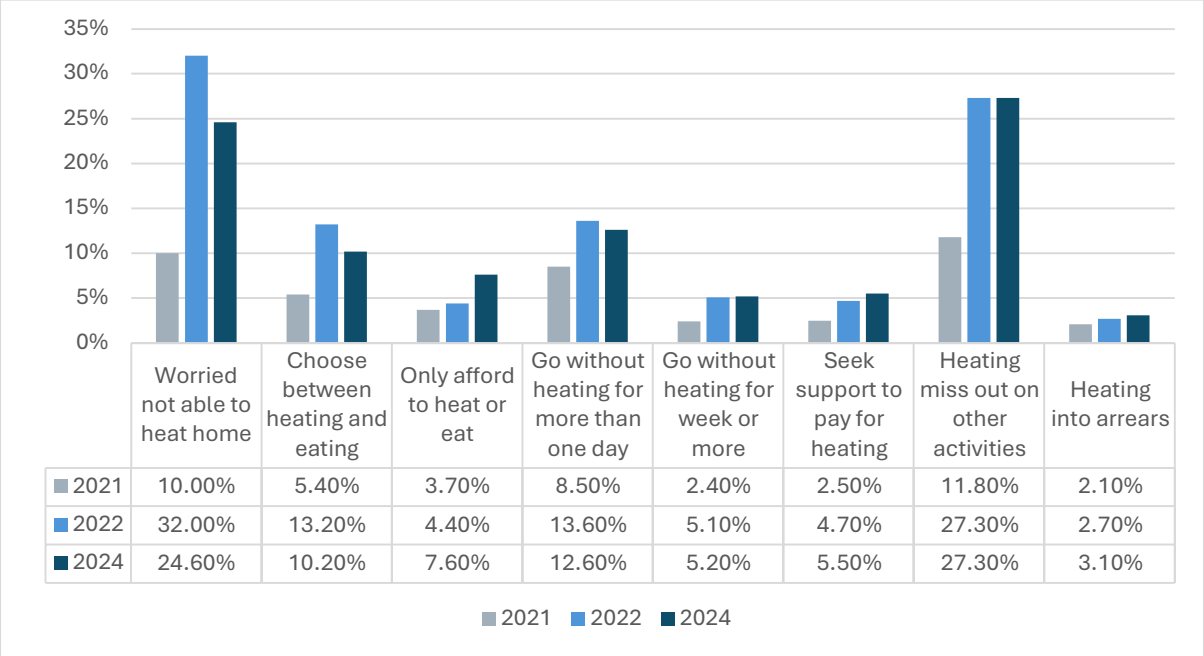
While there is currently not an equivalent standard for properties in the private sector, the Energy Efficiency (Domestic Private Rented Property) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 is in draft form and aim to introduce minimum energy efficiency standards in the private rented sector. This would prohibit landlords from leasing properties which fell below a specific EPC rating. Aberdeen City Council will monitor developments in relation the implementation of these regulations, which may help to improve energy efficiency standards in the private sector.

Aberdeen is known as the 'granite city', since it has a large proportion of granite stone tenement flats and houses, which are more challenging to heat and install energy efficient upgrades than modern buildings. They may lack insulation causing heat loss which compromises their energy efficiency. The Aberdeen Victorian Tenement Project (AVTP) has proven successful over the years enabling basic insulation measures to be installed within privately owned and rented properties throughout the city. It has also allowed mixed tenure blocks with council tenants to be insulated.

City Voice Survey

To provide an Aberdeen context, a series of questions around citizens ability to heat their homes were asked in the Aberdeen City Voice survey[42]. Figure 6.2.6 below shows the results from 2021, 2022 and 2024.

Figure 6.2.6: City Voice Questions on Financial Pressures



	Worried not able to heat home	Choose between heating and eating	Only afford to heat or eat	Go without heating for more than one day	Go without heating for week or more	Seek support to pay for heating	Heating miss out on other activities	Heating into arrears
2021	10.00%	5.40%	3.70%	8.50%	2.40%	2.50%	11.80%	2.10%
2022	32.00%	13.20%	4.40%	13.60%	5.10%	4.70%	27.30%	2.70%
2024	24.60%	10.20%	7.60%	12.60%	5.20%	5.50%	27.30%	3.10%

Source: City Voice 50, Aberdeen Community Planning (July 2024[43])

[42] Aberdeen City Voice is a panel of Aberdeen City Residents who have agreed to give their views on a range of issues. More information can be found on Community Planning Aberdeen website.

In July 2024, 24.6% of respondents reported being worried they would not be able to heat their home compared with a peak of 32% in 2023. 27.3% of respondents said that paying for heating meant missing out on other activities which is a similar level to 2023 but much higher than 11.8% of respondents in 2022. There has also been a significant increase in the number of respondents saying they can "only afford to heat or eat," rising from 4.4% in 2023 to 7.6% in 2024.

The results of this survey were considered by Community Planning Aberdeen's Anti-Poverty Group and action has been taken to try and combat the circumstances which are making it difficult for the citizens of Aberdeen to heat their homes, such as the aftermath of the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis. The focus has been on measures which will increase household income, such as supporting people into employment and ensuring they are claiming the benefits they are entitled to. This is provided through services such as ABZ Works and the online benefit calculator.

Aberdeen City Council is also working with the charity Save Cash and Reduce Fuel (SCARF), to increase awareness of the advice and support available in relation to fuel bills and energy efficiency. Aberdeen City Council's Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee have also allocated £1m to assist in addressing poverty in the city, with some measures targeting the alleviation of fuel poverty such as the distribution of food vouchers and winter clothing payments.

Income

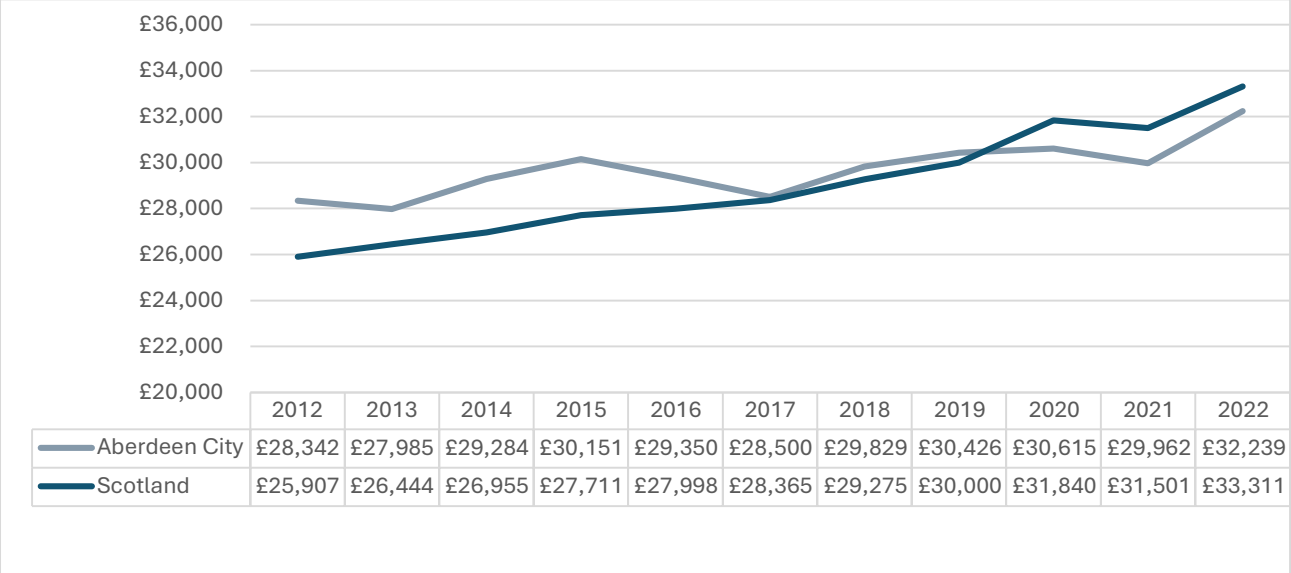
It is widely recognised there are four main drivers behind fuel poverty; cost of fuel, income, energy efficiency of the home and understanding of how to use fuel efficiently[44].

Income levels play a key role in fuel poverty. Figure 6.2.7 below shows residence-based earnings of full-time workers between 2012 and 2022. There have been a number of challenges in Aberdeen that have impacted negatively on these average earnings. These include the financial crash of 2008 and the successive oil and gas downturns on which the Aberdeen economy was so dependent on. This has caused a large fall in the number of high-paid jobs in the oil and gas sector which has had a detrimental impact on local retail and hospitality jobs.

The impact of Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic have also presented challenges in a variety of sectors, although these issues were not exclusive to Aberdeen. The combination of these factors has resulted in residence-based median earnings in Aberdeen falling below the Scottish average since 2020. Income levels in the city being below the national average may result in the citizens of Aberdeen being at a greater risk of fuel poverty.

[43] The survey was not carried out in 2023 so data is not available for this period.
[44] Scottish House Condition Survey: 2022 Key Findings

Figure 6.2.7: Annual Earnings, 2012 - 2022



	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Aberdeen City	£28,342	£27,985	£29,284	£30,151	£29,350	£28,500	£29,829	£30,426	£30,615	£29,962	£32,239
Scotland	£25,907	£26,444	£26,955	£27,711	£27,998	£28,365	£29,275	£30,000	£31,840	£31,501	£33,311

Source – Office for National Statistics[45] (2024)

In order to eradicate fuel poverty, the aim is to reduce energy consumption in homes and promote the use of renewable energy sources and innovations. This is inextricably linked to the challenge of tackling the climate emergency. Housing is a key source of carbon emissions.

The Energy Efficient Scotland-Area Based Scheme, funded through the Scottish Government, has been in existence since 2014 and has enabled the council to offer various measures throughout the city to private owners to develop and deliver energy efficiency programmes. Latterly a concentration on non-traditional built homes has allowed expensive external wall insulation measures to be installed.

The higher costs and timescale involved with carrying external wall insulation limits the number of properties that can be completed in any one year, with demand for these works higher that what can be fulfilled. Significant investment has taken place throughout the duration of the scheme as shown in Table 6.2.1 below.

[45] Data for 2023 will be available later this year

Table 6.2.1: Area-based schemes, allocations and final spend for Aberdeen, 2018-2023

Year	Core Funding Allocation	Final Spend
2018/19	£1,549,101.00	£1,760,106.36
2019/20	£1,652,360.00	£1,798,616.10
2020/21	£1,994,012.00	£2,174,210.41
2021/22	£2,574,178.00	£53,655.88[46]
2022/23	£2,639,764.00	£2,139,917.82

Source: Scottish Government (2024)

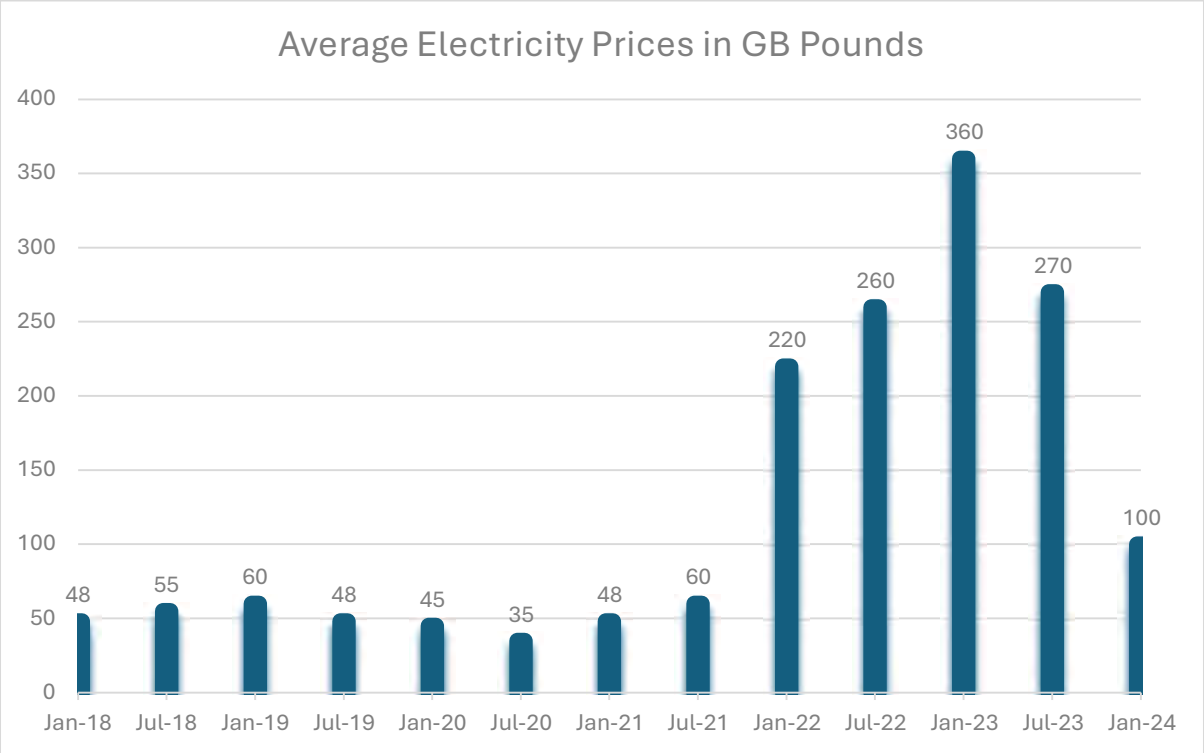
There was a significant underspend in 2021/22, this was due to changes in regulations which impacted procurement and planning aspects of the project.

Energy Prices

Energy prices play a major part in fuel poverty. Figure 6.2.8 below shows electricity prices from 2018. Since 2021 there has been a significant increase in both gas and electricity prices due to both COVID-19 and the conflict in Ukraine. This has affected the international markets for gas and oil and subsequently electricity generation. Prices began to increase dramatically in 2021 and reached their highest in 2022 before slowly lowering through 2023 and 2024. Government assistance both at UK and Scottish level have offset to some extent the dramatic increases seen during this time. However, it has still caused many to fall into fuel debt that may take years to recover from.

[46] Spend across all areas in Scotland was impacted as the result of the COVID-19 restrictions.

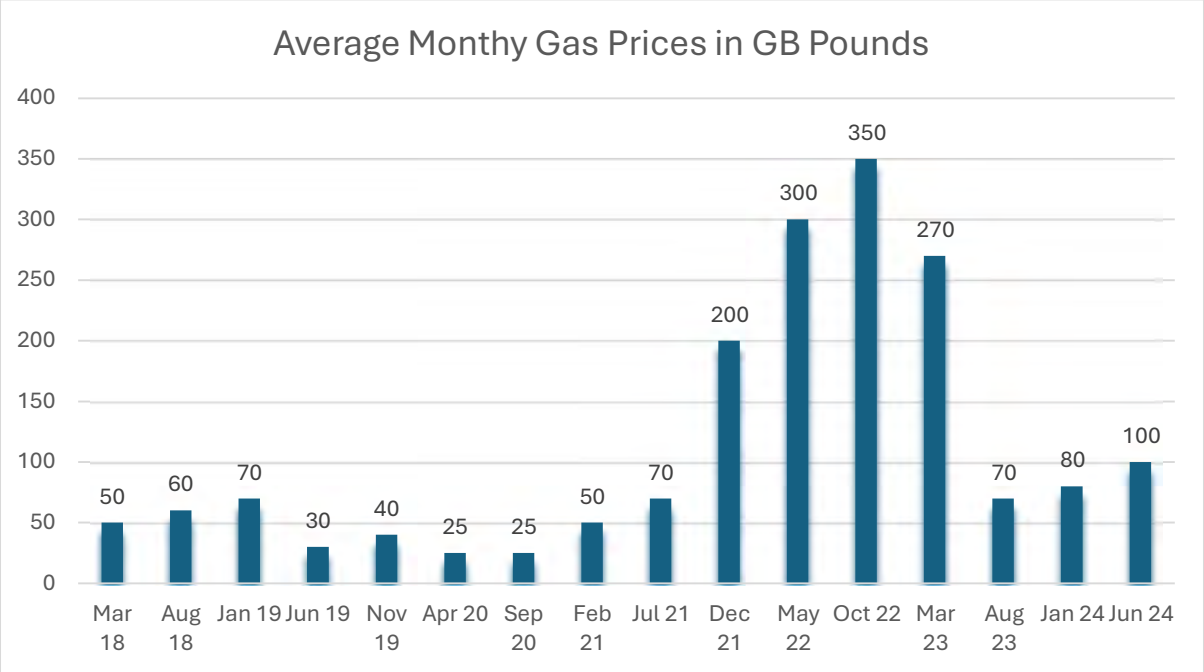
Figure 6.2.8 Monthly average electricity prices in GB pounds per megawatt-hour



Source: https://www.statista.com/statistics/589765/average-electricity-prices-uk/ (2024)

Figure 6.2.9 below shows the monthly average gas prices from July 2018 to July 2024 (in GB pounds per therm).

Figure 6.2.9 Average Gas prices



Source: https://www.statista.com/statistics/1174560/average-monthly-gas-prices-uk/ (2024)

Save Cash and Reduce Fuel (SCARF)

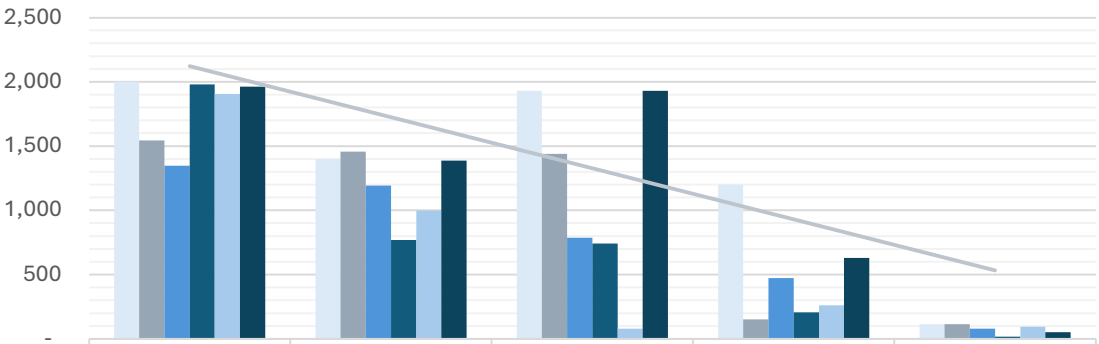
Save Cash and Reduce Fuel (SCARF) offers support and assistance to householders from all tenures across the city. This includes advice with reducing fuel bills with improving energy efficiency, mediation services with energy suppliers to resolve billing issues and benefit checks to maximise household incomes. In certain circumstances they can assist with emergency payments for prepayment meters.

SCARF's Home Energy Advice Team provide advice on ways householders can save both on their fuel bills and their energy usage. Advisors provide tailored advice that is suitable to both the house type and financial circumstances via the telephone advice or home visits. SCARF also carry out benefit checks and can make referrals to other organisations and charities for assistance such as housing repairs and food banks. Recently dementia awareness training has been given to the advisers to raise awareness and signpost people to other agencies for support.

Figure 6.2.10 below shows SCARF's annual performance indicators from 2018/19 to 2023/24. This covers the period of COVID-19 restrictions, which severely impacted on the number of home visits that could be carried out, falling below the annual target for the period. This also impacted on the ability to collate fuel poverty data and reduced the number of events that could take place.

The number of enquiries has stayed consistent over the period, very close to the 2,000 target. 2022/23 saw a large increase in the number of onward referrals to other agencies, rising from 742 in 2021/22 to 2,542 in 2022/23. This is mostly likely related to the relaxing of COVID-19 restrictions and the economic impact on families' incomes, for example through furlough schemes and potential lost employment or income. Data for 2023/24 indicates the first real signs of a recovery to pre-COVID figures.

Figure 6.2.10 SCARF's Annual Activity 2018 – 2024



	Enquiries	Home Visits	Referrals	Fuel Poverty Details	Events
Annual Target	2,000	1,400	1,930	1,200	115
2018/19	1,544	1,457	1,438	151	115
2019/20	1,348	1,193	786	473	79
2021/22	1,980	770	742	206	17
2022/23	1,904	999	79	262	94
2023/24	1,963	1,386	1,930	630	51

Source: SCARF Annual Report[47] (2024)

Key Issues – Fuel Poverty and Energy Efficiency

- Rising energy prices have exacerbated fuel poverty, particularly impacting on low-income households. Despite recent lowering of fuel prices, fuel prices remain higher than pre-2021 levels.
- Median household income growth has been slower than the Scottish average which affects the ability to afford energy costs.
- Poor house conditions and failure to meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard will contribute to higher energy consumption and associated costs.
- There continues to be challenges around implementing energy efficiency improvements across all tenures. The reasons can be due to construction or design, for example multi-storey buildings, granite buildings.
- The cost and complexity of making homes more energy efficient is becoming more challenging. Many households have already undertaken improvement works to install measures such as loft and cavity wall insultation that is relatively inexpensive leaving more costly options measures like external wall insulation and heating systems such air source heat pumps.

[47] Referral to other agencies data for 2018/19 and 2019/20 is not available

Key Actions – Fuel Poverty and Energy Efficiency

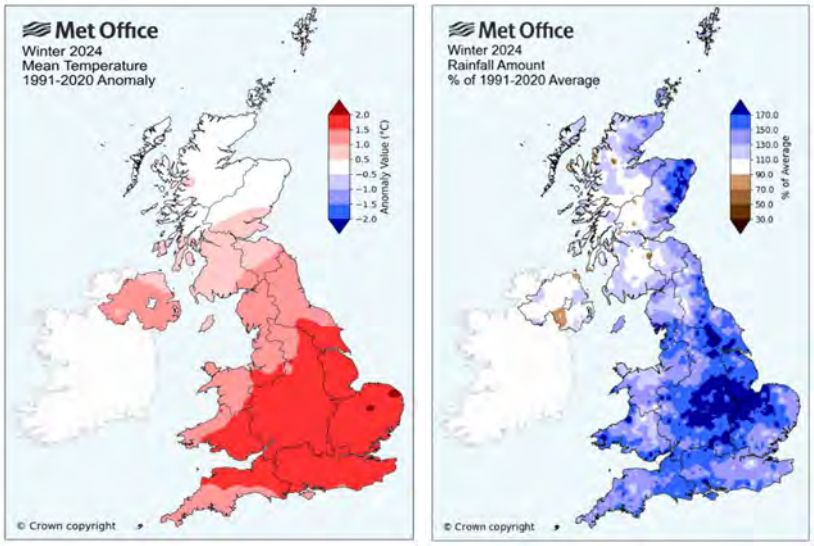
- Actively seek funding through Scottish Government and UK Government initiatives to reduce fuel poverty and improve energy efficiency and collaborate with external partners to ensure any funding is fully utilised.
- Continue to work with partner organisations, such as SCARF to provide households with advice on energy efficiency, fuel cost savings and income maximisation.
- Continue to support the Aberdeen Victorian Tenement Project to improve the energy efficiency of granite tenements throughout the city.
- Continue support for local organisations assisting with fuel poverty.
- Develop a Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES), which aims to improve the energy efficiency of properties within the city so alleviating fuel poverty.
- Expansion of the District Heating system.

Climate Change and Net Zero

The Local Housing Strategy plays an important role in linking action on the climate emergency with mainstream housing and fuel poverty. Climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. While these changes can occur naturally, human activity has been a primary driver since the industrial revolution of the 1800s. This is mainly due to the burning of fossil fuels such as oil and gas. This has led to an increase in greenhouse gases which trap heat in the atmosphere, causing global temperatures to rise, which in turn affects the climate.

Figure 6.2.11 below shows UK seasonal weather maps for Winter 2024 (December 2023, January, February 2024). For this period the northern portion of Scotland had a lower average winter temperature than other parts of the UK and along parts of the east coast rainfall was heavier than the UK average. Colder temperatures have an impact both on heat demand and fuel poverty levels, and intense rainfall can cause damage and flooding.

Figure 6.2.11 Seasonal weather maps



Source: Met Office Seasonal Assessment Winter (2024)

Met Office data indicates an average number of 40 frost days a year in Aberdeen for the period 2001-2020, compared to an average number of 53 days for 1981-2000. The average annual temperature for the city was 8.7°C, 2001-2020 and average yearly rainfall was 833mm, 1991-2020.

Climate change at a global scale drives local changes; and extreme weather events can affect citizens and buildings. Aberdeen and the surrounding area has experienced the impact of severe weather, these have included Storms Arwen (2021), Corrie (2022) and Babet (2023) which resulted in damage, power disruptions and flooding.

As well as needing to be resilient to current weather patterns, new and existing housing will need to be able to adapt to a changing climate. Projected changes in rainfall intensity and increases in temperature are identified under UK Climate Projections (UKCP18). These include warmer wetter, winters; a trend of hotter, drier summers, although there may be increases in heavy summer rainfall events; and a rise in sea level. The impacts from changes in climate identified under the climate projections for Aberdeen are set out in the Evidence Base for Aberdeen Adapts. Potential impacts to buildings include from flooding, water penetration, damp and condensation; in addition hotter summer temperatures may affect those with certain health conditions.

Aberdeen Adapts: Climate Adaptation Framework 2022 is the city-wide climate adaptation framework, outlining five priorities and fifteen goals to support preparing for, and building resilience to, the impacts of climate change. This includes a priority of understanding risks to the Granite City's built environment, addressing climate change in the planning, build, maintenance and protection of city buildings, infrastructure and heritage.

The Flood Risk Management Strategy (SEPA) for the Northeast Local Plan District identifies four areas in Aberdeen City that are potentially vulnerable to flooding including Aberdeen City North, Aberdeen Central, Peterculter and Cove and Nigg

Bay. It considers current and future flood risk, indicating approximately 19,530 homes and business in Aberdeen are at current risk of flooding. The Northeast Local Flood Risk Management Plan 2022-28 incorporates mitigating actions to manage flood risks in these areas.

Reducing global emissions is essential to limit levels of change in climate and the resultant impacts on people and place. This is the aim of the Paris Agreement which seeks to limit global warming to well below 2°C, whilst aiming for 1.5°C.The need to reduce emissions in support of net zero targets is reflected in a range of current and emerging legislative drivers and commitments at national and local level.

The Net Zero Aberdeen Routemap (2022) sets out a pathway towards Aberdeen achieving net zero by 2045. It is supported by six enabling strategies on key themes including Mobility, Buildings and Heat, Circular Economy, Energy Supply, Natural Environment and Empowerment.

The Net Zero Buildings and Heat Strategy sets out the role that buildings and heat have in the Net Zero Aberdeen journey. The strategic aim is to “reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2045, through rapid decarbonisation across all sectors with many changes to the ways in which both power and heat is generated and used. The Buildings and Heat Strategy includes outcomes for improved energy efficiency of buildings, expanding low and zero emission heating and increased connections to decentralised energy, alongside outcomes for fuel poverty.

The Aberdeen Local Development Plan includes policies for low and zero carbon buildings; renewable and low carbon energy development; and heat networks.

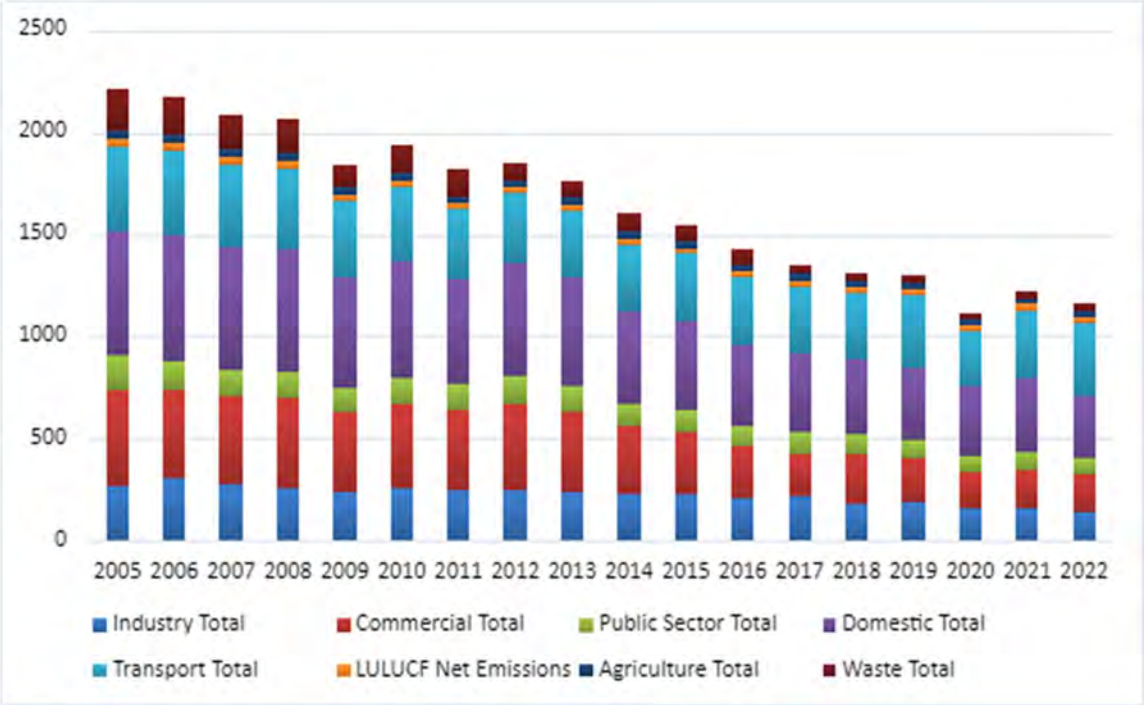
The Local Housing Strategy aims to ensure alignment across plans and strategic drivers for flooding, climate and property protection; and work to support city priorities for low and zero carbon, as well as resilient housing.

Aberdeen Status/Conditions

Acknowledging the global climate emergency and legislative requirements, Aberdeen’s Local Outcome Improvement Plan includes a stretch outcome for addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by at least 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate.

Figure 6.2.12 below shows the greenhouse gas emissions for 2005 to 2022 in Aberdeen. The overall trend has been a reduction in city emissions since 2005, although levels of reduction vary across sectors.

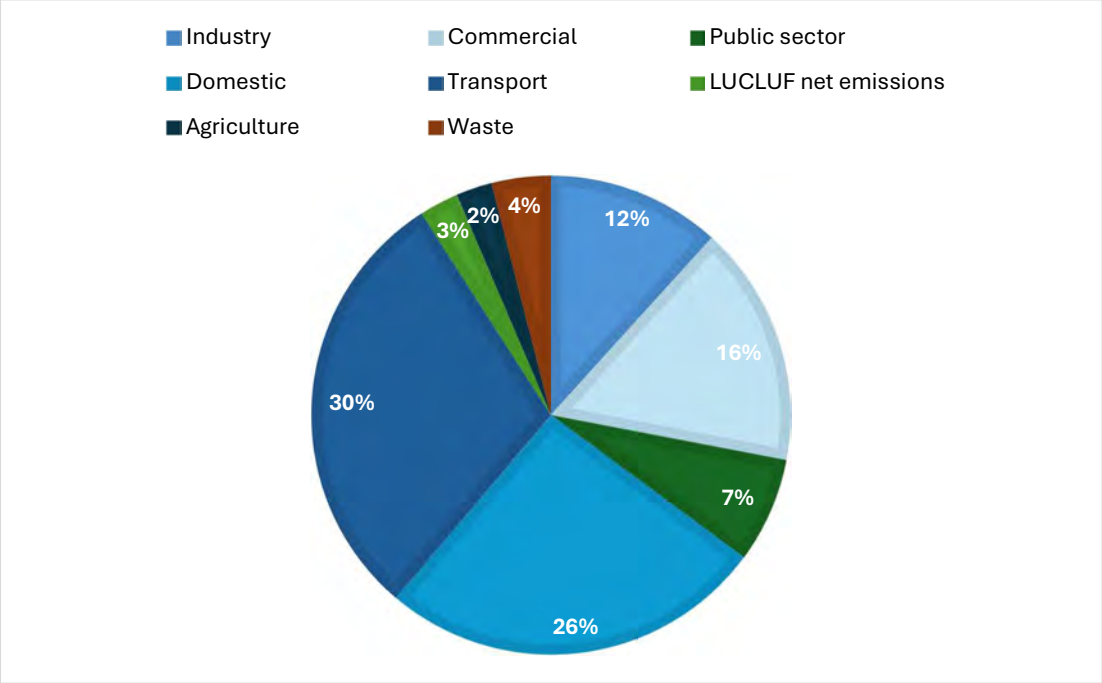
Figure 6.2.12 Aberdeen Greenhouse Gas Emissions kt CO2e, 2005 – 2022



Source: UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emission statistics, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2022).

Figure 6.2.13 below shows that domestic energy use in homes is responsible for approximately 26% of greenhouse gas emissions in Aberdeen. Most of those emissions were generated by heating, from fossil fuel systems, with emissions from domestic gas being the most significant source. An increased scale and pace of activity in reducing energy demand and decarbonising heat through a transition to clean energy systems is required to reach the net zero target of 2045 for the city. However, a fair and just approach is essential to ensure uptake, participation and avoid socio-economic impact.

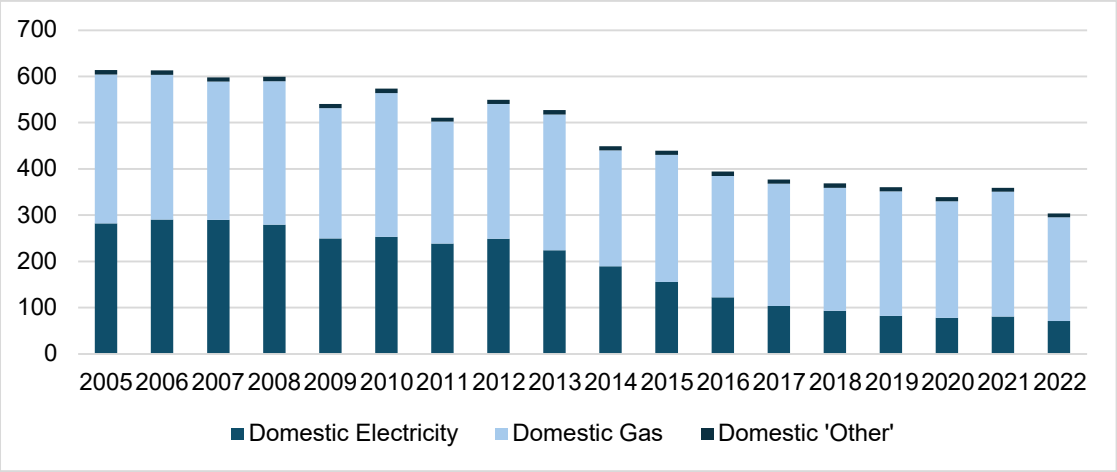
Figure 6.2.13 Aberdeen Greenhouse Gas Emissions kt CO2e, 2022



Source: UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emission statistics, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2022).

Figure 6.2.14 below shows that greenhouse gas emissions from domestic energy have reduced from around 614 kt CO2e in 2005 to 304 kt CO2e in 2022, a reduction of 50%. The most significant source of reduction is emissions from domestic electricity, with a key contributor to this the decarbonisation of the UK electricity grid. In addition, city actions including installation of energy efficiency measures; and the connection of 3,631 homes to district heating by 2023/24, have helped to contribute to reductions in city emissions from domestic energy. However, actions and reductions will need to be sustained requiring infrastructure, resources and a range of clean energy solutions.

Figure 6.2.14 Aberdeen Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Domestic Sector in ktCO2e



Source: UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2005- 2022)

Initiatives to Reduce Impact

A number of heat networks are already in place in the city operated by the not-for-profit company “Aberdeen Heat and Power” as well as the NHS and Aberdeen and Robert Gordon’s Universities. These heat networks are helping to provide lower cost and lower carbon heat, particularly for hard to heat residential property types.

The new build council housing programme is building to gold standard specification. The standard requires use of energy efficiency technologies to reduce heat loss and the homes are designed with high levels of insulation and energy efficient windows and doors. The new build homes are increasing connections to low and zero carbon heat, including district heating.

Project Doric (Domestic Optimised Retrofit Innovation Concept) has enabled the ‘whole house retrofit’ of 50 council homes in the city. Each property was assessed individually to determine which measures suited the property type best. A variety of measures were installed from cavity wall insulation through to external wall insulation and air source heat pumps and solar photovoltaics (PV). Throughout the project, learning was gained on whole house retrofit and decarbonisation which will inform the development of a wider retrofit programme. As well as the manufacturers and installers offering advice to tenants when installation took place, SCARF have also been able to offer assistance to tenants on how to use these new technologies most efficiently.

Key Issues – Climate Change and Net Zero

- Reducing heat demand in residential properties to make more efficient and more cost effective to install and operate clean heating systems.
- The need to phase out fossil-fuel based heating systems from residential properties while maintaining a just transition to net zero.
- Emerging changes to legislation and regulation which are strengthening net zero and energy efficiency requirements for the residential sector.
- Scale, cost and resource implication in addressing legislative requirements.
- The need to improve public engagement to understand issues and deliver better advice and signpost to information in support of net zero and climate resilience.

Key Actions – Climate Change and Net Zero

- Support the delivery of actions set out in the (draft) Aberdeen Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) to decarbonise heat and expand heat networks in the city.
- Increase collaboration across city net zero and adaptation partner organisations on net zero, energy efficiency and adaptation actions and opportunities for residential properties.
- Engage partner organisations in Aberdeen with emissions and climate data on residential properties, to better support decision making.

- Expand learning and engagement with residents on the standards, timescales, methods, challenges of retrofit and retrofit actions appropriate for housing types in the city.
- Raise awareness of property level protection measures and available schemes.
- Support the delivery of Net Zero Aberdeen and Aberdeen Adapts including opportunities to upscale net zero interventions and strengthen assessment and monitoring of climate related risks to city residential properties.

Definitions

Fuel Poverty

Fuel poverty is the condition by which a household is unable to afford to heat (or cool) their home to an adequate temperature. It is caused by low income, high fuel prices, poor energy efficiency, unaffordable housing prices and poor quality private rental housing. The definition of fuel poverty is if a household spends more than 10% of its income on fuel costs *and* if the remaining household income is insufficient to maintain an adequate standard of living.

Energy Efficiency

Energy efficiency is the practice of using less energy to provide the same amount of useful output from a service (such as heating water, lighting, or cooling a fridge).

For example, light emitting diode (LEDs) and compact fluorescent lights (CFLs) have revolutionized energy efficiency in lighting and use far less energy for the same amount of illumination as traditional incandescent bulbs.

Climate Change

Climate change is the long-term shift in average weather patterns across the world. Since the mid-1800s, humans have contributed to the release of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into the air. This causes global temperatures to rise, resulting in long-term changes to the climate.

Net Zero

The term net zero applies to a situation where global greenhouse gas emissions from human activity are in balance. At net zero, carbon dioxide emissions are still generated, but an equal amount of carbon dioxide is removed from the atmosphere as is released into it, resulting in zero increase in net emissions.

Aberdeen Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES)

Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES) are at the heart of a place based, locally led and tailored approach to the heat transition. These local strategies

will underpin an area-based approach to heat and energy efficiency planning and delivery. The existing heat networks within Aberdeen will also be developed to play a pivotal long-term role within the city. LHEES Strategies will set out the long-term plan for decarbonising heat in buildings and improving their energy efficiency across an entire local authority area.

Solar Photovoltaics (PV)

Solar Photovoltaics is the **conversion of light into electricity** using semiconducting materials that exhibit the photovoltaic effect, a phenomenon studied in physics, photochemistry, and electrochemistry. The photovoltaic effect is commercially used for electricity generation and as photosensors.

Just Transition

Defines a fair and equitable transition to net zero, with outcomes to ensure the benefits of climate action are shared and costs do not unfairly impact citizens least able to pay or whose livelihood may be impacted.

Green House Gas

Greenhouse gases (GHGs) are the gases in the atmosphere that raise the surface temperature of planets such as the Earth. What distinguishes them from other gases is that they absorb the wavelengths of radiation that a planet emits, resulting in the greenhouse effect. Gases include Carbon Dioxide and methane.

Mean Sea Level

Mean sea level (MSL), often shortened to sea level is an average surface level of one or more among Earth's coastal bodies of water from which heights such as elevation may be measured.

Priority 7: Private Rented Sector

Introduction

This chapter provides information on the role of private rented sector housing in Aberdeen City, as well as detailing the support offered by Aberdeen City Council to help ensure the best outcomes for all stakeholders within the sector.

The private rented sector has an integral role to play in Scotland's housing system, particularly at a time where the Scottish Government has declared a housing emergency and when 28% of Scottish households have some form of housing need[48]. It is crucial that support is provided to both tenants and landlords during the current 'cost of living crisis' and beyond. This crisis began in 2021 and has been named as such due to the rising cost of food and electricity in the UK, with the Scottish Government stating that:

"People across Scotland are being affected by the most severe economic crisis in a generation. The effects of this are being seen now as households and businesses are having to make difficult choices, despite the support that has been announced."[49]

There are a myriad of factors that have contributed to the crisis such as the conflict in Ukraine, the aftermath of COVID-19 and changes in the way the UK trades with other countries following Brexit. Stakeholders in all sectors are being affected and potentially having to make difficult choices in relation to their livelihoods and living arrangements. In the private rented sector, landlords and tenants alike are experiencing hardship as a result of the crisis.

Landlords are facing challenges such as increased mortgage rates, the rising cost of repairs and maintenance, as well as legislative and regulatory measures which aim to further protect the rights of tenants. There have also been emergency measures as a result of COVID-19 and the cost-of-living crisis which have placed restrictions on the ability of landlords to increase rent and carry out evictions. Aberdeen City Council must ensure that landlords have access to the necessary support to remain in the sector and that action is taken where homes do not meet the required standard. This will help to increase the supply of good quality homes for people trying to access the private rented sector.

Tenants have also faced difficulties over the period of the previous Local Housing Strategy as demand for rental properties has surged while stock levels have decreased, as explored further in chapter. This, alongside the difficulties that landlords are currently facing, has resulted in increased monthly rental costs for tenants and is affecting the accessibility of the sector to those who need it. Those tenants who manage to secure rental accommodation can also face issues related to disrepair and poor energy efficiency, which is explored further in the House Condition (Private) chapter. Aberdeen City Council supports tenants and landlords in resolving

[48] Homes for Scotland, Existing Housing Need in Scotland, 2024
[49] Scottish Government, "Cost of Living Crisis," April 2024

disputes and maintaining tenancies where appropriate and help to provide them with the necessary information regarding their respective rights and responsibilities.

Ensuring that all parties operating within this sector receive the appropriate support is a key component in Aberdeen City Council meeting the vision of this Local Housing Strategy. It also demonstrates the commitment of the Council to contributing to national and local policy objectives in this area, as explored in the National and Local Context sections below.

Strategic Priority

We will support a well managed private rented sector.

This Strategic Priority for the duration of this Local Housing Strategy was developed in consultation with both internal and external stakeholders for this sector. This priority encapsulates the changes that stakeholders wish to see in the sector over the next five years in order to improve outcomes for both tenants and landlords.

National Context

Private Rented Sector Strategy

The Scottish Government's vision and strategic aims for the private rented sector are outlined in "A Place to Stay, A Place to Call Home: A Strategy for the Private Rented Sector in Scotland" ('the Private Rented Sector strategy')[50]. This strategy was published in 2013 and as stated in the previous Local Housing Strategy for Aberdeen, Aberdeen City Council has aligned its strategic priority for the private rented sector with the Scottish Government's Private Rented Sector strategy.

The vision of the Private Rented Sector Strategy is:

"A private rented sector that provides good quality homes and high management standards, inspires consumer confidence and encourages growth through attracting increased investment."

This is supported by three strategic aims:

- To improve the quality of property management, condition, and service.
- To deliver for tenants and landlords, meeting the needs of the people living in the sector; consumers seeking accommodation; and landlords committed to continuous improvement.
- To enable growth, investment and help increase overall housing supply.

Details on how Aberdeen City Council is contributing to these aims will be detailed in the Key Actions section of this chapter and also in the House Condition (Private) chapter.

[50] Scottish Government, "A Place to Stay, A Place to Call Home: a Strategy for the Private Rented Sector in Scotland" (2013)

The private rented sector in Scotland has undergone various changes since the Private Rented Sector Strategy was published in 2013. The 'Housing to 2040' strategy, which was published in 2021, stated that the Scottish Government would take action to ensure that the private rented sector offers affordable, good quality and accessible housing options to those who choose to live in it[51].

One of the actions that the Scottish Government is taking is to develop a new private rented sector strategy, known as the 'New Deal for Tenants' strategy. This strategy is currently in draft form and undergoing extensive consultation with stakeholders in the sector, including tenants, landlords and investors[52]. According to the consultation paper, the Scottish Government aims to deliver the following:

- enhanced rights for tenants
- new requirements for data collection on rents in the private sector
- new cross-tenure housing standards
- a new Private Rented Sector Regulator
- legislation to underpin a new effective system of national rent controls

The timeline for delivering these aims was originally 2025, however the final version of the strategy has not yet been published so it remains to be seen whether this will be met. It is clear, however, that the Scottish Government is aware of a need for improvement in the private rented sector and is taking steps to ensure this happens.

The Scottish Government also carried out a consultation in late 2023 regarding a proposed Human Rights Bill for Scotland, which includes implementing a legal right to adequate housing. The consultation did not give an indication as to the practicalities of implementing such a right for local authorities, tenants, and landlords. The Bill serves as another indicator of the Scottish Government's commitment to improve standards of housing in all sectors, which will subsequently have an impact on the private rented sector. Further information on housing standards in the private sector can be found in the House Condition chapter of this document.

Housing (Scotland) Bill

In March 2024, the Scottish Government introduced the Housing (Scotland) Bill to the Scottish Parliament. The Bill contains seven parts which will make changes to several important areas of existing housing law in Scotland, the most notable of which include homelessness prevention, rent controls and the rights of tenants in all sectors. The Bill has significant implications for a wide range of stakeholders in the private rented sector, as the Scottish Government attempt to enact meaningful reforms which improve outcomes for those who live in rented accommodation while also ensuring the rights of landlords to their own properties are protected.

[51] Scottish Government, "Housing to 2040", March 2021, pg. 36
[52] Scottish Government ,"A New Deal for Tenants", Draft Strategy Consultation Paper, December 2021

The scope of the Bill is ambitious, and it will likely take several years for the proposed changes to take effect, however if introduced the following measures will likely have an impact on the private rented sector in Aberdeen and includes:

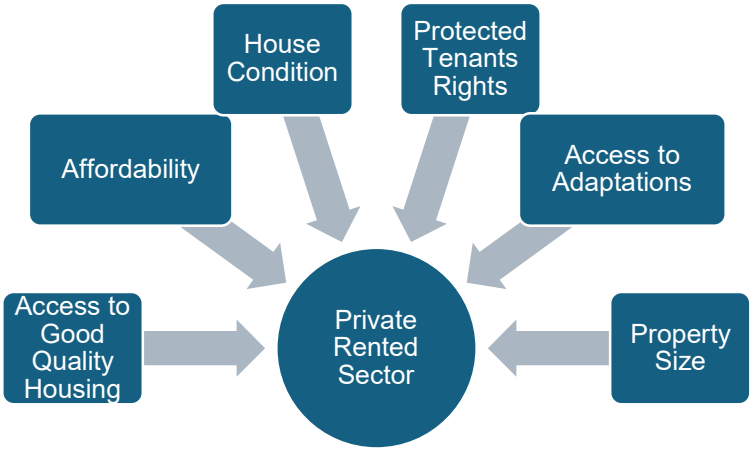
- Rent control areas
- Increased rights for tenants, including the right to keep pets and make alterations to the rental property
- Duties to consider eviction delays and damages for unlawful evictions
- Changes to how joint tenancies can be ended.

Aberdeen City Council has participated in the consultation for the Housing (Scotland) Bill following the Scottish Parliament's request for views on the proposed changes that the Bill will introduce.

Aberdeen Context

Social Determinants of Health

Housing is inextricably linked to social determinants of health, which are conditions of a person's environment which can influence their health outcomes. In terms of the private rented sector, there are several factors which can influence a person's health outcomes, as detailed in the adjacent diagram. This diagram represents some of the main drivers that can influence health outcomes in the private rented sector.



Accessibility to this sector is a significant contributor to positive health outcomes. The private rented sector is a key housing option for those who are unable to purchase their own property or access social rented homes. It is important that these individuals are able to access affordable, good quality housing in this sector, with any adaptations that they may require in order to live a healthy and comfortable life in their chosen accommodation. Regarding the quality of housing and how this can impact health, this is further explored in the House Condition chapter of this Local Housing Strategy. People may also struggle to source accommodation of the appropriate size for their household which can have a negative impact on health. In recent years, there has been increasing protection in tenant rights through legislation and this has the potential to positively impact on the health outcomes of those living in this sector.

Local Policies

The private rented sector can contribute to the objectives outlined in several local policies and strategies, such as Aberdeen City Council's refreshed Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-2026. The private rented sector holds relevance to Stretch Outcome 12 of the LOIP, which has the goal of reducing homelessness. Table 7.1 below details the stretch outcomes for which the private rented sector holds particular relevance, and the improvement project aims which relate to this sector. Table 7.1 is not an exhaustive list of every potential link to this sector in the LOIP, however includes the improvement project aims which have more direct links to the private rented sector.

Table 7.1: LOIP Stretch Outcomes and Improvement Project Aims Relevant to Private Rented Sector:

Stretch Outcome 12	Improvement Project Aims
Reduce homelessness by 10% and youth homelessness by 6% by 2026, ensuring it is rare, brief, and non-recurring with a longer-term ambition to end homelessness in Aberdeen City.	Reduce the number of evictions and increase the percentage of people supported to sustain their tenancy across private and social landlords.
	Increase education and skills relating to tenancy management and housing rights for young people.
	Increase accessibility to a wider range of housing options to people at risk of homelessness.

Source: Aberdeen City Council Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-2026, Refreshed Version (2024)

One improvement project aim is to reduce the number of evictions and people supported to sustain their tenancy in both the social and private sector. The support offered by Aberdeen City Council to stakeholders in the private sector helps to educate them in relation to tenancy management, and also potentially makes the sector more accessible by providing advice to those entering the sector.

Extent and Location of the Private Sector

Private landlords are required to apply for registration with their local authority under the Antisocial Behaviour etc. (Scotland) Act 2004. Aberdeen City Council investigates reports of all unregistered landlords and will take enforcement action against landlords who are continuing to operate without registering to help ensure that rental properties on the market provide safe and secure homes to those who need them. Landlords operating without a valid registration will be issued a rent penalty notice which suspends them from collecting rental income. Action is also taken against landlords where a registration has expired and not renewed in the form of a late application fee, followed by a rent penalty notice if the property continues to be rented out without a valid registration.

Table 7.2 below shows the number of unregistered landlords or landlords whose registration has expired that have been contacted by the Private Sector Housing team and any enforcement action taken as a result of the investigation. The number of RPNs served on unregistered landlords is relatively low with much of the enforcement action taken relating to registrations which have expired.

Table 7.2: Action Taken in Relation to Unregistered Landlords and Expired Registrations

	Unregistered Landlords Contacted	RPNs served on Unregistered Landlords	Late Application Fees	RPNs served on Landlords with Expired Registrations
2020/21	288	0	462	135
2021/22	147	35	370	201
2022/23	111	18	347	192
2023/24	228	25	372	184

Source: Private Sector Housing team, Aberdeen City Council (2024)

According to the landlord registration database, as of 31 March 2024 there were 19,712 registered landlords in Aberdeen that collectively own 25,235 properties in the City. The number of private rented sector properties in 2019 was 30,952 and the number of registered landlords was 20,491. This represents a significant reduction in the number of properties compared to 2019, although the number of registrations has remained at a consistent level over the six-year period. It is important to note that the steep drop between 2019 and 2020 is likely a result of factors associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Following 2020, the number of properties in the private rented sector has risen slightly, however this is still substantially lower than the pre-pandemic numbers.

The data in the Table 7.3 below indicates that while the number of active landlord registrations has remained relatively consistent, landlords seem to be reducing the size of their property portfolios. This is likely due to a variety of factors, including rising mortgage rates, increased labour and materials costs due to COVID-19 and Brexit, as well as the strengthening of tenant rights and rent controls.

Table 7.3: Private Rented Sector: Properties and Active Registrations in Aberdeen 2019-24, as of 31 March Annually

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Change 2019-24
Properties	30,952	24,169	24,883	24,874	24,984	25,235	-5,717 **(-18.5%)**
Active Registrations	20,491	20,189	19,973	19,769	19,783	19,712	-779 **(-3.8%)**

Source: Registers of Scotland (2024)

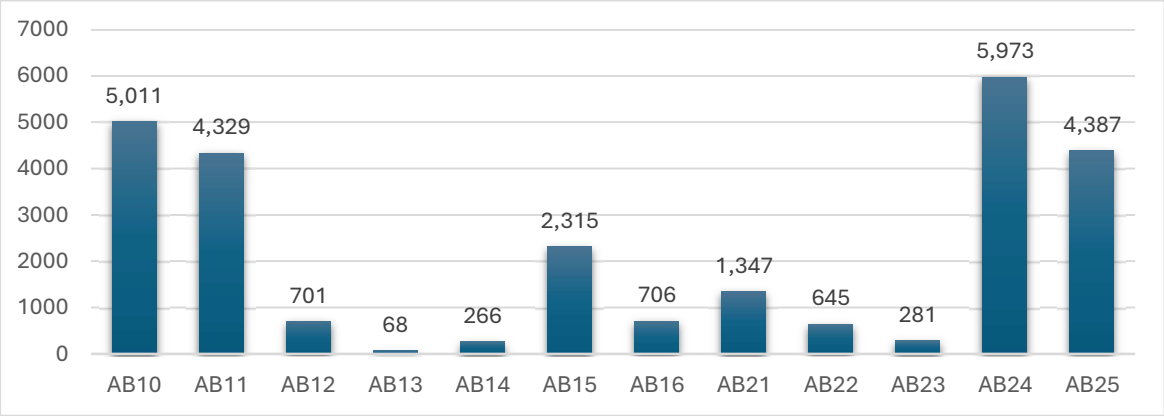
There is, however, anecdotal evidence from local letting agents and landlords, that landlords are planning to exit the sector in the near future due to the difficulties mentioned above. During the consultation period of the Local Housing Strategy, stakeholders indicated that difficulties in carrying out essential works, particularly roofing repairs, has led to landlords opting to reduce their property portfolios. These difficulties include sourcing local tradespeople to carry out the works, as well as the rising costs of these repairs when they are carried out.

It has also been suggested that political and legislative uncertainty in the sector has contributed to landlords leaving the sector or reducing their portfolios, such as the

Housing (Scotland) Bill presenting the possibility of further rent controls and several local authorities declaring housing emergencies.

Figure 7.1 below shows the number of registered private rented sector properties in the City by postcode. The majority of properties are centrally located or in close proximity to higher education establishments, with AB10, AB11, AB24 and AB25 all being relatively central or have one of the city's universities located within their boundaries. Further information on the areas surrounding the universities can be found within the HMO section below. There are also a significant number of private rented sector properties in the AB15 region of the city.

Figure 7.1: Total Number of Private Rented Sector Properties in each Aberdeen Postcode Boundary, 2024



Source: Aberdeen City Council, Private Sector Housing Team (August 2024)

Figure 7.2 below shows a map of the postcode boundaries in Aberdeen for reference. The postcode data is based on information provided by Aberdeen City Council's Private Sector Housing team which was a snapshot of rental properties in the City as of 12 August 2024. The total number of private rental properties on this date, 26,029, is therefore slightly higher than the total number of private rental properties provided by the Registers of Scotland detailed above.

Figure 7.2: Postcode Areas Aberdeen

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2024)

Houses in Multiple Occupation

A house in multiple occupation (HMO) refers to any living accommodation occupied by three or more unrelated persons as their only or main residence, where the kitchen and/or bathroom facilities are shared. For landlords to rent out a property for this purpose, they must acquire an HMO licence from the relevant local authority, as required under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006[53]. Aberdeen City Council investigates any complaints made regarding unlicensed HMO properties. HMO licenses are granted for up to a three-year period and must be renewed before expiry if the landlord wishes for the property to remain an HMO.

In the Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3, informal consultation was conducted with property agents in Aberdeen which indicated that, despite a recent increase in student numbers, there was a lower demand for HMO properties from students due to the increase in purpose-built student accommodation in the City. This is reflected in the Table 7.4 below, as the number of HMO licenses being granted per year has decreased significantly between 2017 and 2023, from 412 licenses to 278. This decrease is even more drastic when compared to the peak number of licenses being granted in 2018, with a reduction of 39.6% in the four years since then.

Table 7.4: Number of HMOs Licensed in Aberdeen, 2017-2024

Year	Licenses Granted	Total
2017	412	1,374
2018	460	1,355
2019	448	1,320
2020	300	1,208
2021	388	1,136
2022	342	1,030
2023	278	1,008

Source: Private Sector Housing team, Aberdeen City Council (2024)

The three-year rolling total of HMOs has been on a steady decline since 2017, decreasing from 1,374 licenses to 1,008 in 2023. It is clear to see that the number of HMOs in the city is declining concurrently with the number of properties in the private sector and the number of active registrations, as seen in Table 5.4 above.

Table 7.5 below indicates the decrease in each of these areas from 2019 to the latest data available. The number of properties in the in the private rented sector along with the total number of HMOs and licenses being granted, are all decreasing at a significant rate.

[53] Housing (Scotland) Act 2006, Part 5, s.124

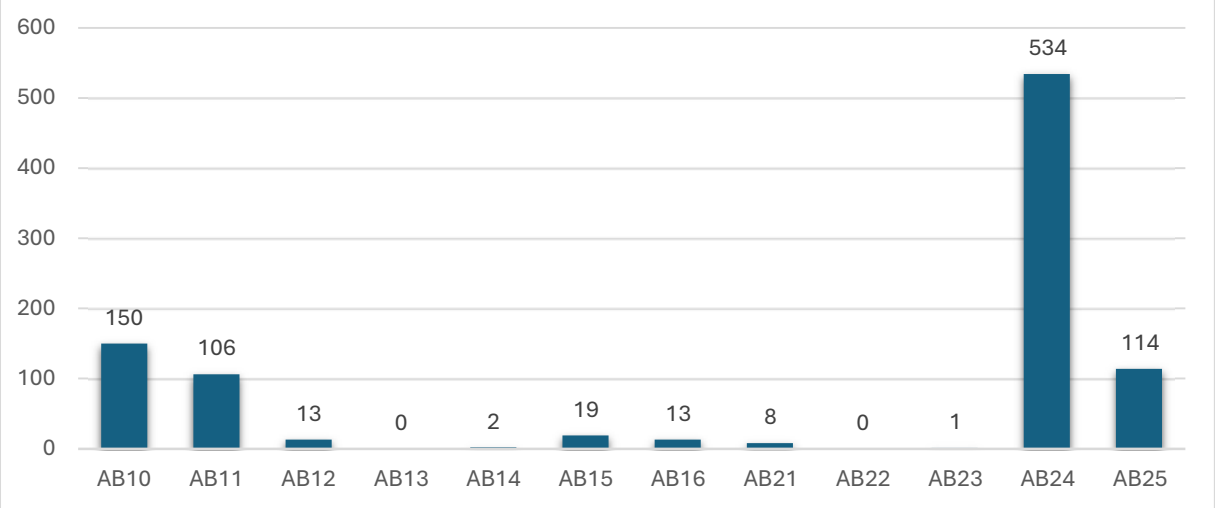
Table 7.5: Percentage Change from 2019 to Latest Data Available (2023 for HMO figures, 2024 for Private Rented Sector Properties and Landlord Registrations

	Percentage Change
Properties	-18.5%
Active Registrations	-3.8%
Annual HMO Licenses Granted	-37.9%
3 Year Rolling HMO Total	-23.6%

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2024), Registers of Scotland (2024)

Figure 7.3 below details the number of granted HMO licenses that are currently live in Aberdeen, and how they are distributed by each postcode in the city. As seen, the vast majority of HMOs granted are located in the AB24 postcode, which covers Old Aberdeen, Woodside, Tillydrone, Seaton and Bedford. Aberdeen University is based in this postcode, which likely explains the higher number of HMO licenses Granted in this area, as students will wish to reside close to their place of study. The AB10 postcode, within which Robert Gordon University is located, has the next highest number of HMO licenses granted, although this is significantly lower than the number in AB24. Generally, the postcode distribution of HMO properties follows similar trends, as seen in Figure 5.1 above for all private rented sector properties, with most being located in AB24, AB25, AB10 and AB11.

Figure 7.3: Live HMO Licenses in Aberdeen City as of May 2024



Source: Aberdeen City Council Private Sector Housing team (2024)

Property Size

Table 7.6 below shows the composition of properties in the private sector for both Aberdeen and Scotland according to Citylets[54]. The data shows that Aberdeen has a higher proportion of 1 bed and 2 bed flats than Scotland as a whole, while having a lower proportion of 3 bed flats and 3 bed houses. The most notable disparity between Aberdeen's market composition and the national picture is that the proportion of 1 bed flats is 5.2% higher in Aberdeen.

Table 7.6: Private Rented Sector Market Composition for Aberdeen City and Scotland, Q1 2024

	2 Bed Flats	1 Bed Flats	3 Bed Flats	3 Bed Houses	Other
Aberdeen	47.5%	36%	6.2%	4.3%	6.1%
Scotland	45.6%	30.8%	7.7%	5.4%	10.4%

Source: Citylets, Quarterly Report, Q1 (2024)

According to a Citylets report, the majority of the private rented sector, both locally and nationally, is comprised of 1 bed and 2 bed flatted accommodation. In the Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3, this market composition was also generally supported by Scottish Household Survey data, however this data was from 2019 and is now several years out of date.

Data from the 2022 Census provides demographical information, such as the household composition and age group of Aberdeen's population. This data, shown in Table 7.7 below, can illustrate whether the proportions of property sizes in the private rented sector, as provided by CityLets, are appropriate for the demography of Aberdeen's population.

Table 7.7: Household Composition by Percentage in Aberdeen City and Scotland, 2022*

	Aberdeen City	Scotland
One-person household	43.4%	37.1%
Couple, no children	17.4%	17.4%
Couple, one dependent child	6.6%	7%
Couple, two or more dependent children	8.5%	9.3%
Couple, all Children non-dependent	3.9%	6%
Lone parent, one dependent child	3.1%	3.3%
Lone parent, two or more dependent children	2%	2.5%
Lone parent, all children non-dependent	2.9%	4.1%
All full-time students	1.8%	0.7%
All other household types	10.2%	12.7%

Source: Household Composition, Scotland's Census (2022) *percentages rounded to one decimal place

[54] "Name of the Game", Issue 69, Quarterly Report, Q1 2024, Citylets, https://www.citylets.co.uk/research/reports/pdf/Citylets-Quarterly-Report-Q1-2024.pdf

When comparing the household composition in Aberdeen to the national level, most household types in the city are of a similar proportion to Scotland as a whole with some categories having a slight percentage increase or decrease. One-person households and couples with no children are the two most common households for both Aberdeen and Scotland, however in Aberdeen the proportion of one-person households is notably higher than Scotland with over 6% more.

Both demographics should theoretically find the private rented sector in Aberdeen to be accessible due to the market primarily being comprised of 1 bed and 2 bed flats. There is also the potential that couples and lone parents with one child or two children may find suitable 2 bed accommodation in this sector.

One-person households, couples with no children, and couples and lone parents with one child only should be able to access the rental market in Aberdeen based on the market composition statistics provided by CityLets, and these demographics make up 70.5% of the households in the city. This percentage does not include couples or lone parents with two children or non-dependent children which may also find 2 bed accommodation to be suitable. The proportion of 3 bed flats and houses in Aberdeen, 6.2% and 4.3% respectively, seems relatively proportionate to the number of households which would require them based on the 2022 Census results.

Aberdeen City Council will continue to monitor the market composition of the private rented sector, as well as the household composition in the city; utilising available data to monitor whether the sector has the required level of each property type to meet the needs of the citizens of Aberdeen.

Rent Levels

According to recent data published by Citylets, demand for private rented sector properties across Scotland continues to rise and is exceeding the available supply of housing in this sector. The Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3 provided evidence that, following the downturn in the oil sector in the city, average rents in Aberdeen decreased significantly and fell below the Scottish average in 2018. Rent levels have remained below the Scottish average since, although in 2022, the number started to rise again following a period of minimal change during the pandemic years of 2020 and 2021.

Table 7.8 below shows the average rent levels in the first quarter of 2024 for Aberdeen and Scotland, compared to the same period in 2023. Table 7.9 also displays the rent levels for the same period in 2019, which demonstrates how rent levels have changed over the last ten years which includes the lifespan of the previous Local Housing Strategy.

Table 7.8: Average Rent Levels for all Property Types in Aberdeen and Scotland, Q1 2024 Compared to Q1 2023, 2019 and 2014, Totals Rounded to Nearest £

	Q1 2024	Q1 2023	Q1 2019	Q1 2014	1 Year % Change	5 Year % Change	10 Year % Change
Aberdeen	£867	£792	£675	£1,029	8.6%	22.1%	-18.7%
Scotland	£1,123	£994	£656	£441	11.5%	41.6%	60.7%

Source: Citylets, Quarterly Report, Q1 (2024)

Average rent levels in Aberdeen have risen significantly since 2019, however the rate of growth during this period is around half of the growth experienced by Scotland as a whole. The rate of growth between 2023 and 2024 shows that the market in Aberdeen appears to be experiencing similar growth to the national trend.

When expanding the analysis to a ten-year period, it can clearly be seen that over the decade there have been dramatic fluctuations in the rental market in Aberdeen, with the 2014 figures being almost 20% higher than the rent levels in 2024. The rent levels then reduced in the period from 2014 to 2019 before increasing again in recent years, which is in contrast with the consistent and significant increases seen for Scotland as a whole in the same ten-year period. As reported in the Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3, these fluctuations in Aberdeen's rental market are linked to a variety of factors, particularly in relation to the performance the oil and gas sector in the city in the past decade.

The Q1 2024 rent levels provided by Citylets can be compared with the current Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates to provide a rough indicator of affordability in the private rented sector. LHA rates are limited by legislation and used to calculate Housing Benefit for tenants renting in the private sector, based on private market rents in the Broad Rental Market Area that the housing benefit claim is made. Table 7.9 below shows the Q1 2024 rent levels by property type, compared to the corresponding LHA rates from the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

Table 7.9: Average Rent Levels by Property Type for Q1 2024 in Aberdeen, Compared to Local Housing Allowance Rates 2024/25

	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed
Aberdeen Average Rent	£545.00	£788.00	£1,145.00	£1,736.00
LHA Rate	£473.72	£648.22	£857.65	£1246.56

Source: Citylets (2024)

The comparison between these two figures clearly indicates that average rent cost for all property types is greater than the LHA rates. However, while the 1 and 2 bed properties remain relatively affordable, the gap between the average rents and the LHA rates are more significant for 3 and 4 bed properties. This disparity suggests that the private rented sector is considerably less affordable for larger families and this may result in additional pressure on social housing stock of this size. The average rents for 1 and 2 bed properties are also still above the LHA rate and could

therefore still be considered unaffordable for some households who require these sizes of properties.

Support Available

Landlords

Aberdeen City Council provides support and advice to private landlords to improve awareness of their rights and responsibilities, while also working with them to improve property management and condition standards in the sector.

An integral part of the support offered by the council to landlords is the employment of the Private Landlord Support Officer, who works with Private Landlords across Aberdeen City and offers advice and guidance on tenancy management and property standards In 2023, the Landlord Support Officer dealt directly with 65 landlords who required advice, with support offered most frequently in relation to legislative queries and tenancy management issues.

Examples of this support includes:

- Annual information sessions on relevant changes in the sector
- Delivering training courses in partnership with Landlord Accreditation Scotland and Aberdeenshire Council
- Encouraging landlords to ensure their properties meet the Repairing Standard
- Providing regularly updated information on the Aberdeen City Council website
- Utilising the Landlord Support Officer Role to provide advice and guidance
- Matchmake-to-Rent Scheme which helps owners of long-term empty properties market their properties to renters
- Quarterly newsletters issued to all registered landlords who want to receive information from the Council, providing landlords advice and guidance on developments within the sector
- Collaborative information sessions with Under One Roof to improve awareness and knowledge of responsibilities in relation to building maintenance.
- Online forums consisting of talks from key speakers from the Scottish Government, Landlord Accreditation Scotland and Under One Roof. These forums cover a variety of topics such as property maintenance, tenancy management and legislative updates within the sector.
-

Tenants

Support and advice is also provided to tenants regarding their rights and responsibilities, such as:

- Providing advice to tenants when they contact the Private Sector Housing Unit (PSHU), such as for issues relating to management standards, repairs, etc.

- Tenant complaint form facilities for situations where tenants have unsuccessfully attempted to resolve the issues with their landlord and require input from the PSHU
- Matchmake-to-Rent Scheme which provides renters with a list of long-term empty properties which are available for rent
- Providing information on the Aberdeen City Council website about support available to tenants
- Encouraging tenants to report instances where they cannot find their landlord on the Landlord Registration Database, or where their HMO property does not appear to be licensed on the Public Register.
- Facilitating Discretionary Housing Payment applications which can be used for assistance in meeting deposits for private rented sector tenancies.
- Facilitating Local Housing Allowance applications which can be used to help those on low incomes pay rent.

Rent Pressure Zones

The Private Housing (Tenancies) (Scotland) Act 2016 introduced Rent Pressure Zones (RPZ) which would allow local authorities to request that all or part of their authority area be designated for a rent cap[55]. These requests are to be made to Scottish Ministers and should be supported by robust evidence gathered by the local authority that proves:

- Rents in the area are rising too much.
- The rent rises are causing problems for the tenants.
- The local council is coming under pressure to provide housing or subsidise the cost of housing as a result.

Currently, there are no rent pressure zones in Scotland and thus far there have been no applications made by any local authority to introduce an Rent Pressure Zone in their area. Aberdeen City Council have not undertaken an application for Rent Pressure Zones and there are currently no plans to introduce them in the city. The data that local authorities are required to provide to prove that an Rent Pressure Zone is necessary is considerable, and doesn't actually exist in any published datasets, which is why there is a lack of applications made by local authorities in Scotland.

Rent Restrictions and Rent Control Areas

The Cost of Living (Tenant Protection) (Scotland) Act 2022 introduced a temporary cap on rent increases for existing tenants to protect them from rising costs during the current cost of living crisis. In addition, the Housing (Scotland) Bill has proposed further rent control measures and local authorities may be required to carry out rent assessments in their area. The Bill, if passed, will give Scottish Ministers the power to designate rent control areas which would restrict increases to rent for new and existing tenancies.

[55] Private Housing (Tenancies) (Scotland) Act 2016, Chapter 3

Rent control areas will effectively replace Rent Pressure Zones as a rent control measure if the Bill is passed as the aim of their introduction is to remedy the same issues that Rent Pressure Zones were designed to address. The introduction of new rent control measures, as well as the lack of local authority applications during the legislation's lifespan, would suggest that Rent Pressure Zones have not had the desired impact on the private rented sector in Scotland.

Aberdeen City Council are monitoring the latest developments relating to the Housing (Scotland) Bill and changes to rent control measures; having actively participated in the consultation process for the Bill thus far. The council will continue to consider the potential benefits and challenges of implementing such measures if the Bill is passed and will work with the Scottish Government to ensure that these are considered during the consultation process and beyond.

Build to Rent

Build to Rent Private Rented Sector offers opportunities to complement existing housing delivery models and help to increase the overall rate of delivery of housing. Build to Rent can contribute to the creation of well-designed, sustainable places, quickly and at scale. It can provide high-quality, purpose-built rented accommodation that will enhance the attractiveness of Scotland, for new and different developers and long-term investors at scale. It can also support labour market mobility by providing homes for people moving into areas for work.

Aberdeen City Council does not have a specific Build to Rent policy, but successful build to rent schemes have been delivered in Aberdeen in the recent past, and the Council will consider any future proposals for such accommodation against the relevant policies in the Local Development Plan and National Planning Framework 4.

Key Issues

- There is a reduced number of private rented sector properties available on the market since 2019, reducing the options available to those requiring housing in the sector.
- There is anecdotal information from local landlords that they are planning to leave the sector, as well as data which indicates they are reducing the number of properties in their portfolios.
- There have been significant fluctuations in rent levels across the city, often linked to oil and gas. This makes it harder for landlords and tenants to reliably predict the costs associated with owning and renting properties respectively.
- Larger family homes tend to be unaffordable for those on low or modest incomes with rents far exceeding Local Housing Allowance rates. 1 and 2 bed homes can currently be found within the Local Housing Allowance rate.

Key Actions

- Continuation of the Council's Landlord Support Officer role to support private tenants when poor rental conditions/tenancy management issues are reported. Landlords are contacted and provided with advice and support on tenancy management/repairs.
- Continuation of random sampling where landlords are requested to provide a copy of all safety certificates in relation to the rental property.
- Engagement with Private Landlords to encourage landlords to increase standards of rental properties in line with the Repairing Standard. This could be through training/information sessions or detail within Newsletters.
- Ensuring private rented sector properties meet Repairing Standard.
- Ensuring that all landlords are registered through Landlord Registration process
- Reporting of landlords to the First Tier Tribunal for not complying with tenancy management and repairs.

Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire

Housing Need & Demand Assessment 3: 2023 – 2028

Contents **Page No.**

HNDA Key Findings Template (Core Process 5) 4 - 5

Chapter 1 - Introduction
- Background 6
- Strategic Context 6
- Governance 7 - 8
- Consultation 8 - 9
- Housing Market Areas 9 - 10
- Quality Assurance 10
- Methodology 10
- Data Limitations 11 - 13
- Signatories 13

Chapter 2 – Key Housing Market Drivers
- Introduction 14
- Methodology 14
- Demographic Trends 15 - 18
- Population Projections 18 - 21
- Components of Population Change 21 - 28
- Household Trends 28 - 30
- Household Projections 31 - 38
- Affordability Trends 38 - 44
- Rental Market Trends 44 - 51
- Social Rents 51 - 53
- Income Trends 53 - 58
- Affordability of Housing 58 - 65
- Mortgages 65 - 67
- Economic Trends 67 - 71
- Housing Benefit and Universal Credit 72 - 73
- Deprivation 73 - 74
- Oil Price and Energy Transition 75 - 78
- Impact of Leaving EU 78 - 80
- Impact of COVID-19 81 - 83
- Key Issues 84 - 87
- Informing the Assumptions and Choice of Scenarios for the HNDA Tool 87

Chapter 3 - Housing Stock Profile
- Introduction 88
- Methodology 88
- Housing Stock Profile 89 – 94
- Dwelling Sizes 94 – 96
- Dwelling Condition/Quality 96 – 100
- Dwelling Tenure 101 – 103
- Stock Pressures 103 – 112
- Low Demand 112 - 113

- Overcrowded and Concealed Households 113 – 114
- Underoccupied Households 114 – 116
- Stock Turnover (Relets) 116 – 121
- Registered Social Landlords 122 – 123
- Empty Homes 124 – 127
- Stock Management 127 – 133
- Future Provision 133 – 136
- Key Issues 137 – 141

Chapter 4 – Estimating Housing Need and Demand

- Introduction 142 – 145
- Existing Housing Need 145 – 146
- Overcrowded and Concealed Households 147
- Temporary Accommodation 147 – 148
- Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Resettlement Schemes 148 – 149
- Estimate of Existing Need 149 – 150
- Scenario 1 – Default 150 – 153
- Scenario 2-3 Rationale 154 – 156
- Scenario 2 Principal Growth 156 – 160
- Scenario 3 – High Migration 160 – 163
- Scenario 4 – High Migration Plus 163 – 171
- Review and Monitoring 171
- Key Issues 172

Chapter 5 – Specialist Provision

- Introduction 173 – 176
- Accessible and Adapted Housing 177 – 185
- Wheelchair Housing 186 – 194
- Non-Permanent and Transitional Housing
- Supported Housing Provision 195 - 224
- Care and Support Services for Independent Living 225 - 239
- Location and Land Needs 140 – 255
- Stakeholder Engagement 256 – 268
- Key Issues 269

270 – 273

Appendices

Appendix A: List of Tables/Figures 274 – 282

Appendix B: Grampian Regional Equalities Centre Research Paper: Accommodation Needs of Ethnic Minorities, Gypsy/Travellers and Travelling Showpeople (2022) 283

Appendix C: List of Those Invited to Attend the Engagement Session 284

HNDA Key Findings Template (Core Process 5)

Estimate of Additional (New) Future Housing Units – Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire

Local Authority Generated Existing Need Figure and Years to Clear Existing Need

Existing Need	Years to Clear
1,236	10

Source: Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council, Housing Management Databases - Waiting List and Temporary Accommodation figures, Refugee Project Managers – Refugee, Asylum seeker and Resettlement Data (2023)

Default Existing Need (HoTOC) and Years to Clear Existing Need

Existing Need	Years to Clear
880	5

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

Total Number of New Households Over the Projection Period

Projection Period	Default	Principal Growth	High Migration	High Migration Plus
2023-2042	15,135	15,505	20,980	24,415

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

Annual Need – Years 1-5 (total households over the projection period who *may* afford)

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3	Scenario 4
Social Rent	1,850	1,625	1,930	2,810
Below Market	895	935	1,205	1,975
Private Rent	1,210	1,145	1,400	2,180
Owner Occupied	1,175	1,165	1,520	2,525
Total	**5,130**	**4,870**	**6,055**	**9,490**

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

Annual Need – Years 5-10 (total households over the projection period who *may* afford)

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3	Scenario 4
Social Rent	835	1,595	1,950	1,950
Below Market	855	855	1,165	1,165
Private Rent	1,025	915	1,205	1,205
Owner Occupied	1,160	1,130	1,535	1,535
Total	**3,875**	**4,495**	**5,855**	**5,855**

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

Annual Need – Years 10-15 (total households over the projection period who *may* afford)

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3	Scenario 4
Social Rent	710	950	1,350	1,350
Below Market	750	760	1,070	1,070
Private Rent	940	765	1,060	1,060
Owner Occupied	1,110	1,045	1,475	1,475
Total	**3,510**	**3,520**	**4,955**	**4,955**

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

Annual Need – Years 15-20 (total households over the projection period who *may* afford)

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3	Scenario 4
Social Rent	495	685	1,105	1,105
Below Market	525	580	915	925
Private Rent	740	560	845	845
Owner Occupied	860	795	1,250	1,250
Total	**2,620**	**2,620**	**4,125**	**4,125**

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

Cumulative Total at End of Projection Period (Existing Need Plus New Households)

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3	Scenario 4
Social Rent	3,890	4,855	6,335	7,215
Below Market	3,025	3,130	4,355	5,125
Private Rent	3,915	3,385	4,510	5,290
Owner Occupied	4,305	4,135	5,780	6,785
Existing Need	880	1,236	1,236	1,236
Total	**16,015**	**16,741**	**22,216**	**25,651**

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

Chapter 1

Introduction

Background

1.1 The Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) is carried out jointly by Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils every five years to inform the decisions made by both councils in relation to housing, homelessness, and specialist provision accommodation as well as for planning for future housing requirements across the region.

1.2 The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 requires local and strategic planning authorities to plan for land use in their area, including the allocation of land for housing.

1.3 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 places a responsibility on local authorities to prepare a Local Housing Strategy supported by an assessment of housing need and demand and the provision of related services.

1.4 The HNDA provides a common evidence base to enable these statutory obligations for Aberdeen City and Shire local authority areas to be met.

1.5 The HNDA will be regularly updated and monitored with a full review on a five-year cycle. This HNDA replaces the previous HNDA prepared for the area in 2017.

1.6 A key element of the HNDA is the estimated number of new build homes required in the future to meet housing need and demand. The HNDA remains a primary element of the evidence base for Local Development Plans and Local Housing Strategies. The HNDA is to be referenced when setting out the workings behind housing supply targets and that these targets are to be included within the Local Housing Strategy. The setting of housing supply targets is not however directly part of the HNDA process.

Strategic Context

1.7 The strategic context for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire has changed significantly since the previous HNDA in 2017. Relevant developments in the intervening time include:

- HNDA Tool – the HNDA tool was updated in 2020 alongside the user guidance for managers and practitioners. The processes surrounding the tool and its role in the HNDA have remained broadly similar, however the tool has been updated with more recent data such as the 2018 National Records of Scotland (NRS) Household Projections. In addition, the tool functionality has been improved.
- COVID-19 – as a result of the pandemic which began in early 2020, local economies have been negatively impacted in several ways such as through

issues in production, supply chains and financial constraints. The pandemic has had widespread impact on housing supply and demand, and this is apparent in many of the areas discussed throughout the HNDA. It is possible that the pandemic will continue to affect housing trends in the coming years.

- Ukraine Conflict – which began in early 2022, has presented various challenges for social housing providers across Scotland. The ongoing conflict has created uncertainty regarding the number of arrivals from refugee, asylum seeker and resettlement groups. The impact for both areas has been considered in the information provided in the HNDA, particularly in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5.
- Brexit –the previous HNDA indicted that the Brexit referendum had recently taken place and the future impact of the result was not clear, although the level of uncertainty was predicted to have a negative impact in the short term. This HNDA acknowledges there is still a level of uncertainty, although more information is now available such as the Brexit Vulnerability Index as discussed in Chapter 2. In addition, the impact on the housing market of Brexit may be seen in several trends such as the increased price and availability of construction materials.
- Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 – this removed the requirement to provide a Strategic Development Plan. The HNDA will continue to inform the Local Housing Strategy and Local Development Plan. The Act also reforms the planning system by giving the Fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4) an enhanced status as part of the development plan.
- Local Housing Strategy Guidance 2019 – this guidance reinforces the requirement for local authorities to prepare and submit a LHS informed by a HNDA. The HNDA should referenced when preparing housing supply targets that will be included within the LHS. The setting of these targets is not a direct part of the HNDA process.

Governance

1.8 The HNDA 3 has been agreed by the Housing Market Partnership (HMP). This group comprises lead officers for housing and planning from Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council. At the project inception, the Housing Market Partnership met quarterly but the frequency of meetings increased as progress was made with the drafting of each chapter. Each chapter was signed off and approved individually by the HMP. The final draft was then approved by the HMP. Microsoft Teams was utilised to allow draft chapters to be shared with the project teams from both local authorities. This allowed discussions to take place out with formal meetings so that progress was not delayed.

1.9 Following agreement by the Housing Market Partnership, the HNDA was reviewed and approved by Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning (Aberdeen City Council), Head of Housing and Head of Planning and Economy (Aberdeenshire Council). It was then submitted to the Scottish Government's Centre for Housing Market Analysis (CHMA) for their consideration.

1.10 A Project Steering Group has managed the production of the HNDA. This group comprised officers for housing, planning, information and research from both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils. The Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) were involved throughout the development of the HNDA to ensure that their interests were represented.

1.11 Sub-groups were established for each chapter in the HNDA:

- Key Housing Market Drivers
- Housing Stock Profile and Pressures
- Estimating Housing Need and Demand
- Specialist Provision.

1.12 The sub-groups were made up of officers from both councils as appropriate.

Figure 1.1: Organisational Structure

Consultation

1.13 The Project teams have taken steps to ensure consultation with all appropriate stakeholders during the development of HNDA 3. In the interests of partnership working and wider engagement, an Engagement Group was established. This group consisted of a wide range of partners, including representatives from housing and planning in both local authorities, registered social landlords (RSLs) who operate in the area, housebuilding and financial sectors including Homes for Scotland who were representing the development industry, Cairngorm National Park Authority and Aberdeen Solicitors and Property Centre (ASPC). Further details can be found in Appendix C.

1.14 Some members of the Engagement Group raised concerns about the limitations of the tool and advised that additional research was being carried out by Homes for Scotland. This research was not available at the time of

finalising HNDA 3 but the results will be considered when both councils are refreshing their respective Local Housing Strategies when setting housing supply targets.

1.15 The main concerns raised were in relation to the figures for overcrowded and concealed households. In order to address this, the Housing Market Partnership agreed that the project teams should carry out additional research with a view to potentially deviating from the tool. This was completed in September 2023. Further details can be found in chapter 4.

1.16 HNDA 3 was drafted and issued to the Engagement Group prior to its submission to CHMA with final comments incorporated into the final draft.

1.17 Minutes of the engagement group can be made available upon request.

Housing Market Areas

1.18 A Housing Market Area (HMA) is "a geographical area where the demand for housing is relatively self-contained" (Scottish Planning Policy 2014). While NPF4 does not require local authorities to identify HMAs as part of the planning process, they can still be useful tools in considering how best to meet housing need and demand, particularly in terms of understanding the affordability profile of different parts of the area.

1.19 There are two HMAs within the Aberdeen City and Shire area: the Aberdeen Housing Market Area (AHMA) which includes all of Aberdeen City and the area within approximately a 20 mile radius of the City. The Rural Housing Market Area (RHMA) covers the rest of Aberdeenshire, including the part which falls within the Cairngorms National Park.

1.20 The HMAs were originally based on 1971 Census data and built up from civil parish boundaries. In 2005/06, there was evidence to suggest that minor changes to the boundaries may be beneficial. No changes were made, however, as the continuity of data and general public acceptance of the boundaries were thought to outweigh the benefits of a small adjustment.

1.21 The boundaries were reviewed as part of work undertaken on HNDA 2 in 2017. It was concluded that there was no evidence to indicate that the current HMA boundaries were unfit for purpose and therefore, no amendments were recommended. This review was included as Appendix 2 within HNDA 2 and can be found on Page 139 of the document.

Figure 1.2: Housing Market Areas

1.22 In May 2022 work was undertaken to consider whether there was justification for reviewing the housing market area boundaries prior to commencing the HNDA. The Housing Market Partnership agreed that the existing boundaries remain fit for purpose, and it would not be appropriate to undertake a full review at that time given the changing planning policy landscape as draft NPF4 was progressing and also the potential for delay to the HNDA timetable. Both local authorities have committed to reviewing the housing market areas for HNDA 4.

Quality Assurance

1.23 The HNDA has adhered to quality assurance principles to ensure that the findings have been reached transparently using clear methodologies. Wherever possible, official and recognised data sources have been used. Any local data has been checked and cleaned to the satisfaction of the Housing Market Partnership. Where there is a number of competing sources of data, triangulation has taken place to ensure that only the most credible data is used in the HNDA. Any non-prescribed sources from the HNDA practitioner guidance have been triangulated or justified where possible.

1.24 HNDA 3 and associated documents were proofread by all members of the project teams with senior officials from both local authorities being involved in all aspects of quality assurance and final sign off.

Data Limitations

1.25 Throughout the HNDA there are various limitations in terms of available data and research which are listed below:

Chapter 1

- None

Chapter 2

- The most recent NRS population projections used in Figures 2.3-2.5 are 2018 based and as such, do not consider events such as Brexit, the COVID-19 pandemic and the conflict in Ukraine which will likely have had an impact on the population in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.
- The most recent data regarding ethnicity is taken from the 2011 Census. This data is now relatively outdated and new data will be available in the 2022 Census results.
- The most recent data on household composition and tenure comes from the 2011 Census and is therefore relatively dated but is the most up to date data source available.
- Aberdeenshire Council is unable to rely on data from Citylets for private rented sector rents as Citylets only covers properties in Aberdeen City.

Chapter 3

- Data related to concealed households in Table 3.19 is taken from the 2011 Census which is now outdated. These figures will be reviewed once detailed data from the 2022 Census becomes available.
- The SHCS data does not include figures for under-occupation of social housing for Aberdeen City or Aberdeenshire due to the base sample being too small to report for this tenure.
- There is a potential discrepancy relating to the number of long-term empty properties in Aberdeen City in 2020 and 2021 which affects the conclusions able to be drawn from this data.
- Choice-based lettings was only recently introduced in both local authorities and there is limited data available at this time regarding the impact of this change.

Chapter 4

- The population projections used in the HNDA Tool (Version 4.0) are 2018 based and are relatively outdated.
- There is a lack of data available regarding future arrivals from refugee, asylum seeker and resettlement groups in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.

- In the absence of concrete projections, both local authorities have agreed on an estimated figure to be used in calculating future need for these groups in the tool.

Chapter 5

Introduction

- Collecting comparative data from the two local authority areas and Health and Social Care partnerships in order to interpret and reach meaningful comparisons has proved challenging.
- Comparative quantitative data may not always be available due to differences in data collection methods used by the two local authorities.

Accessible and Adapted

- Table 5.7 presents the number of people awaiting accessible housing in Aberdeen City between 2018 and 2022, however comparable data for Aberdeenshire over the same period is not available. A snapshot of applications for wheelchair accessible properties, taken March 2023, was presented as an alternative.

Wheelchair Housing

- Table 5.17 presents the stock levels of wheelchair adapted housing for Registered Social Landlords in both areas. Some RSLs listed were unable to provide this data.
- There is a lack of national and local data available regarding wheelchair accessible properties in the private sector.
- The methodology found in the *"Still Minding the Step?"* report by Horizon Housing has been used to estimate the unmet need for households requiring wheelchair housing. However, this is a rough estimate and there is a general lack of evidence regarding the housing needs of wheelchair users.

Non-Permanent and Transitional

- There is a lack of local data available regarding armed forces veterans and their housing needs.
- There is limited data available regarding migrant workers and their housing needs.
- There is difficulty in determining the future housing needs for those in refugee, asylum seeker and resettlement groups given the emergency nature of the situations that causes them to be displaced. Both local authorities have committed to identifying future need and provision required for these groups in the coming years.

Supported Housing Provision

- None

Care and Support Services for Independent Living

- Some data in Tables 5.62 to 5.68 taken from the Social Care Insights Dashboard, Public Health Scotland is not available due to the Health and Social Care Partnerships in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire being unable to provide the data. For example, Table 5.65, Community Alarm/Telecare data is not available in 2020-21 for Aberdeen City.
- There is a lack of national and local data in relation to unpaid carers. This will be reviewed when the 2022 Census data is available.

Location and Land Needs – Site Provision

- The population size of Gypsy/Travellers is relatively unknown compared to other ethnic groups, with limited official data available in terms of the number of households and overall population numbers. This will be reviewed when the 2022 Census data is available.
- There is limited data regarding site occupancy between 2017/18 and 2021/22 for Gypsy/Traveller sites managed by both local authorities.
- There is a lack of national and local data in relation to Travelling Showpeople. In the 2022 Census, this group has been represented as an ethnicity for the first time and data will be reviewed when it becomes available.

Signatories

1.26 The following senior officials at Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council have signed this document confirming they have jointly produced this HNDA and agreed the core outputs.

David Dunne **Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning** **(Aberdeen City Council)**	[redacted] 12 October 2023
Alexander Macleod **Head of Housing & Building Standards** **(Aberdeenshire Council)**	[redacted] 12 October 2023
Paul Macari **Head of Planning & Economy** **(Aberdeenshire Council)**	[redacted] 12 October 2023

Chapter 2: Key Housing Market Drivers

Core Output 1: Key Housing Market Drivers

- Identifies key factors driving the local housing market, including household formation, population and migration, housing affordability including income, house prices, rent levels, access to finance, and key drivers of the local and national economy.
- It should inform the choice of scenarios run in the HNDA Tool.

Introduction

2.1 This chapter focuses on the key housing market drivers for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, informed by projections for future household growth, population trends, private rent and house price growth and economic performance. It highlights the distinct nature of this areas housing market, which has a direct link to the Oil and Gas industry. It will provide justification for the scenarios outlined in later chapters of this report.

Methodology

2.2 The broad methodology used for delivery of Chapter 2 was to allocate project team leads for each section, namely the demographic evidence and the affordability and economic sections of the report. Each lead gathered evidence by local authority area with comparison to Scotland outputs. The analysis considers key questions being asked through the HNDA tool around household growth, income growth and distribution, house price growth and rental increases. Where possible, ten-year trends were considered using data from a range of sources, but principally through nationally published datasets. Past housing trends have been studied as they can indicate future housing trends, which is one of the aims of the HNDA tool. Any data limitations are highlighted at relevant points within the chapter. The analysis is used to inform scenarios for the HNDA tool, as discussed later within the report. All sections of Chapter 2 has been issued in draft form to the project team, regional housing partners and wider Housing Market Partnership as part of the HNDA consultation process, with feedback gathered, recorded and appropriate amendments made.

Demographic Trends

Population

2.3 The National Records of Scotland's (NRS) latest population estimates are for mid-2021. Table 2.1 below shows population estimates for 2011 and 2021. The population of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire combined in 2021 was 490,120, which was 14,010 more than in 2011. This is equivalent to an increase of 2.9%, which is a slightly lower rate of growth than Scotland which saw an increase of 3.4% over the same period. While the population increased in both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, the percentage increase was higher in Aberdeenshire (3.6%) than Aberdeen City (2.2%).

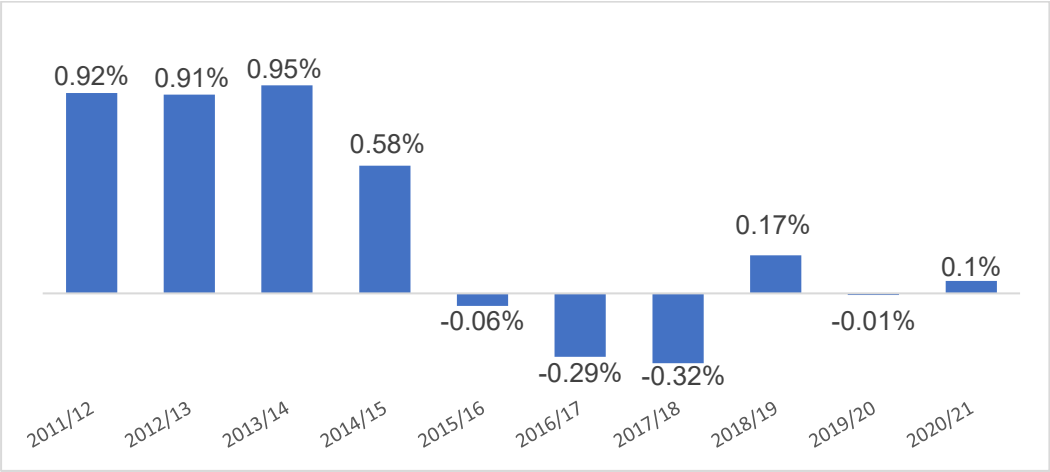
Table 2.1: Population Estimates 2011 – 2021

	2011	2021	Change 2011 - 2021	Percentage change 2011 - 2021
Aberdeen City	222,460	227,430	4,970	2.2
Aberdeenshire	253,650	262,690	9,040	3.6
Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire	476,110	490,120	14,010	2.9
Aberdeen HMA	337,166	349,329	12,159	3.6
Rural HMA	135,834	137,761	1,927	1.4
CNP (Aberdeenshire)	3,110	3,034	-76	-2.4
Scotland	5,299,900	5,479,900	80,000	3.4

Source: National Records of Scotland Mid-Year Population Estimates (2021)

2.4 Figure 2.1 below shows the annual percentage change in population for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire combined. Although there was an overall increase in population for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire in the 10 years between 2011 and 2021, this was not consistent over the period. Following increases in the first four years, the population peaked in 2015 at 492,310 and then decreased in each of the three following years (to 489,830 in 2018) before increasing again in 2018/19. The percentage increases seen in 2018/19 and 2020/21 are lower than those seen at the start of the period.

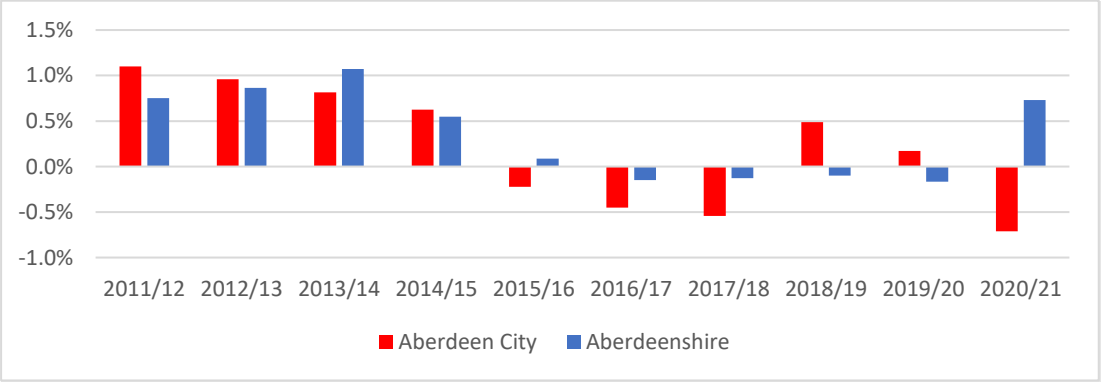
Figure 2.1: Annual percentage change in population, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire combined, 2011 - 2021



Source: National Records of Scotland Mid-Year Population Estimates (2021)

2.5 Similarly, population change has not been consistent across the two areas, particularly in the last few years (Figure 2.2). Whilst Aberdeen City saw population increases in 2018/19 and 2019/20, albeit at lower levels than in the early part of the decade, the population in Aberdeenshire continued to decrease in these periods. However, the most recent figures for 2021 show a sharp reversal with Aberdeen City's population decreasing by 0.7% whilst the population of Aberdeenshire increased by 0.7% (Figure 2.2). This is consistent with the broader pattern seen across Scotland during the pandemic which saw populations in cities falling while some rural areas saw their populations rise. This pattern is reversing recent trends; however, it is not clear yet whether this pattern will be sustained[1].

Figure 2.2 Annual percentage change in population, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, 2011/12 to 2020/21



Source: National Records of Scotland Mid-Year Population Estimates (2021)

[1] National Records of Scotland, Mid-2021 Population Estimates Scotland: *"As well as people moving long term out of cities and into the surrounding areas, there may have been students who have moved back to their parents' addresses temporarily during the pandemic. Another factor could be people who had previously moved updating their addresses with a GP to make sure they received their COVID-19 vaccination letters".*

Age

2.6 Table 2.2 below summarises the population age structure (2021). Overall, the age profile of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire combined is broadly similar to that of Scotland.

2.7 There are, however, differences in the age profile between Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire (Table 2.3). Comparison of the age profile of the two areas shows that relative to Aberdeenshire, Aberdeen City has a higher proportion of younger adults (16-44 years) and a lower proportion of children (0-15 years) and older adults (45+ years). Broadly speaking, the population of Aberdeen City is younger than that of Aberdeenshire, with a median age of 38.25 years in Aberdeen City compared to a median age of 44.56 years in Aberdeenshire.

Table 2.2: Population Age Structure by percentage, 2021

	All Ages	0-15	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Aberdeen City	227,430	15.8%	10.9%	17.9%	15.0%	12.2%	11.8%	9.2%	7.2%
Aberdeenshire	262,690	18.5%	8.7%	10.4%	13.0%	14.6%	14.4%	11.7%	8.7%
Aberdeen City& Aberdeenshire	490,120	17.2%	9.7%	13.9%	13.9%	13.5%	13.2%	10.5%	8.0%
Aberdeen HMA	349,325	17.0%	10.1%	15.3%	14.6%	13.1%	12.6%	9.9%	7.5%
Rural HMA	137,761	17.8%	8.7%	10.5%	12.2%	14.5%	14.8%	12.1%	9.3%
CNP	3,034	11.3%	8.1%	10.1%	8.6%	14.5%	17.2%	15.9%	14.2%
Scotland	5,467,900	16.6%	10.2%	13.8%	12.6%	13.3%	13.9%	10.9%	8.7%

Source: National Records of Scotland (2021)

2.8 Table 2.3 below shows the percentage change in population by age group between 2011 and 2021. Population change has not been consistent across all age groups or areas. Overall, in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire combined, the age group with the largest percentage increase in population was the 65–74-year group with an increase of 31.4% (compared to 22.9% in Scotland). However, the increase was higher in Aberdeenshire at 34.1% than in Aberdeen City at 27.5%. Similarly, while the number of people aged 75+ years increased by 15.4% overall, the increase in Aberdeenshire was considerably higher at 25.6% compared to Aberdeen City at only 3.7%. Overall, the age group which saw the largest decrease was the 16–24-year group which fell by 21.5% (compared to a fall of 11.6% in Scotland). The decrease was greater in Aberdeen City at -29.5% than in Aberdeenshire at -10.5%.

Table 2.3: Percentage change in population by age groups, 2011 – 2021.

% Change 2011 - 2021	All Ages	0-15	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Aberdeen City	2.2	11.3	-29.5	6.2	15.3	-6.6	6.5	27.5	3.7
Aberdeenshire	3.6	2.3	-10.5	-2.1	-8.3	-2.9	8.4	34.1	25.6
Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire	2.9	5.9	-21.5	2.7	2.1	-4.4	7.6	31.4	15.4
Aberdeen HMA	3.6	8.8	-24.0	3.0	8.3	-4.7	7.6	34.7	14.0
Rural HMA	1.4	-0.1	-13.6	1.1	-12.1	-3.9	7.6	25.3	18.8
CNP	-2.4	-23.6	4.2	35.8	-37.0	-5.4	5.9	18.5	3.4
Scotland	3.4	-0.5	-11.6	12.5	-5.1	-7.6	14.0	22.9	16.2

Source: National Records of Scotland 2021, Population Estimates Time Series Data

Key Issues:

- Following a prolonged period of strong population growth, both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire saw decreases in population post 2015 in response to local economic circumstances.
- Compared to the figures for Scotland, both areas have seen an above average increase in older age groups and a decrease in young adults.

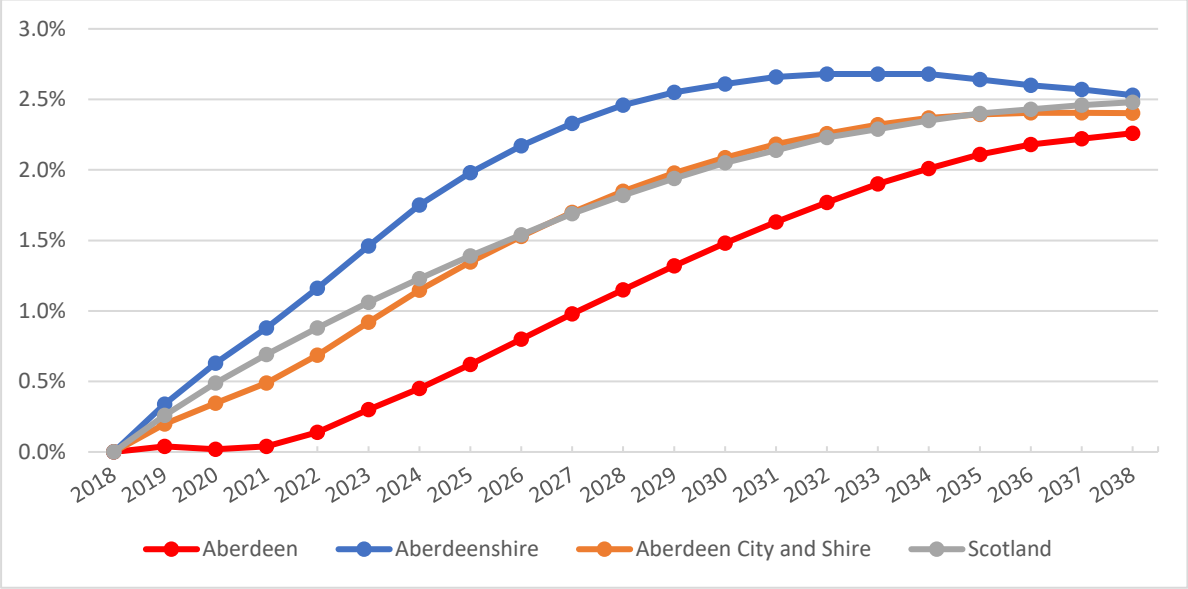
Population Projections

2.9 The most recent population projections available are 2018 based. Projections are not a prediction of what will happen in the future but express what would happen based on a range of assumptions and are heavily reliant on past trends. As these projections are 2018 based, they do not consider subsequent occurrences such as Brexit or COVID-19 which may have had a significant impact on population in the north-east as can be seen by the 2020 based projections for Scotland being lower than previous projections.

2.10 A range of scenarios are produced by NRS but for simplicity most of the analysis below will be based on the 'principal' projection and, given the levels of uncertainty over longer term predictions, will focus on a 10-year projection period.

2.11 In the 10 years between 2018 and 2028, the total population of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire is projected to increase by 1.8% from 489,030 in 2018 to 498,066 in 2028 and follows a broadly similar trajectory to that of Scotland. The rate of increase is projected to be higher in Aberdeenshire (2.5%) than in Aberdeen City (1.1%). Figure 2.3 below shows the projected rate of change for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.

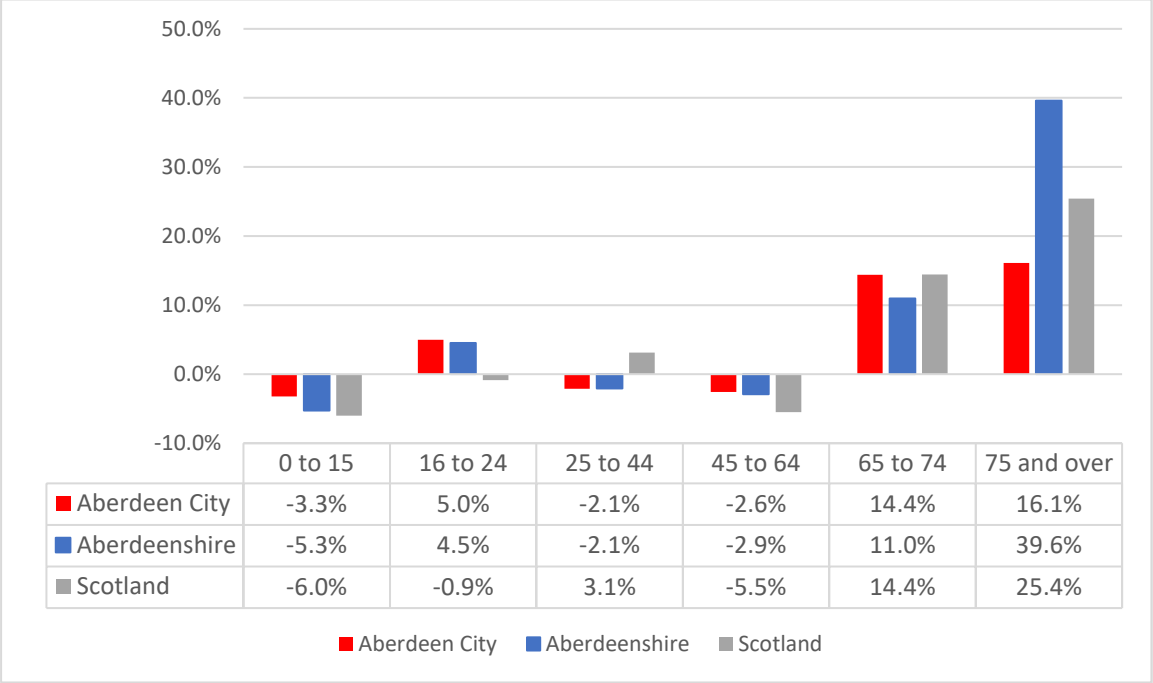
Figure 2.3: Projected percentage change in population, 2018 to 2038



Source: National Records of Scotland, Population Projections for Scottish Areas (2018-based)

2.12 Not all age groups are projected to change in the same way. In both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, the number of children (0-15 years) and the number of adults aged 25-44 and 45-64 years are projected to decrease, while the number of young adults (16-24) and older adults (65+) is projected to increase. The most notable projected change is in the 75+ years age group which is projected to increase by 16.1% in Aberdeen City and by 39.6% in Aberdeenshire (compared to 25.4% in Scotland). Figure 2.4 shows the projected percentage change by age group for Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, and Scotland between 2018 and 2028.

Figure 2.4: Projected percentage change in population by age groups, 2018-2028

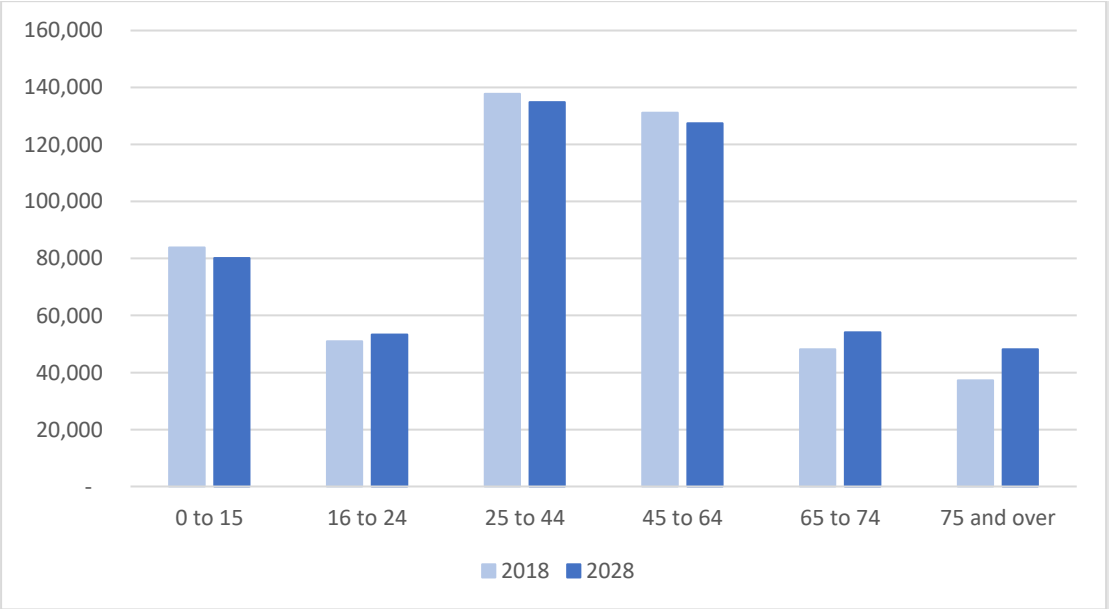


	0 to 15	16 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 64	65 to 74	75 and over
Aberdeen City	-3.3%	5.0%	-2.1%	-2.6%	14.4%	16.1%
Aberdeenshire	-5.3%	4.5%	-2.1%	-2.9%	11.0%	39.6%
Scotland	-6.0%	-0.9%	3.1%	-5.5%	14.4%	25.4%

Source: National Records of Scotland, Population Projections for Scottish Areas (2018-based)

2.13 Whilst the largest projected percentage increase in population across Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire combined is in the 75 years and over age group, in terms of numbers, this is projected to remain the smallest age group, with the largest age group being 25-44 years.

Figure 2.5: Population by age group, 2018 and 2028, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire combined.



Source: National Records of Scotland, Population Projections for Scottish Areas (2018-based)

Key Issues:

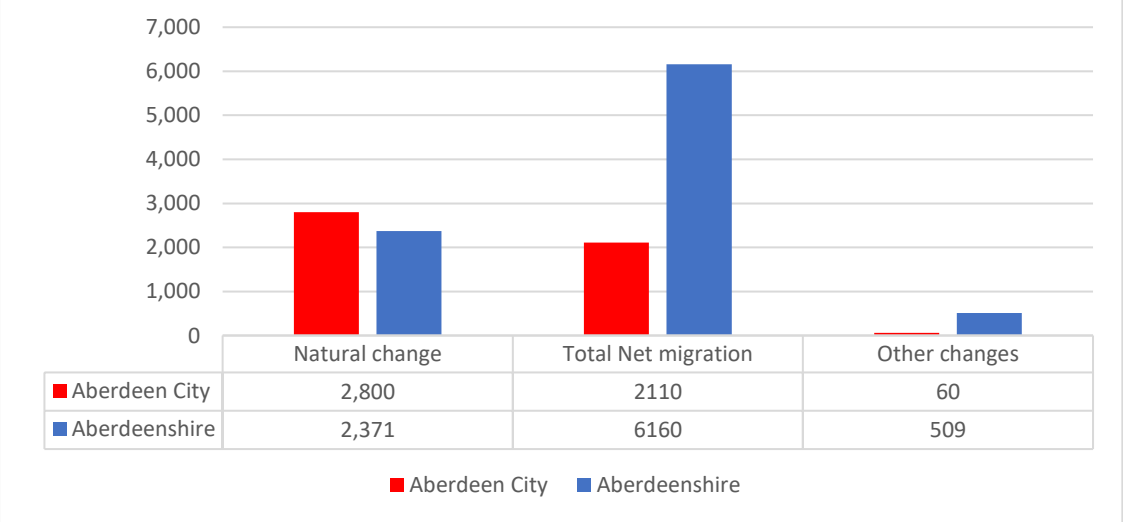
- Population projections indicate a higher rate of increase in population in Aberdeenshire than Aberdeen City in future years. The main increases are in older age groups, and particularly those aged 75+ in Aberdeenshire.

Components of Population Change

Natural Change

2.14 There are two main components of population change: natural change (births minus deaths) and migration. Other changes, for example, changes in the number of prisoners or armed forces personnel can also contribute to population change but these are generally relatively small. Information on components of change between mid-2011 and mid-2021 is available from NRS mid-2021 population estimates. Figure 2.6 summarises the components of change for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, mid-2011 to mid-2021.

Figure 2.6: Components of population change, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, mid-2011 to mid-2021.



Source: National Records of Scotland, Mid-Year Population Estimates, Mid-2021 Population Estimates Scotland

2.15 Between 2011 and 2021, “Other Changes” increased the population of Aberdeen City by 60 and Aberdeenshire by 509.

2.16 In the 10 years between 2011 and 2021, there were 2,800 more births than deaths in Aberdeen City. With a total increase in population of 4,970 in the period, this suggests that over half (56.3%) of the population growth in Aberdeen City over this period can be attributed to natural change.

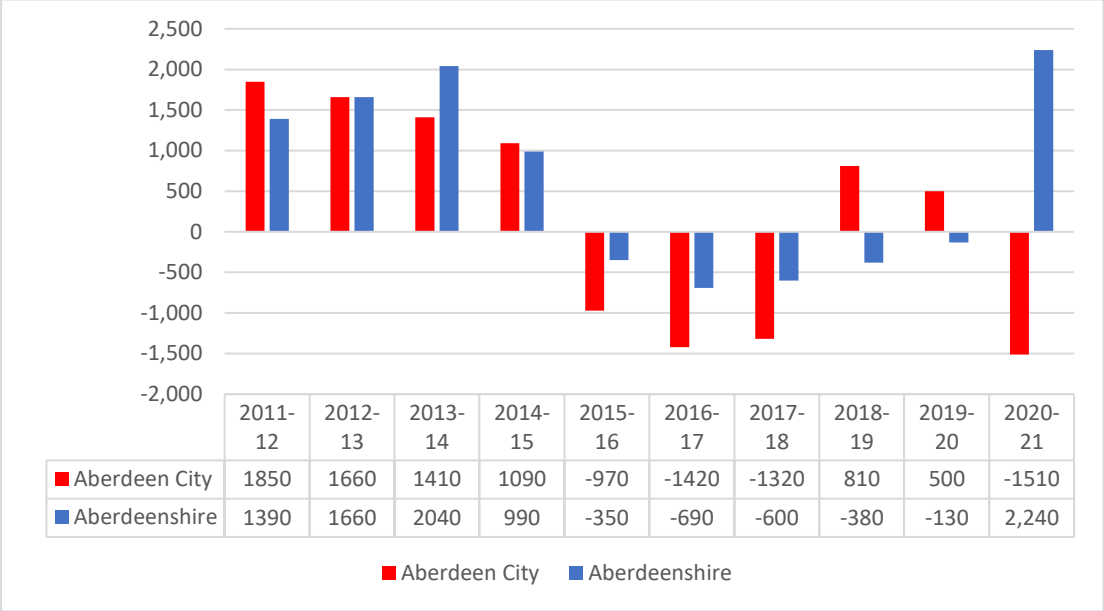
2.17 In Aberdeenshire there were 2,371 more births than deaths, suggesting that 26.2% of the population growth in Aberdeenshire (9,040) over this period can be attributed to natural change.

2.18 Both areas saw positive natural change over most of the 10-year period except for the last two years (mid-2019-20 and mid-2020-21), when there have been more deaths than births (303 more deaths than births in Aberdeen City and 637 more deaths than births in Aberdeenshire for the two years combined).

Migration

2.19 Over the decade, migration has been positive, increasing the population of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire by 8,270. However, patterns of migration have not been consistent over the period and much of the net in-migration occurred in the first four years. Between 2011-12 and 2014-15 total net in-migration to Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire was 12,090 (6,010 for Aberdeen City and 6,080 for Aberdeenshire). The following three years saw negative net migration in both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire which is likely to have been due to the downturn in oil and gas sectors. Whilst Aberdeen City saw positive net migration in 2019 and 2020, although at lower levels than previously, this was not the case in Aberdeenshire where net migration was still negative. However, between 2020 and 2021 there was high net out-migration for Aberdeen City while Aberdeenshire saw the highest levels of positive net migration that has occurred over the 10-year period, with over half of this (58.5%) resulting from within Scotland migration (figure 2.7). This is likely to be related to the broader movement of people from cities to surrounding areas during the pandemic.

Figure 2.7: Net migration, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire

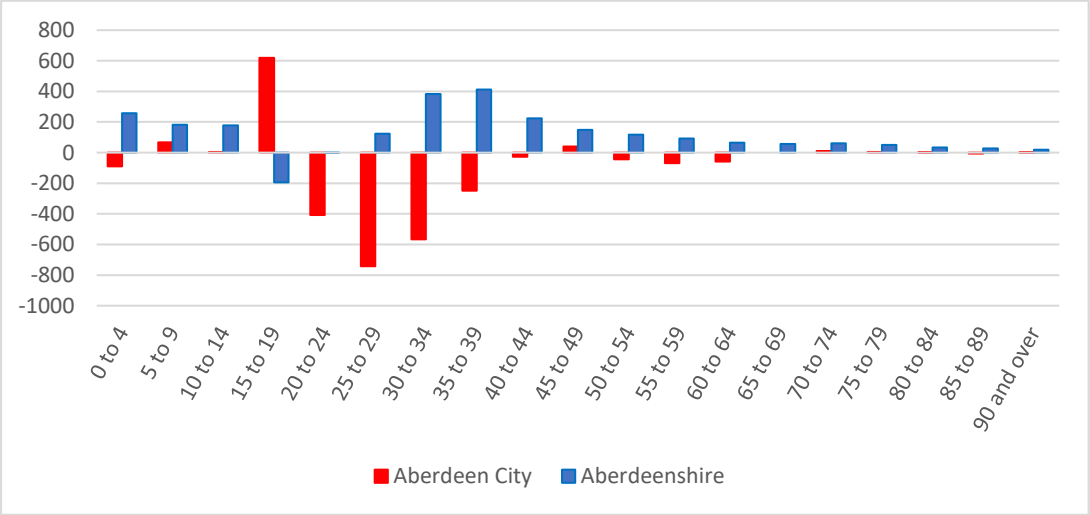


	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Aberdeen City	1850	1660	1410	1090	-970	-1420	-1320	810	500	-1510
Aberdeenshire	1390	1660	2040	990	-350	-690	-600	-380	-130	2,240

Source: National Records of Scotland, Total Migration to or from Scotland

2.20 Figure 2.8 shows net migration to Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire by 5-year age-groups for 2020-2021. Peak net in-migration to the city was in the 15–19-year age group with peak net out-migration in the 25–29-year age-group. For Aberdeenshire, peak net in-migration is in the 30-34 year and 35–39-year age groups, with peak net out-migration in the 15–19-year age-group.

Figure 2.8: Net migration by 5-year age groups, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, mid-2020 to mid-2021

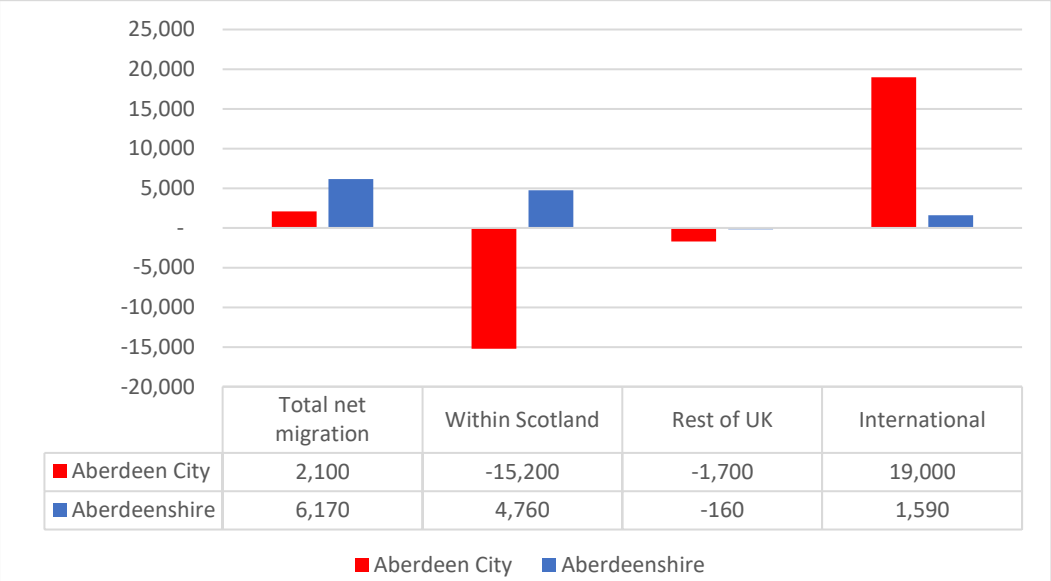


Source: National Records of Scotland, Total Migration to or from Scotland, Migration to and from administrative areas by age.

2.21 Figure 2.9 gives the breakdown of net migration (within-Scotland migration, rest of UK migration and international migration) for the period between mid-2011 and mid-2021, highlighting differences in migration patterns in both

areas. For Aberdeen City, only international migration was positive, while migration within Scotland and to other parts of the UK was negative. In contrast, Aberdeenshire had relatively low levels of positive net international migration but had positive net within-Scotland migration.

Figure 2.9: Net migration for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, mid 2011 to mid-2021



	Total net migration	Within Scotland	Rest of UK	International
Aberdeen City	2,100	-15,200	-1,700	19,000
Aberdeenshire	6,170	4,760	-160	1,590

Source: National Records of Scotland, Total Migration to or from Scotland

2.22 In addition to looking at net migration, it is also useful to look at migration flows as these give an indication of levels of movement in and out of an area. Table 2.4 below shows migration flows for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire for mid-2020 to mid-2021, providing a more detailed look at movement of people in and out of the area in the last year. Overall, there was more movement in Aberdeen City than in Aberdeenshire, with a total of 25,050 people either moving into or out of the city compared to 16,790 for Aberdeenshire. In both areas, within-Scotland movement accounted for most of the flows. For example, in Aberdeen City, a total of 13,280 people moved out of the city with most of this (65%) being to other parts of Scotland. Movement from Aberdeenshire to other parts of Scotland accounted for 75% of all out-migration from the area and 71% of all in-migration.

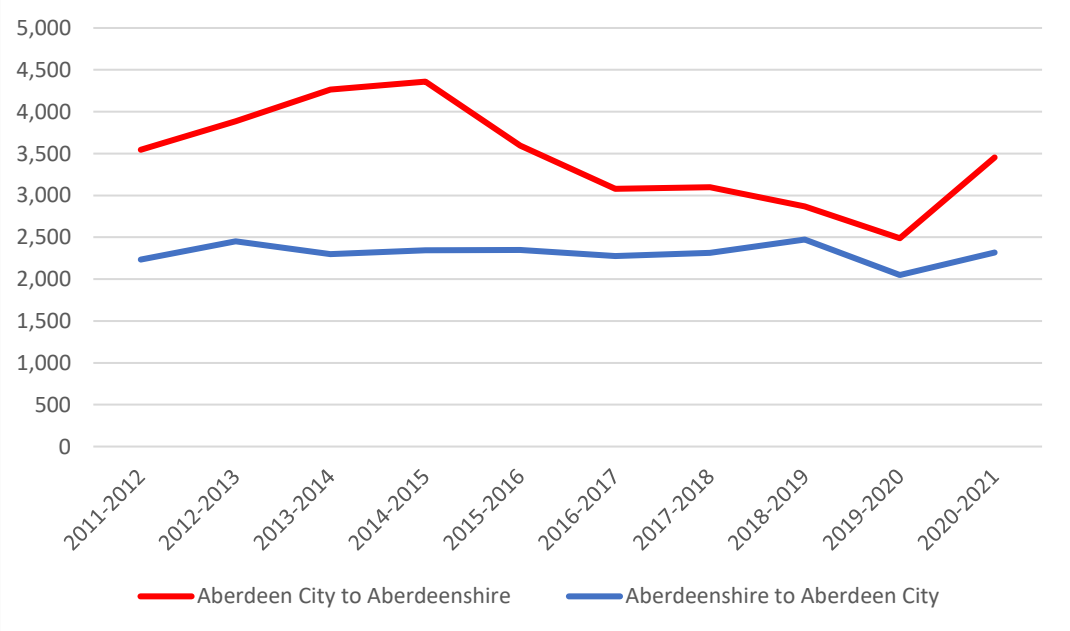
Table 2.4: In – Out - and Net migration, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, mid-2020 to mid-2021

	In-migration			
	Total	**Within Scotland**	**Rest of UK**	**International**
Aberdeen City	11,770	5,810	2,270	3,690
Aberdeenshire	9,510	6,750	2,000	770
	Out-migration			
	Total	**Within Scotland**	**Rest of UK**	**International**
Aberdeen City	13,280	8,640	2,910	1,720
Aberdeenshire	7,280	5,440	1,340	500
	Net-migration			
	Total	**Within Scotland**	**Rest of UK**	**International**
Aberdeen City	-1,510	-2,830	-640	1,970
Aberdeenshire	2,240	1,310	660	270

Source: National Records of Scotland, Mid-2021 Population Estimates

2.23 Figure 2.10 shows flows from Aberdeen City to Aberdeenshire and flows from Aberdeenshire to Aberdeen City from mid-2011 to mid-2021. The figure highlights the sharp increase in flows from Aberdeen City to Aberdeenshire during the pandemic.

Figure 2.10: Flows from Aberdeen City to Aberdeenshire and from Aberdeenshire to Aberdeen City, mid-2011 to mid-2021



Source: National Records of Scotland, Migration within Scotland

2.24 Focussing on data for the most recent year, between mid-2020 and mid-2021, of the 8,643 people who moved out of Aberdeen City to other parts of Scotland, 3,453 (40%) moved to Aberdeenshire. The next most common moves were to City of Edinburgh (1,090) and Glasgow City (860). Similarly, of

the 5,810 people who moved to Aberdeen City from other parts of Scotland, 2,316 (40%) were from Aberdeenshire, with City of Edinburgh and Glasgow City being the next two most common (540 and 440 people respectively).

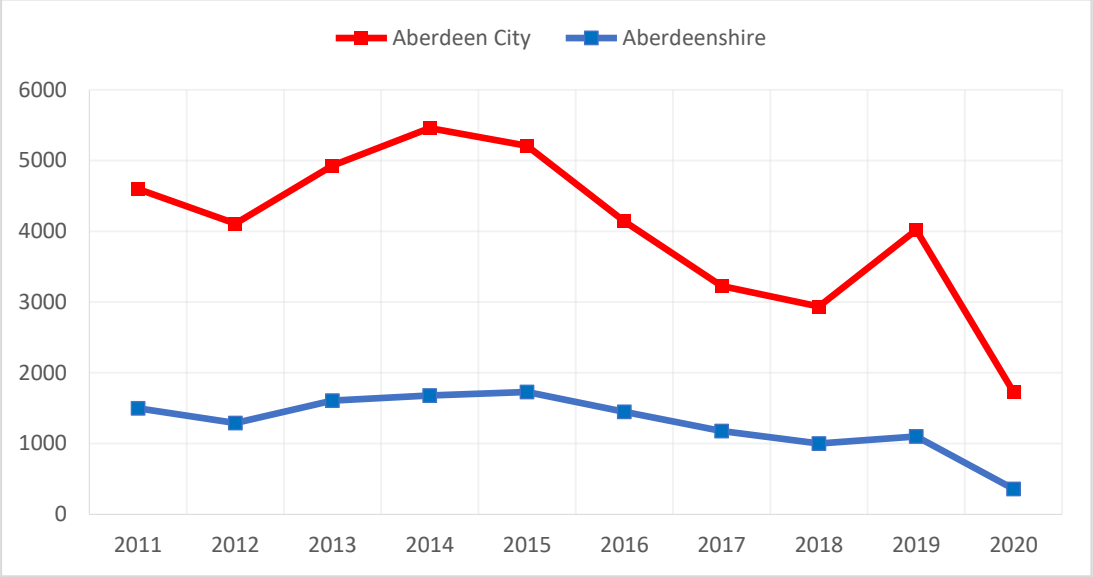
2.25 Of the 5,441 people who moved out of Aberdeenshire to other parts of Scotland between mid-2020 and mid-2021, 2,316 (43%) moved to Aberdeen City. The next most common destinations were Angus (380) and City of Edinburgh (360). Of the 6,750 people who moved to Aberdeenshire, 3,453 (51%) were from Aberdeen City. The next most common sources of within-Scotland in-migration to Aberdeenshire were again Angus (460) and City of Edinburgh (450).

Migrant Workers

2.26 A National Insurance Number (NINo) is generally required by any adult overseas national looking to work or claim benefits/tax credits in the UK, including the self-employed or students working part-time. NINo allocations give an indication of the inflow of migrant workers into an area. However, it does not show the overall number of migrant workers at a particular time, their length of stay or when they leave.

2.27 In 2020, there were 2,092 NiNo allocations in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. This is the lowest number in the 10-year period between 2011 and 2020. Total number of allocations for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire peaked in 2014 and decreased in each of the four subsequent years. The number of allocations rose again in 2019, before dropping sharply in 2020 due to the restrictions on international travel during the COVID-19 pandemic. NINo allocations are consistently higher in Aberdeen City than Aberdeenshire. Figure 2.11 below shows the number of NINo registrations for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire for the period 2011-2020.

Figure 2.11: Number of NINo registrations, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, 2011-2020



Source: National Records of Scotland (Department for Work and Pensions)

Ethnicity

2.28 The most recent data on ethnicity comes from the 2011 Census. In 2011, as in 2001, around 80% of residents from a non-white ethnic minority who lived in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, lived in Aberdeen City. The largest non-white ethnic minority group, in both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, comprised people who described their ethnic group as Asian, Asian Scottish, or Asian British.

Table 2.5: Ethnic Groups in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, 2011

Area	Ethnic Groups	Number	% of population
Aberdeen City	White ethnic groups	204,715	91.9%
	All other ethnic groups	18,078	8.1%
	All People	222,793	
Aberdeenshire	White ethnic groups	249,112	98.5%
	All other ethnic groups	3,861	1.5%
	All People	252,973	
Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire	White ethnic groups	453,827	95.4%
	All other ethnic groups	21,939	4.6%
	All People	475,766	
Aberdeen HMA	White ethnic groups	316,485	93.9%
	All other ethnic groups	20,442	6.1%
	All People	336,927	
Rural HMA	White ethnic groups	137,342	98.9%
	All other ethnic groups	1,497	1.1%
	All People	138,839	
Scotland	White ethnic groups	5,084,407	96.0%
	All other ethnic groups	210,996	4.0%
	All People	5,295,403	

Source: National Records of Scotland: 2011 Census (Table KS201SC)

Key Issues:

- After a long period of positive net in-migration up to 2014, there was a reversal of this trend from 2015 and both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire saw negative net migration for a few years. There remains uncertainty over the future direction and pattern of migration trends post Covid-19 and Brexit.

Household Trends

2.29 Table 2.6 shows the number of households, and percentage change in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. In 2021 there were 222,705 households in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. Between 2011 and 2021, the number of households in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire increased by 6.8% which is slightly higher than the rate for Scotland of 6.4%. The rate of increase was higher in Aberdeenshire at 8.4% than in Aberdeen City at 5.2%. Table 2.6 also shows the number of households has increased at a faster rate than would be expected due to an increase in population alone.

Table 2.6: Households in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire (NRS)

	2011	2021	2011-2021	Percentage household change 2011-2021	Percentage population change 2011-2021
Aberdeen City	103,423	108,844	5,608	5.2%	2.2%
Aberdeenshire	105,006	113,861	8,696	8.4%	3.6%
Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire	208,429	222,705	14,276	6.8%	2.9%
Scotland	2,376,424	2,528,823	152,399	6.4%	3.4%

National Records of Scotland, Households and Dwellings in Scotland (2021)

Household Size

2.30 As in Scotland as a whole, the average household size in both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire has been decreasing in recent years. Between 2011 and 2021, the average household size decreased by 2.4% in Aberdeen City and by 5.0% in Aberdeenshire, compared to a decrease of 3.2% in Scotland. While Aberdeenshire saw a larger relative decrease, the average household size is still larger in Aberdeenshire (2.27 people per household) than in Aberdeen City (2.02 people per household). By 2028 the household size is projected to decrease further, to 1.98 in Aberdeen City and 2.25 in Aberdeenshire.

Table 2.7: Average household size, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire (NRS)

	20111	20211	Percentage Change 2011 to2021	2028 Projections	Projected Percentage change 2011-2028
Aberdeen City	2.07	2.02	**-2.4%**	1.98	-4.35%
Aberdeenshire	2.39	2.27	-5.0%	2.25	-5.86%
Scotland	2.19	2.12	-3.2%	2.08	-5.02%

Source: National Records of Scotland, Households and Dwellings in Scotland (2021)

Household Composition

2.31 Across Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, household composition is broadly similar to that of Scotland, with the main differences being that Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire have a higher proportion of couples and couples with dependent children than Scotland and a lower proportion of lone parents with dependent children. Compared with Aberdeenshire, Aberdeen City has a higher proportion of single adult households <65 years (27% compared to 15%) and a lower proportion of couples with dependant child(ren) (16% compared to 24%) and couples with no children (19% compared to 30%).

Table 2.8: Household composition, 2011

Household type	Aberdeen City	Aberdeenshire	Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire	Aberdeen HMA	Rural HMA	Scotland
Single Adult Aged < 65	27%	15%	21%	23%	15%	22%
Single Adult Aged 65+	11%	12%	12%	11%	13%	13%
Couple, No Children (inc. people aged 65+)	19%	30%	20%	20%	22%	18%
Lone Parent with Dependent Child(ren)	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	7%
Lone Parent, All children nondependent	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%
Couple with Dependent Child(ren)	16%	24%	20%	19%	22%	17%
Couple, All children non-dependent	5%	8%	6%	6%	7%	6%
Other	15%	12%	14%	14%	13%	13%
All Households	103,371	104,714	208,085	149,459	58,626	2,372,777

Source: National Records of Scotland (2011 Census)

2.32 The most recent data on household composition and tenure comes from the 2011 Census and is therefore relatively dated but is the most up to date data source available.

Key Issues:

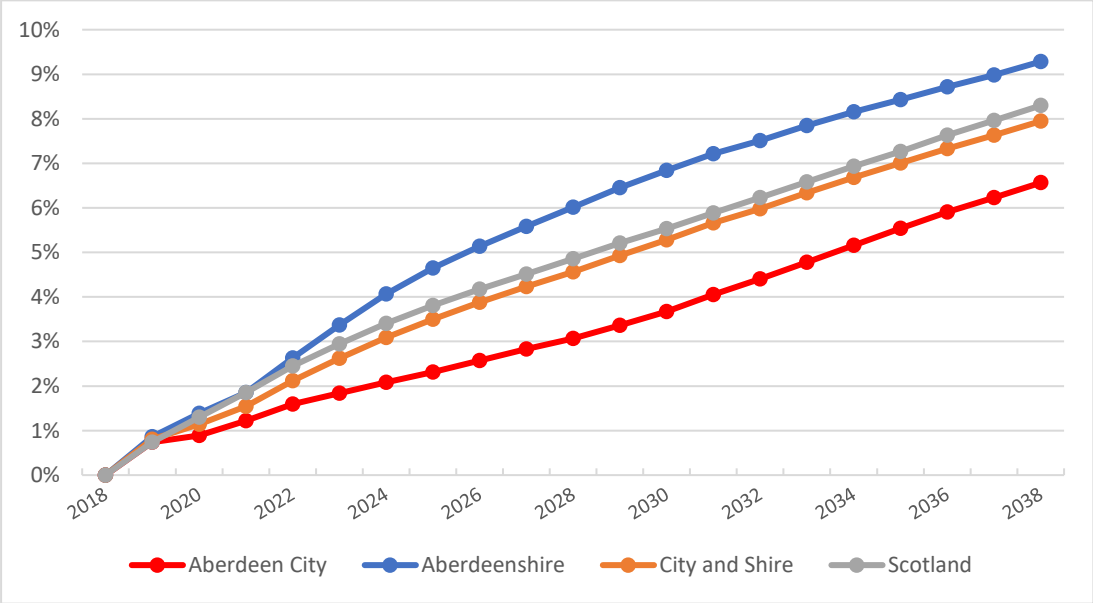
- Since 2011, the number of households has increased at a greater rate than the population. In Aberdeen City the increase was 5.2% and in Aberdeenshire it was 8.4%
- Aberdeenshire has a larger average household size (2.27 persons per household) than Aberdeen City (2.02 persons per household). Household size has been decreasing in both areas and this trend is projected to continue.

Household Projections

2.33 Household projections are trend-based and indicate the number of additional households that will form if recent demographic trends continue. As with the population projections, the levels of uncertainty around projections tend to increase in the longer term so the analysis here will focus mainly on the 10-year period up to 2028.

2.34 Between 2018 and 2028, the number of households is projected to increase in both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, with the projected rate of increase being higher in Aberdeenshire at 6.0% than in Aberdeen City at 3.1%. Figure 2.12 below shows the projected rate of change in households for Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Scotland.

Figure 2.12: Projected percentage change in households (Principal Projection) 2018 to 2038



Source: National Records of Scotland, Household Projections for Scotland (2018-based)

Table 2.9: Household Projections, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, 2018-2028

	2018	2028	Projected Change	Projected % Change
Aberdeen City	107,586	110,884	3,298	3.1%
Aberdeenshire	111,156	117,844	6,688	6.0%
Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire	218,742	228,728	9,986	4.6%
Scotland	2,477,276	2,597,626	120,350	4.9%

Source: National Records of Scotland, Household Projections for Scotland (2018-based)

2.35 While the principal projection uses assumptions about migration which are thought most likely to occur, NRS also publishes projections were either low or high international migration is assumed. These are presented in Tables 2.10 and 2.11.

Table 2.10: Household projections - low international migration variant

	2018	2028	Projected Change	Projected % Change
Aberdeen City	107,586	109,655	2,069	1.9%
Aberdeenshire	111,156	117, 350	6,194	5.6%
Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire	218,742	227,005	8,263	3.8%
Scotland	**2,477,276**	**2,585,105**	**107,829**	**4.4%**

Source: National Records of Scotland, Household Projections for Scotland (2018-based)

Table 2.11: Household projections - high international migration variant

	2018	2028	Projected Change	Projected % Change
Aberdeen City	107,586	112,131	4,545	4.2%
Aberdeenshire	111,156	117,733	7,129	6.4%
Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire	218,742	230,416	11,674	5.3%
Scotland	**2,477,276**	**2,600,287**	**133,595**	**5.4%**

Source: National Records of Scotland, Household Projections for Scotland (2018-based)

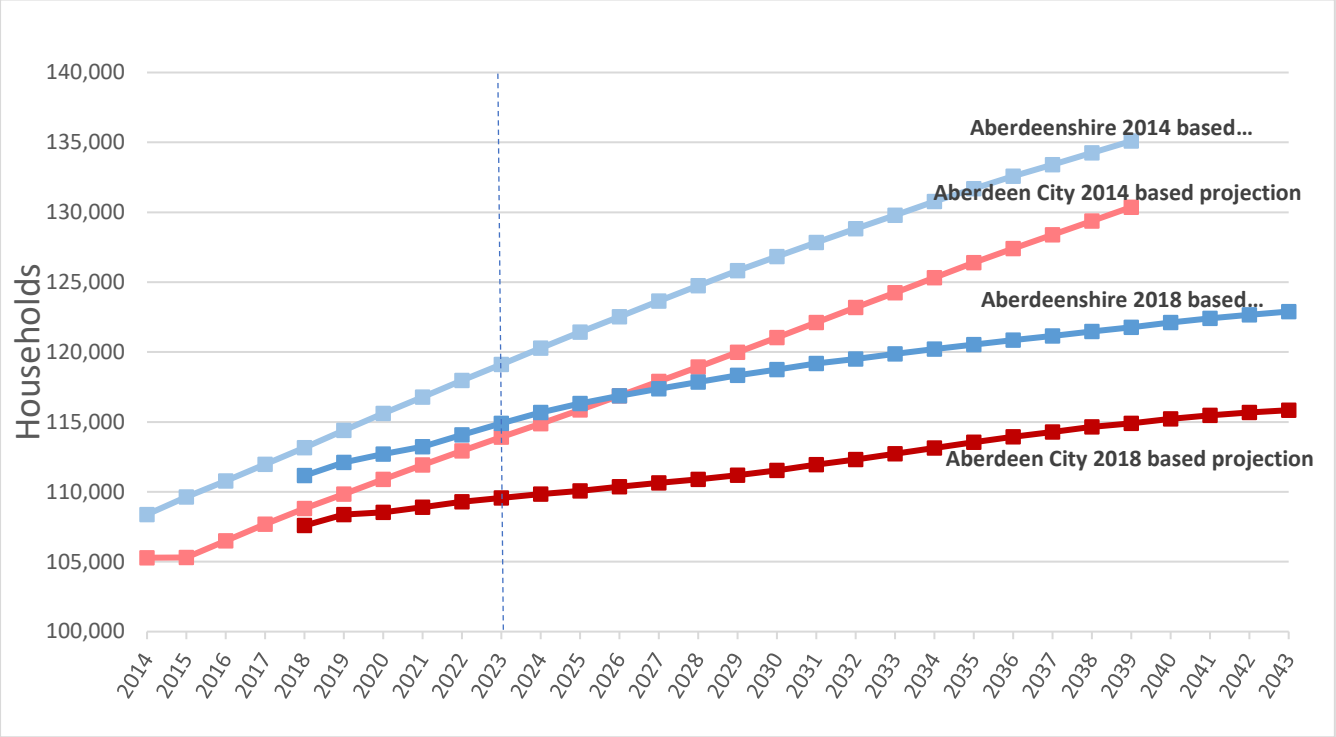
2.36 As could be expected given the higher levels of international migration in Aberdeen City than in Aberdeenshire, the variant projections suggest a greater impact for Aberdeen City if international migration levels change. For example, the low international migration variant projects that the number of households in Aberdeen City would increase by only 1.9% compared to a projected increase of 3.1% in the principal projection. For Aberdeenshire the projected increase in the low international migration variant is 5.6% compared to 6.0% for the principal projection.

2.37 Household projections drive future housing need in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire more than population projections. While the population projections feed into the household projections, it is significant that the projected change in households is 5.3% where the total population of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire is only projected to increase by 1.8%. This information is more useful in making future housing predictions.

Comparison with Previous Household Projections

2.38 It is important to note that the 2018 household projections described in the previous section, and which will be used in the HNDA tool are significantly different from the 2014 projections which formed the basis for the housing need figures in the 2017 HNDA. Figure 2.13 below shows the comparison between the household growth generated by the 2014 and the 2018 projections.

Figure 2.13: Comparison of 2014 and 2018 Based Principal Household Projections



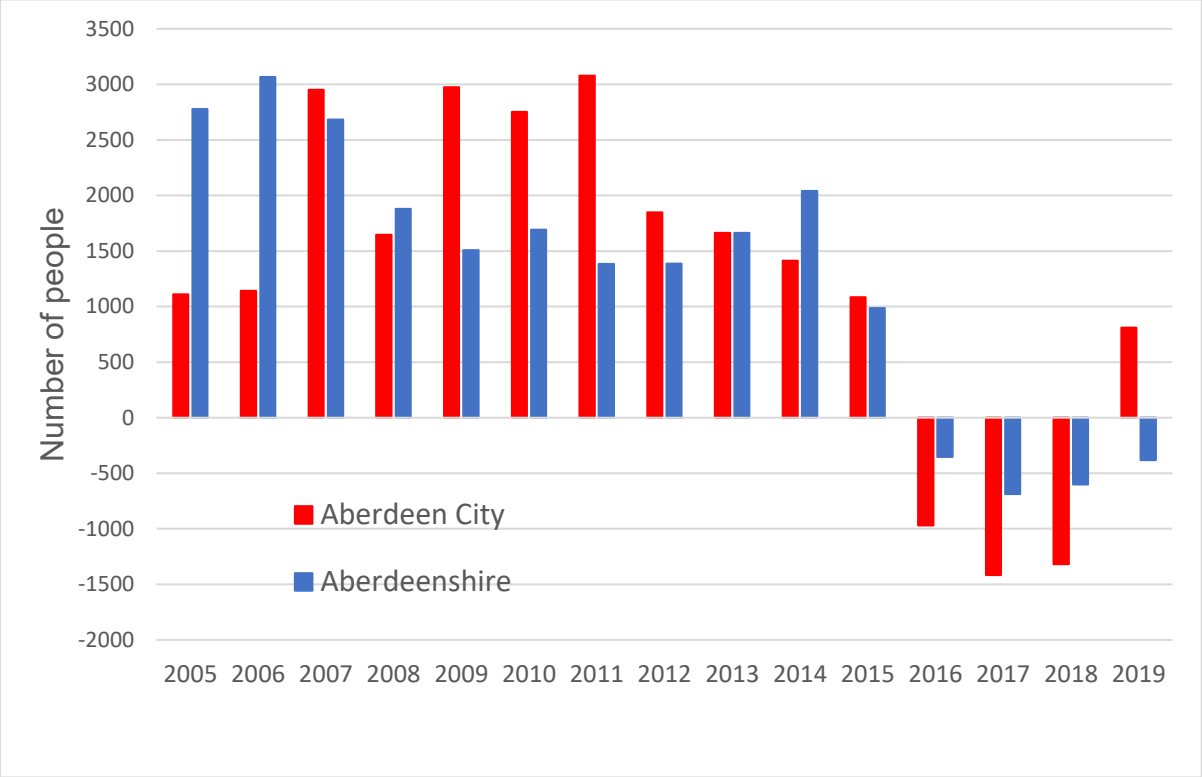
Source: National Records of Scotland, 2014 and 2018 based Household Projections for Scotland

2.39 While the 2018 projections are the most up to date available at this time, there is reason to believe that they may present a rather pessimistic view of likely future trends in the number of households for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.

2.40 Projections are trend based, which means that the trend in the years leading up to the base date determines the likely scale of future growth. Migration is the main driver for population and household growth so it is worth considering migration patterns in the years leading up to the 2018 projections.

2.41 Following the oil price crash in 2014, the years from 2015 to 2018 represented a particularly difficult and atypical period for the local economy in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. After many years of positive net migration there was a major reversal in the trend as can be seen in Figure 2.14 below. However by 2019 there were signs that net migration was increasing again.

Figure 2.14: Annual Net Migration 2005-2019



Source: National Records of Scotland Local Area Migration 2021

2.42 In addition, there have been recent large increases in numbers of refugees and asylum seekers arriving in the area who were not included in the 2018 projections. More information on these groups of migrants is available in Chapter 5.

2.43 It seems likely therefore that future net migration, and consequent growth in the number of households could be higher, perhaps significantly higher, than that indicated by the principal 2018 projections.

Household Composition Projections

2.44 NRS also produces projections by household type. Table 2.12 summarises the projected change in household type for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.

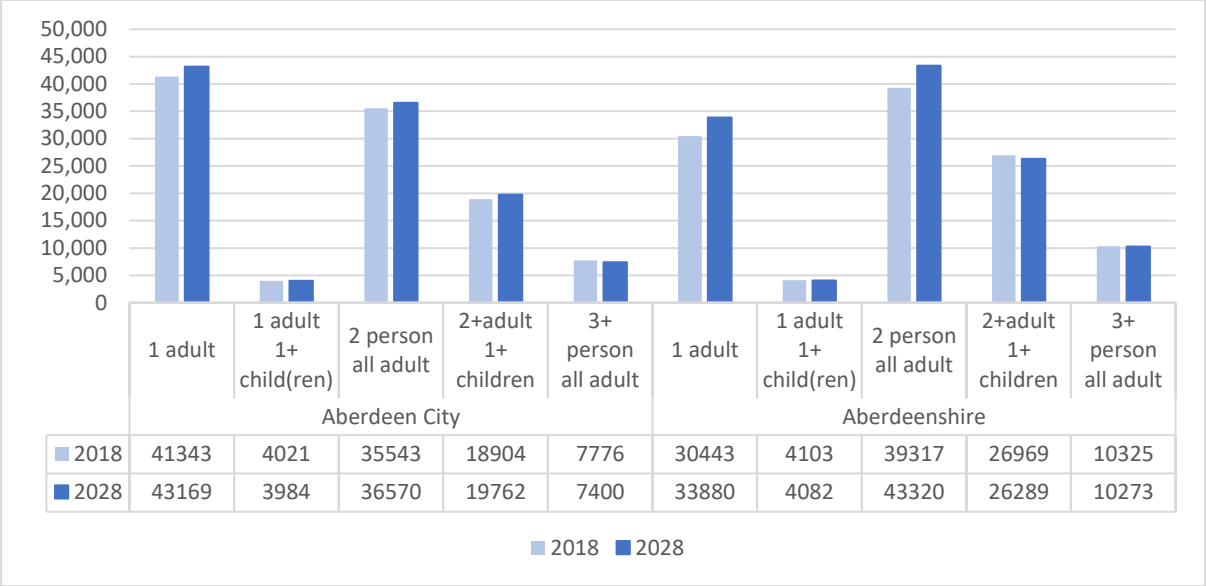
Table 2.12: Projected change in household size by household type, 2018-2028

		2018	2028	Change	% Change
Aberdeen City	1 adult	41,343	43,169	1,826	4.4%
	1 adult 1+ child(ren)	4,021	3,984	-37	-0.9%
	2 person all adult	35,543	36,570	1,027	2.9%
	2+adult 1+ children	18,904	19,762	858	4.5%
	3+ person all adult	7,776	7,400	-376	-4.8%
Aberdeenshire	1 adult	30,443	33,880	3,437	11.3%
	1 adult 1+ child(ren)	4,103	4,082	-21	-0.5%
	2 person all adult	39,317	43,320	4,003	10.2%
	2+adult 1+ children	26,969	26,289	-680	-2.5%
	3+ person all adult	10,325	10,273	-52	-0.5%
Scotland	1 adult	892,687	965,062	72,375	8.1%
	1 adult 1+ child(ren)	154,526	157,895	3,369	2.2%
	2 person all adult	774,680	830,592	55,912	7.2%
	2+adult 1+ children	445,241	441,068	-4,173	-0.9%
	3+ person all adult	210,141	203,008	-7,133	-3.4%

Source: National Records of Scotland, Household Projections for Scotland (2018-based)

2.45 Figure 2.15 below shows the projected number of households in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire by household type. In 2028, single adult households are projected to remain the most common household type in Aberdeen City, followed by 2 person all adult households. In Aberdeenshire, 2 person all adult households are projected to be the most common household type, followed by single adult households.

Figure 2.15: Projected number of households by household type, 2018-2028

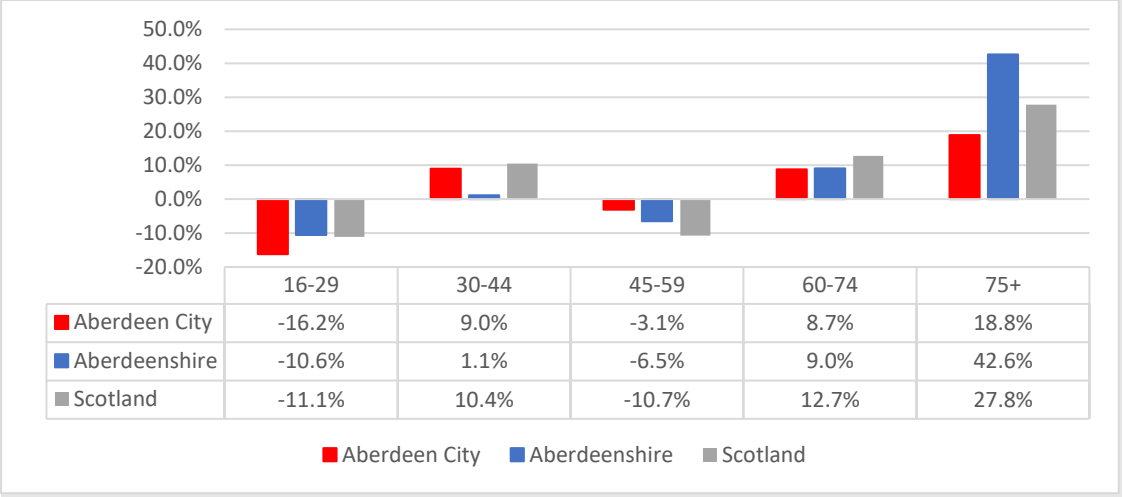


	Aberdeen City					Aberdeenshire				
	1 adult	1 adult 1+ child(ren)	2 person all adult	2+adult 1+ children	3+ person all adult	1 adult	1 adult 1+ child(ren)	2 person all adult	2+adult 1+ children	3+ person all adult
2018	41343	4021	35543	18904	7776	30443	4103	39317	26969	10325
2028	43169	3984	36570	19762	7400	33880	4082	43320	26289	10273

Source: National Records of Scotland, Household Projections for Scotland (2018-based)

2.46 Figure 2.16 below shows the projected percentage change in the number of households between 2018 and 2028 by age of Household Reference Person (HRP)[2] for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. The concept of a HRP was introduced in the 2001 Census (in common with other government surveys in 2001/2) to replace the traditional concept of the 'head of the household'. HRPs provide an individual person within a household to act as a reference point for producing further derived statistics and for characterising a whole household according to characteristics of the chosen reference person.

Figure 2.16: Projected percentage change in household numbers by age of HRP, 2018-2028



	16-29	30-44	45-59	60-74	75+
Aberdeen City	-16.2%	9.0%	-3.1%	8.7%	18.8%
Aberdeenshire	-10.6%	1.1%	-6.5%	9.0%	42.6%
Scotland	-11.1%	10.4%	-10.7%	12.7%	27.8%

Source: National Records of Scotland, Household Projections for Scotland (2018-based)

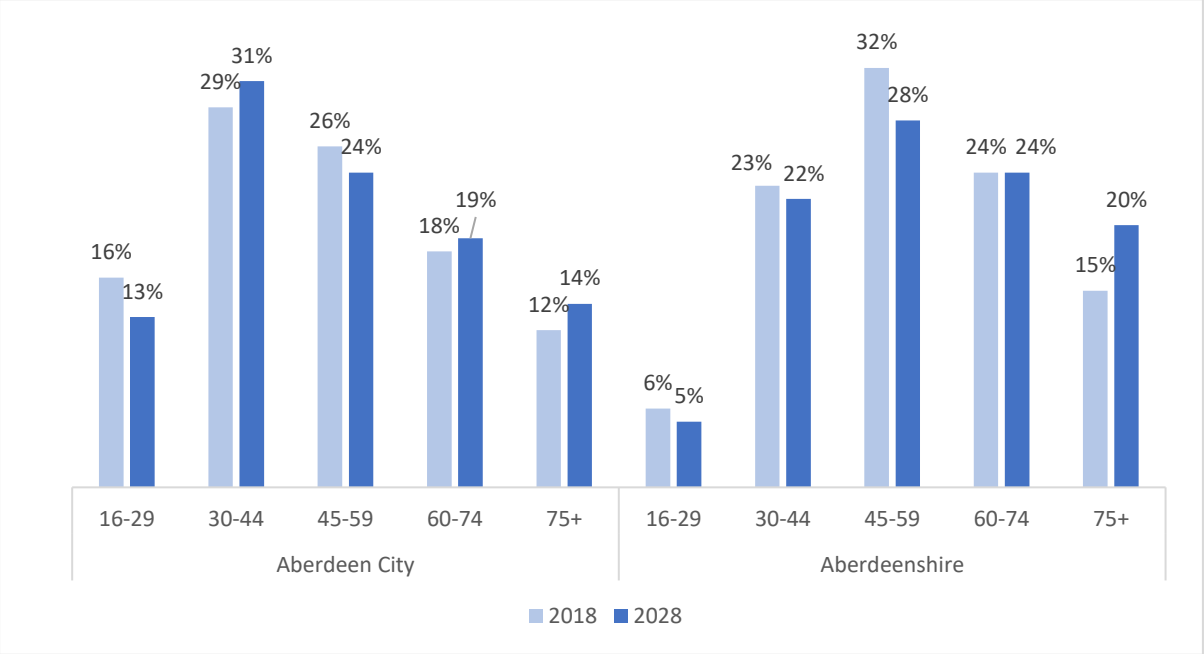
[2] https://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/metadata/household-reference-person/

2.47 Overall, there is projected to be an increase in proportion of older households and a decrease in the proportion of working-age households. The largest projected increase is in households with a HRP aged 75+ years. This is particularly the case in Aberdeenshire, where the number of households in this group is projected to increase by 42.6% which is considerably higher than the projected increase for Scotland of 27.8% and Aberdeen City of 18.8%.

2.48 Both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire are projected to see sizeable decreases in the number of households with an HRP of 16-29 years (-16.2% and -10.6% respectively) and decreases in the number of households with an HRP of 45-59 years (-3.1% and -6.5% respectively). The number of households with a HRP of 30-44 years is projected to increase in both areas, although this increase is larger in Aberdeen City at 9% than in Aberdeenshire at 1.1%.

2.49 Figure 2.17 below shows the proportion of households by age of HRP in 2018 and 2028. By 2028, it is projected that households with an HRP of 75+ years will make up 20% (up from 15% in 2018) of all households in Aberdeenshire and households with an HRP aged 60+ years will make up 44% of all households in Aberdeenshire compared to 39% in 2018. In Aberdeen City it is projected that households with an HRP aged 60+ years will make up 33% of all households compared to 30% in 2018.

Figure 2.17: Projected percentage of households by age group, 2018 and 2028



Source: National Records of Scotland, Household Projections for Scotland (2018-based)

Key Issues:

- The number of households is projected to increase by 3% in Aberdeen City and 6% in Aberdeenshire by 2028. This may be a conservative estimate of household growth as recent migration trends indicate a higher level of growth is more likely.

- In Aberdeen City the largest projected increase is in single adult households (+4.4%) while in Aberdeenshire it is households with 2 adults (+10.2%). In both City and Shire the largest percentage increases are in older households, particularly those aged 75+, with projected increases of 18.8% in Aberdeen City and 42.6% in Aberdeenshire.

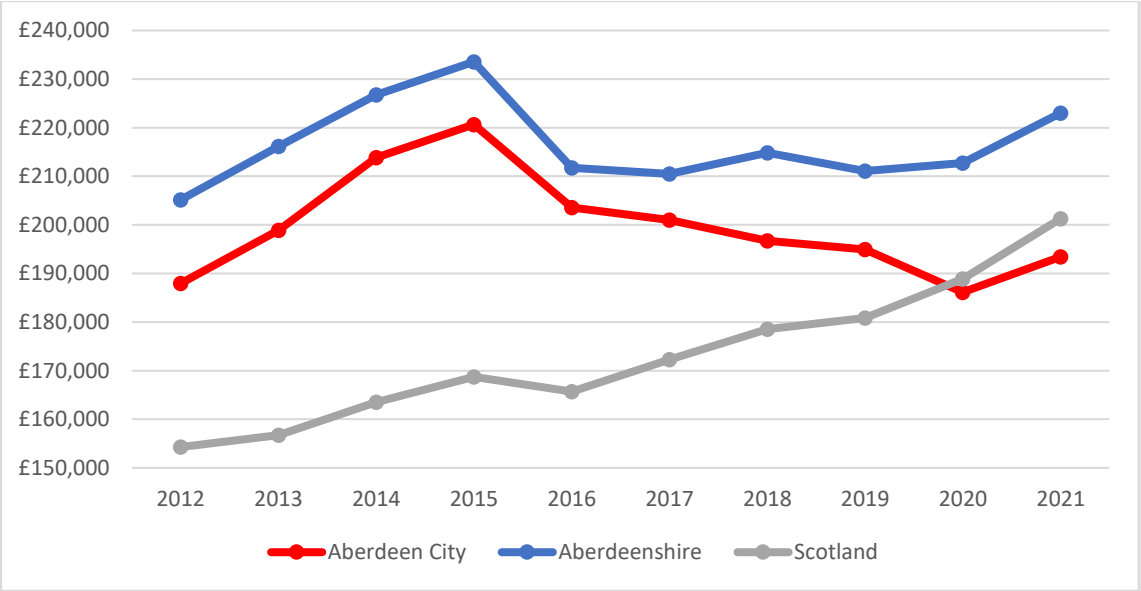
Affordability Trends

Housing Market Trends

2.50 Figure 2.18 below shows the 10-year trend in average house prices. Prices in both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire were well above the Scottish average at the beginning of the period and reached a peak in 2015 when the average price was £220,665 in Aberdeen City and £233,566 in Aberdeenshire compared to £168,723 for Scotland.

2.51 The impact of the oil price reduction in 2014 on the local economy became evident from 2016 onwards as house prices fell sharply in the northeast but generally continued to rise steadily in other parts of Scotland. In 2020 the average price in Aberdeen City dropped below the Scottish average for the first time since 2006. Prices in Aberdeenshire have remained above the Scottish average but the gap between them has been narrowing in recent years.

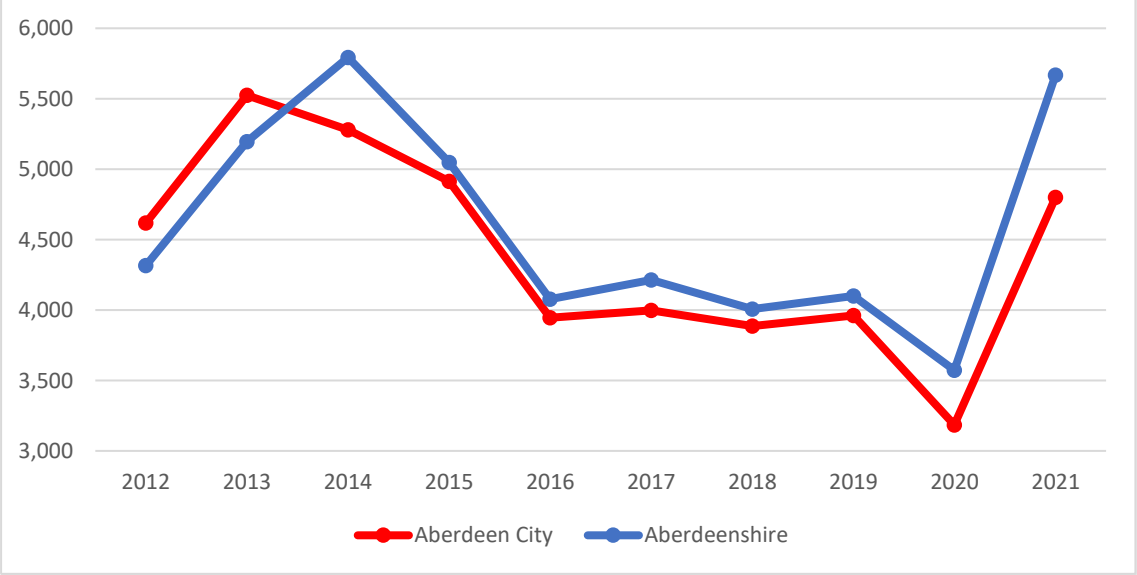
Figure 2.18: Average House Price 2012-2021



Source: Registers of Scotland (2022)

2.52 Figure 2.19 below shows that the number of residential sales followed a similar pattern to house prices but clearly demonstrates the impact of COVID-19, with a sharp drop in the number of sales in 2020. Since then, there has been a significant increase in sales volumes, reaching levels not far off those at the peak of the market in 2014. It is unclear at present whether this is a short-term response to pent up demand during the pandemic or a change in the overall trend. Recent data from Aberdeen Solicitors Property Centre for Q2 - 2022 shows a decrease of -11.3% in the number of sales compared to the same quarter in 2021 which might indicate that the number of sales is beginning to level off again.

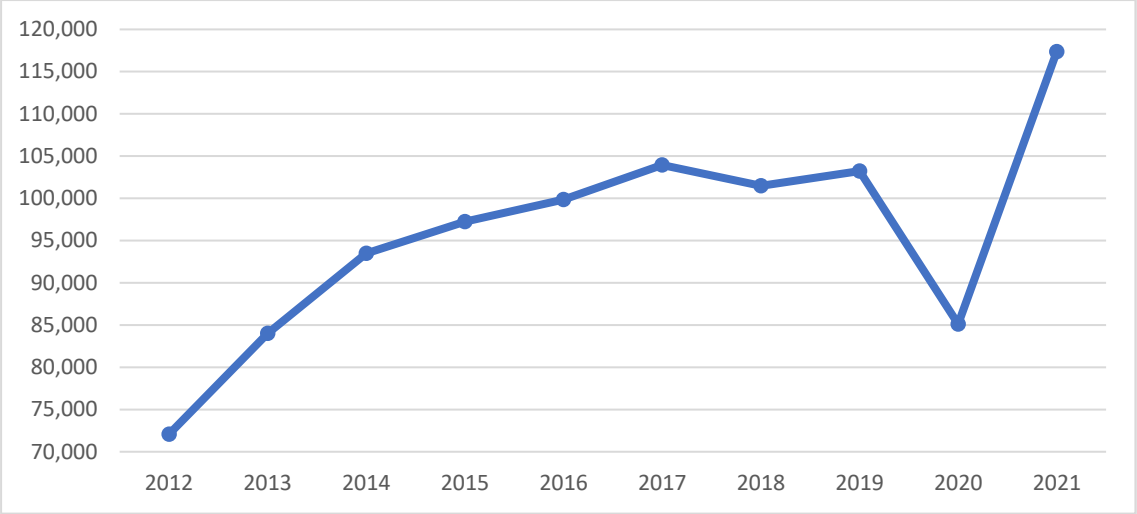
Figure 2.19: Volume of Sales in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire 2012-2021



Source: Registers of Scotland (2022)

2.53 The pattern of sales up until 2019 was quite different to that in Scotland as a whole, see Figure 2.20 below. Since then, the northeast has tracked the Scottish trend.

Figure 2.20: Volume of Sales in Scotland 2012 – 2021



Source: Registers of Scotland (2022)

House Prices and Sales in Housing Market Areas

2.54 A Housing Market Area (HMA) is a geographical area where the demand for housing is relatively self-contained. There are two Housing Market Areas in the City Region – the Aberdeen Housing Market Area and the Rural Housing Market Area. The Aberdeen HMA includes the whole of Aberdeen City and the part of Aberdeenshire that forms roughly a 20 mile radius around the city to the north, south, and west and includes the main commuter towns of Portlethen, Stonehaven, Westhill, Inverurie, Banchory and Ellon. The Rural HMA covers the rest of Aberdeenshire.

2.55 From a housing need and demand perspective, these two areas have very different characteristics with much higher house prices, higher demand and higher incomes in the Aberdeen HMA than the Rural HMA. Therefore, where possible it is more useful to assess affordability for housing market areas than for local authority areas and this is the approach taken in much of this section. This is very important for understanding the situation in Aberdeenshire where there are such significant regional differences.

2.56 Detailed data from 2019/20 is available for housing market areas and allows us to look at lower quartile[3] and median[4] prices across the area.

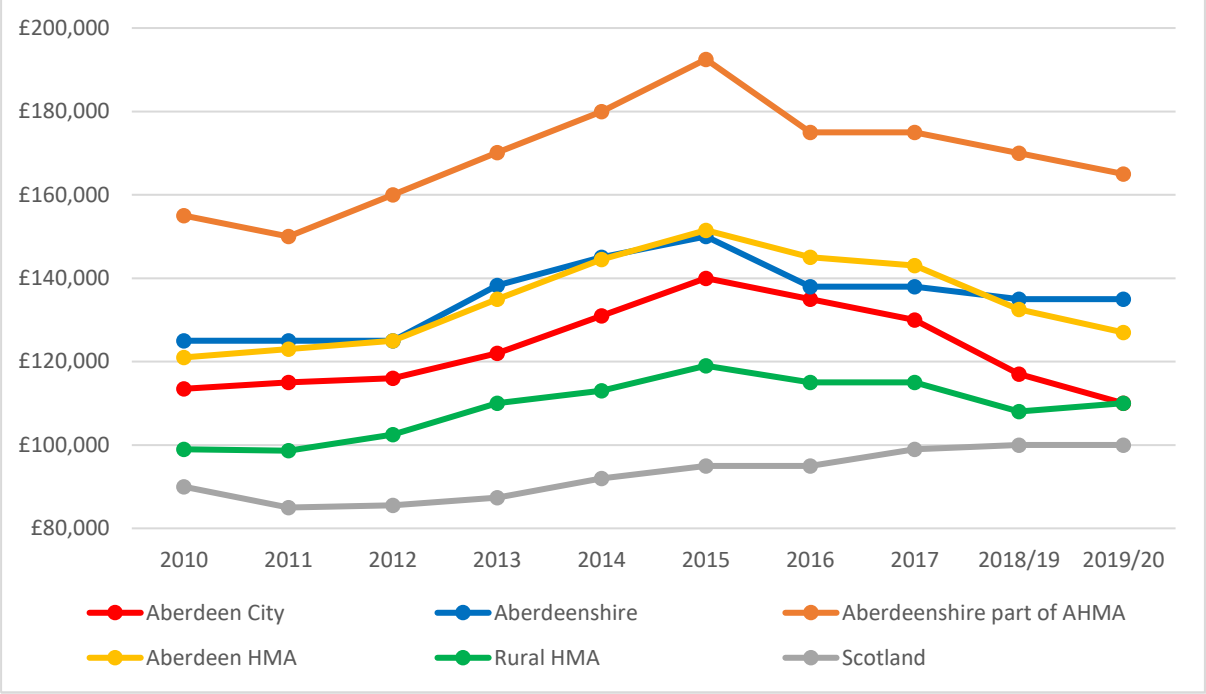
2.57 It is important to look at lower quartile house prices as it is expected that this will be the entry level for first time buyers and the HNDA tool uses lower quartile price as the threshold for need. Figure 2.21 below shows the trend in

[3] Lower quartile house price data is the average price in the lowest quarter of all house prices
[4] Median prices provide the mid-point of all prices. It can be a better way of measuring average price than using a straightforward mean because the mean can be skewed by a few very high or low prices

lower quartile price in different parts of the area over the last 10 years. Lower quartile prices in each of housing market areas reflect the overall trend noted in the previous section with prices climbing to a peak in 2015 then declining, particularly in Aberdeen City where prices fell from £140,000 in 2015 to £110,000 in 2019/20, a decrease of 21%.

2.58 Over the same period, lower quartile prices in Scotland rose by 5% from £95,000 to £100,000. Lower quartile prices in the Aberdeen HMA continue to be well above those in the Rural HMA. In 2019/20 the lower quartile price in the Aberdeen HMA was £127,000 compared with £110,000 in the Rural HMA. Clearly this is being driven by higher prices in the Aberdeenshire part of the Aberdeen HMA given that Aberdeen City now has a lower quartile price at the same level as the Rural HMA. In 2019/20 the lower quartile price in the Aberdeenshire part of the Aberdeen HMA was £165,000.

Figure 2.21: Lower Quartile House Price 2010-2019/20

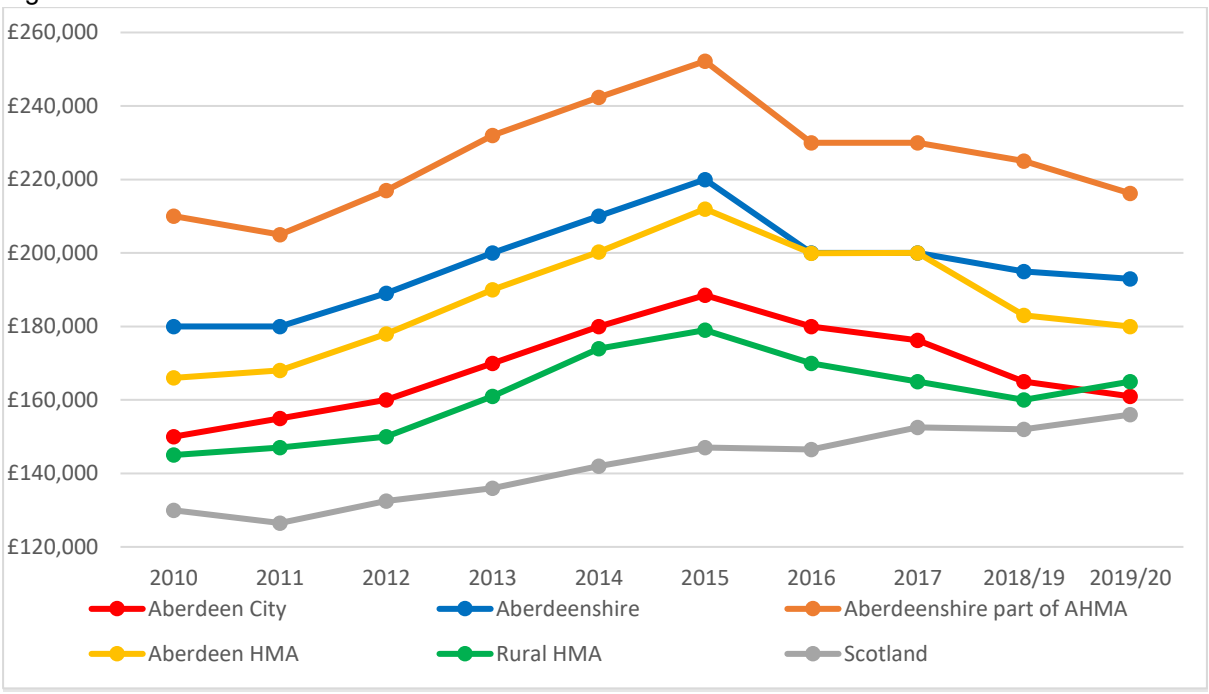


Source: Registers of Scotland/ CHMA[5]

2.59 Figure 2.22 below gives the same breakdown of areas but for median prices. The pattern is very similar to that of lower quartile prices and shows again the high price of housing in the Aberdeenshire part of the Aberdeen HMA which was £216,222 in 2019/20 compared with £165,000 in the Rural HMA and £156,000 for Scotland.

[5] Note that data was provided by the CHMA by calendar year up until 2017 then changed to financial year

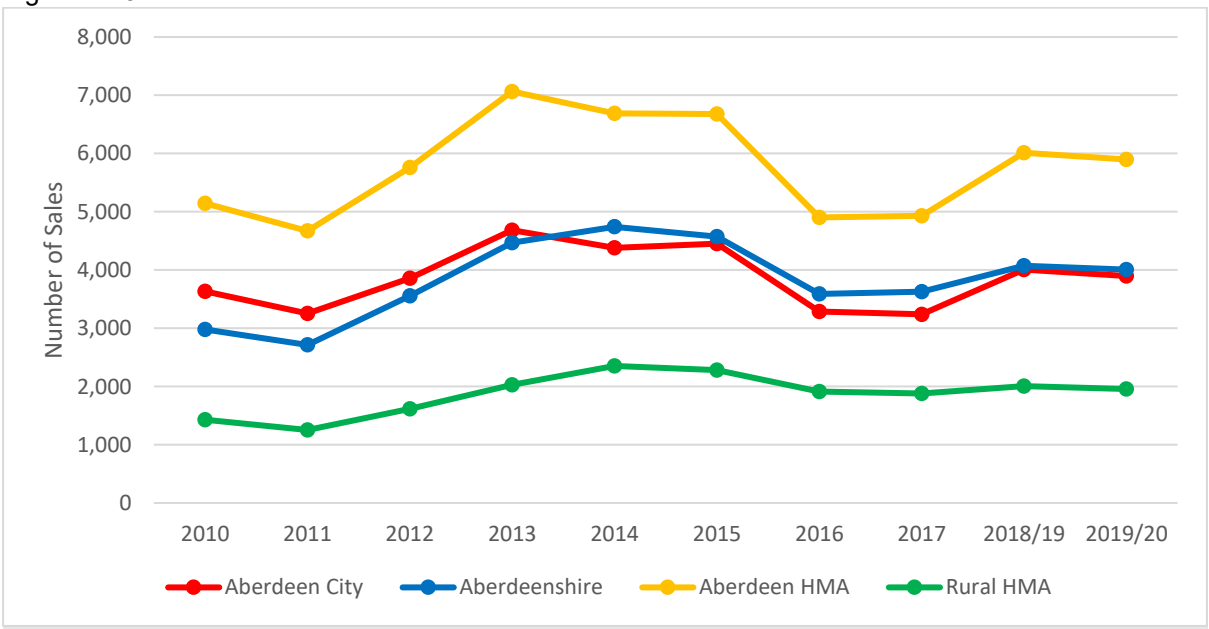
Figure 2.22: Median House Price 2010-2019/20



Source: Registers of Scotland/ CHMA

2.60 Figure 2.23 below shows the volume of sales over the last 10 years. This shows that sales were highest just before the peak of the market in 2015 and then declined until 2018/19 when they rose again and then levelled off into 2019/20. The Aberdeen HMA tends to track the pattern of Aberdeen City while the Rural HMA more closely mirrors the trend in Aberdeenshire.

Figure 2.23: Volume of Sales

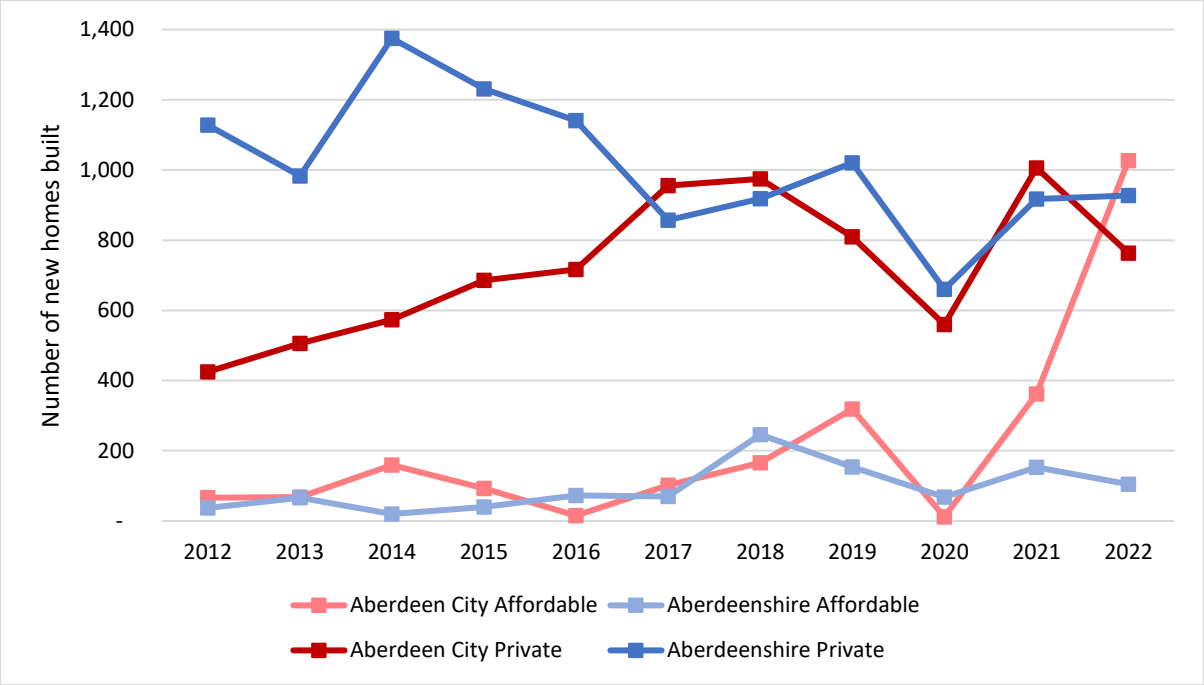


Source: Registers of Scotland/ CHMA

New Housebuilding

2.61 Figure 2.24 shows the level of new private and affordable housing that has been built in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire over the period 2012 to 2022. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic can be clearly seen in the sharp drop in completions in 2020.

Figure 2.24 New Private and Affordable Housing Completions 2012-2022



Source: Housing statistics quarterly update: new housebuilding and affordable housing supply - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

2.62 In Aberdeenshire the building of private homes peaked in 2014 at just under 1,400 units, well above the City, and has subsequently reduced to around 1,000 units or below in more recent years. In Aberdeen City there has been a steady increase from a low level of just over 400 units in 2012 to a peak of just under 1,000 units 2018, followed by an uptick again in 2021, bringing City and Aberdeenshire completions more in line.

2.63 The building of new affordable homes in both the City and Aberdeenshire remained at relatively steady low levels until 2019 when affordable completions in the City picked up significantly and have peaked last year at over 1,000 units due to large scale building programmes on brownfield sites controlled by Aberdeen City Council.

Key Issues:

- House prices in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire had been well above the Scottish average for many years. This changed from 2015 onwards when this area saw significant decreases while prices in Scotland rose steadily, and in 2020 the average price in Aberdeen City dropped below the Scottish average.

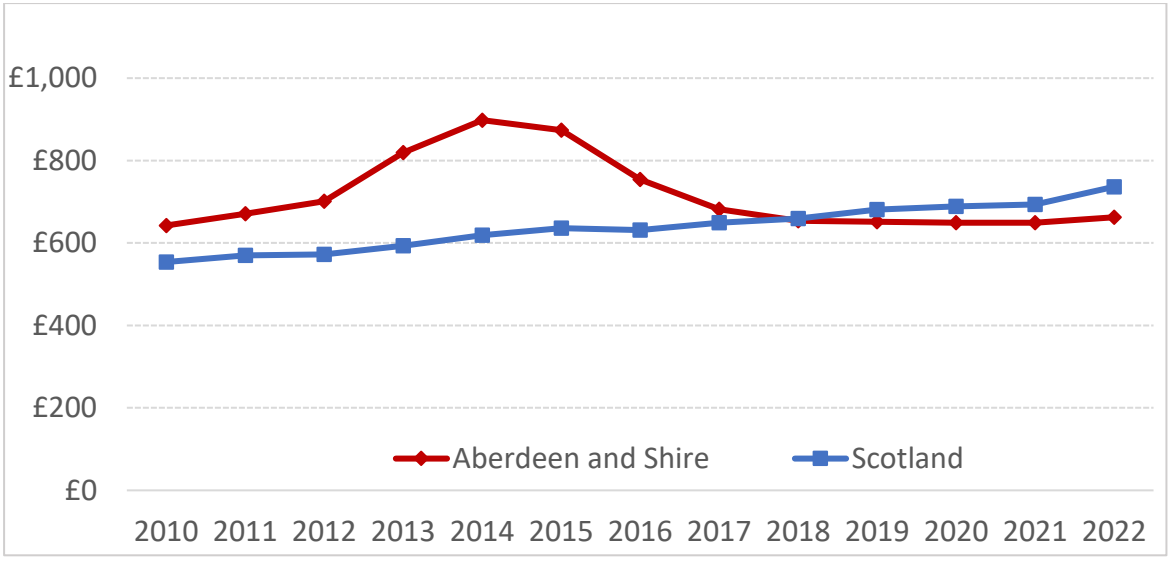
- Lower quartile prices across the area remain above those in Scotland, with the highest prices found in the Aberdeenshire part of the Aberdeen Housing Market.

Rental Market Trends - Private Rented Sector

2.64 The Scottish Government publishes statistics on average private sector rent levels in Scotland by Broad Rental Market Area and size of property, allowing us to compare the Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Broad Rental Market Area with Scotland as a whole.

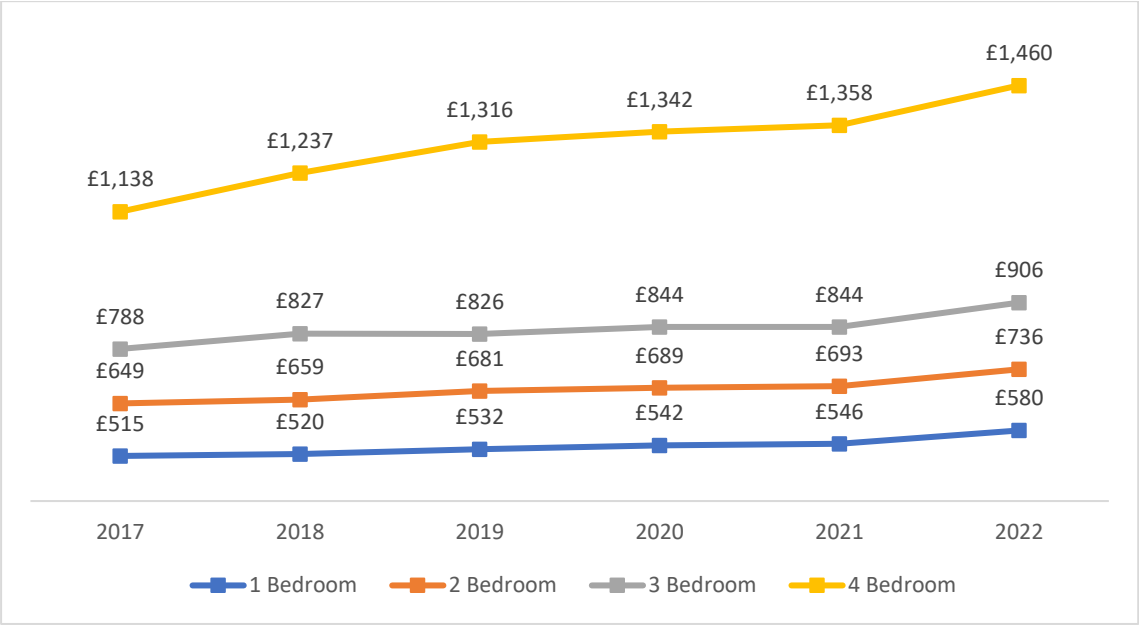
2.65 Figure 2.25 below shows that since 2010, rental prices in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire have roughly tracked the house price trends detailed in the previous section. Rental prices peaked at the top of the market in 2014 before the oil price drop and resulting downturn in the local economy led to a rapid fall in rent levels between 2015 and 2018 to below the Scottish average. In common with the rest of Scotland the pandemic impacted on the rental market with little growth over the 2020/21 period but there was a slight increase again in 2022.

Figure 2.25 Average Monthly Private Rents Aberdeen/ Aberdeenshire and Scotland 2010-2022



Source: Scottish Government – Private Sector Rent Statistics 2010-2022

Figure 2.26: Average Monthly Private Rents for Scotland 2016 - 2022

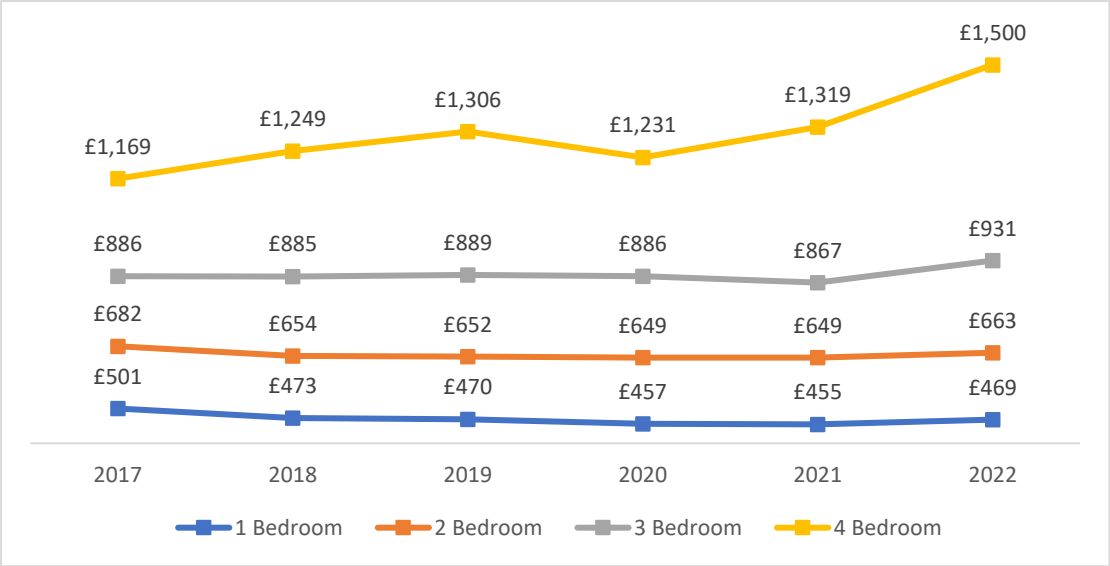


Source: Scottish Government – Private Sector Rent Statistics 2010-2022

2.66 Figure 2.26 above shows the average rents in Scotland from 2017 to 2022 for different sizes of properties. The rents for all sizes of homes have increased over the period, particularly for 4-bedroom properties with an increase of 29%. The rents for 1, 2 and 3-bedroom properties have also increased, but more modestly by around 13-15%.

2.67 Figure 2.27 below shows the average rents in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Broad Market Area from 2017 to 2022. While the rent levels are broadly similar to those in Scotland as a whole, the trend over time has been slightly different.

Figure 2.27: Average Monthly Rents for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Broad Rental Market Area 2017-2022

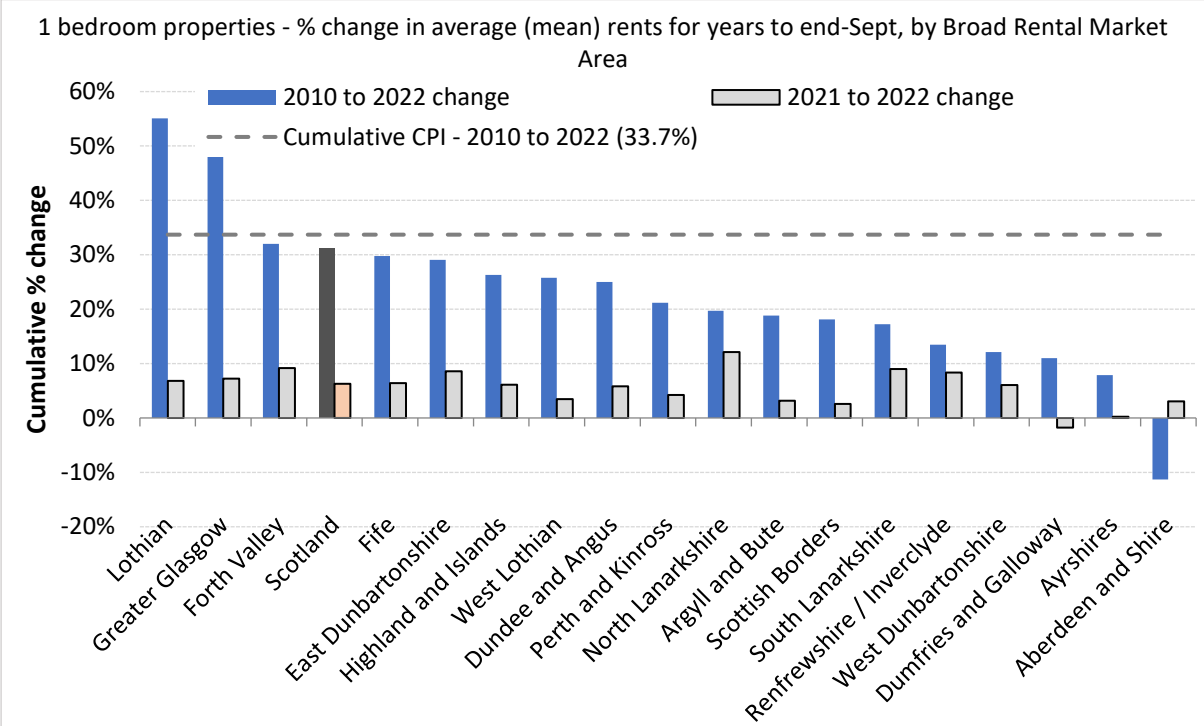


Source: Scottish Government – Private Sector Rent Statistics 2010-2022

2.68 The rents for 4-bedroom properties have fluctuated over the period, but in the last two years there has been a significant increase, and rents are now 26% higher than they were in 2017. Rents for 1, 2 and 3 bedroom properties had been falling but the last year has seen an increase, with rent for 3 bed properties now 5% higher than they were in 2017 and rents for 2 bed properties once again approaching the level they had been at in 2017.

2.69 Figure 2.28 below shows the change in average rents for 1 bed properties since 2010 for local authorities in Scotland which highlights how different the situation has been in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire compared to the rest of Scotland. For 1 bed properties, rents in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire dropped by 11% over the period, compared to a rise in Scotland of 31%.

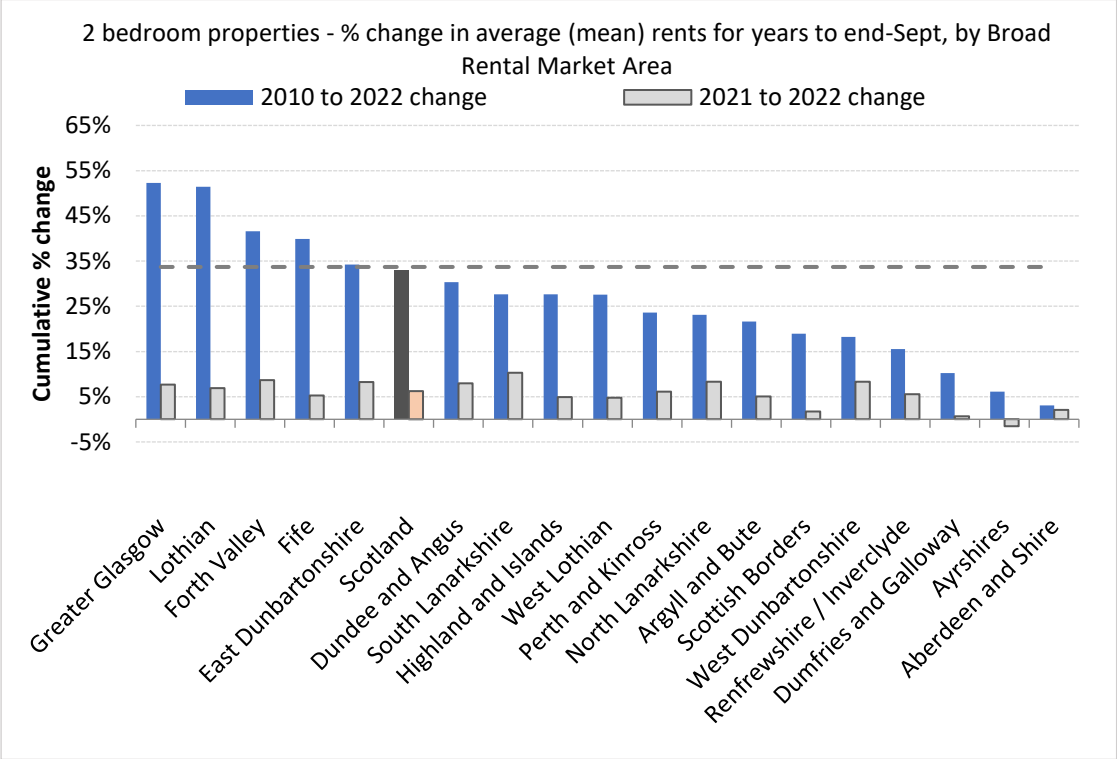
Figure 2.28: Change in Average Rents 1 Bedroom Properties by Local Authority 2010-2022



Source: Scottish Government – Private Sector Rent Statistics 2010-2022

2.70 Figure 2.29 below shows that 2 bed properties in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire fared a little better with the average rents having increased by 3% since 2010, but this was compared with a rise in Scotland of 33%.

Figure 2.29: Change in Average Rents 2 Bedroom Properties by Local Authority 2010-2022



Source: Scottish Government – Private Sector Rent Statistics 2010-2022

2.71 Three-bedroom properties have seen rents increase by 25% over the same period but again the growth in rent levels in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire was lower than Scotland which saw rents increase by 34%.

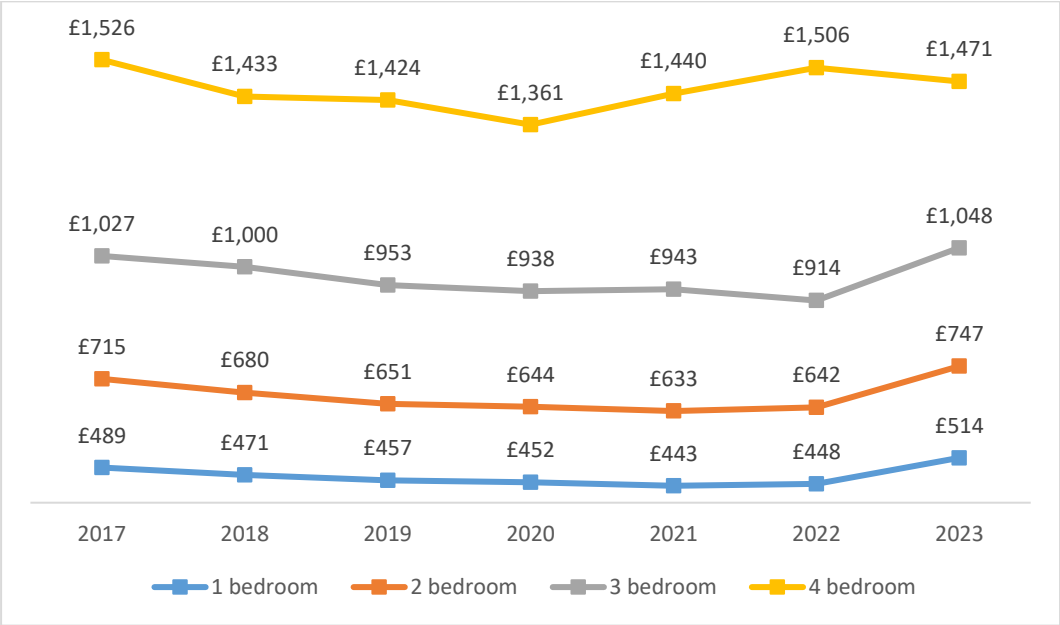
2.72 Both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire have been impacted by the oil downturn and resulting economic slump but looking at the Broad Rental Market Area can mask important differences between the Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire markets.

2.73 Figure 2.30 below shows average rents in Aberdeen City from 2017 to the first quarter in 2023. The rents for 1, 2 and 3 bedroom properties had declined by around 10% between 2017 and 2022. However, there has been a significant increase of around 16% in the last year with rents now returning to levels higher than in 2017. Rents for 4-bedroom properties have been more volatile and remain below the 2017 figure.

2.74 The recent increase in rental prices is likely to be due to a number of factors. These include increased demand as higher oil prices result in additional activity in the local oil and gas sector, and also a range of legislative and financial changes at a national level which are having the often unintended

consequence of decreasing supply and increasing prices[6] in the private rented sector, a trend which looks set to continue.

Figure 2.30: Average Monthly Rents for Aberdeen City Q1 2017 - 2023



Source - Citylets (2023)

2.75 Average rental values are higher overall for Aberdeen City than the combined area, and this reflects the higher prices of properties in the city compared with some of the more rural properties in Aberdeenshire.

2.76 Aberdeenshire Council is unable to rely on data from Citylets for private rented sector rents as Citylets only covers properties in Aberdeen City. However, the Affordable Housing Team at Aberdeenshire Council record rent information by monitoring estate agents' webpages and recording the advertised rent price for each property (excluding detached houses and properties with extra living rooms, bathrooms, and conservatories). Average rents for each size of property can then be calculated. Average rent levels can fluctuate quite significantly using this method, depending on the number and location of advertised properties but it is the best information available at present.

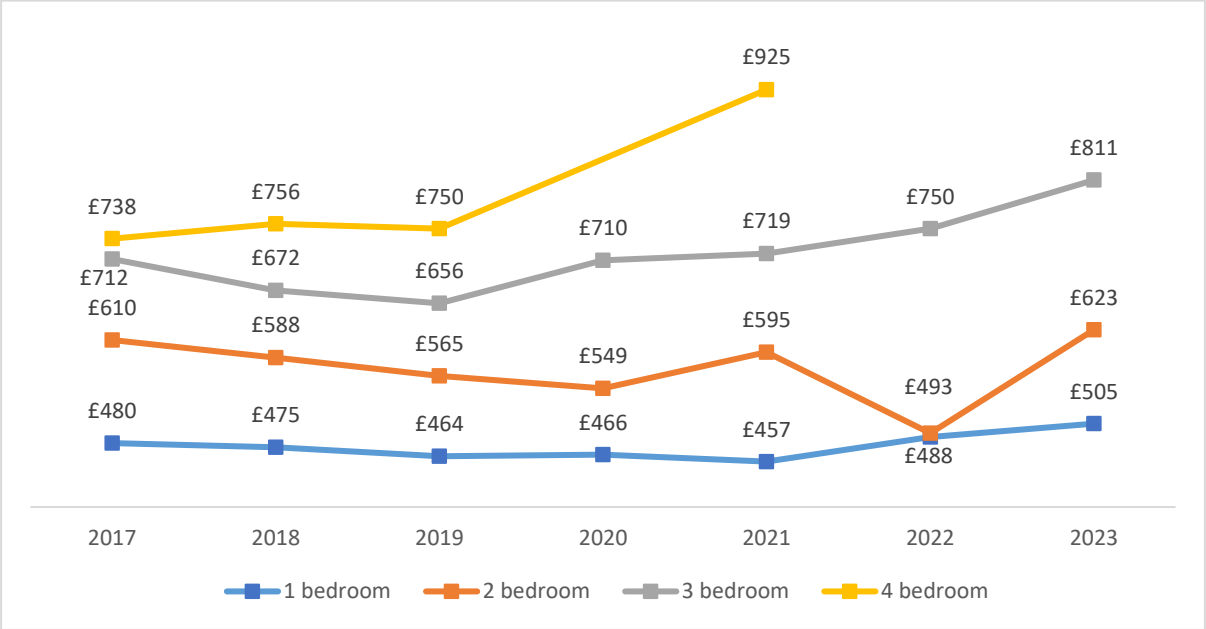
2.77 Figure 2.31 below shows the trends in rental prices in Aberdeenshire since 2017. For the first few years rents were steady or falling but more recently there have been increases for all sizes of properties indicating a reversal of the downward trend which had been evident in response to local economic conditions from 2015 onwards. The price of 3 bed properties has increased by 13% since 2017 while 1 and 2 bed properties have seen more modest increases of 5% and 2% respectively. Lack of data for 4 bed properties makes

[6] For example the introduction of the Cost of Living (Tenant Protection)(Scotland) Act 2022 which has resulted in increased rent levels for new tenancies. For more information see What Lies Ahead Citylets Quarterly Report Q2 2023

it difficult to accurately assess the trend but it does appear to be heading in an upward direction[7].

2.78 Average rental values are generally lower for Aberdeenshire than for those in Aberdeen City which were shown in Figure 2.31 with 2 bed properties currently averaging around £747 per month in Aberdeen City compared with £623 in Aberdeenshire.

Figure 2.31: Average Monthly Rents for Aberdeenshire 2017-2023



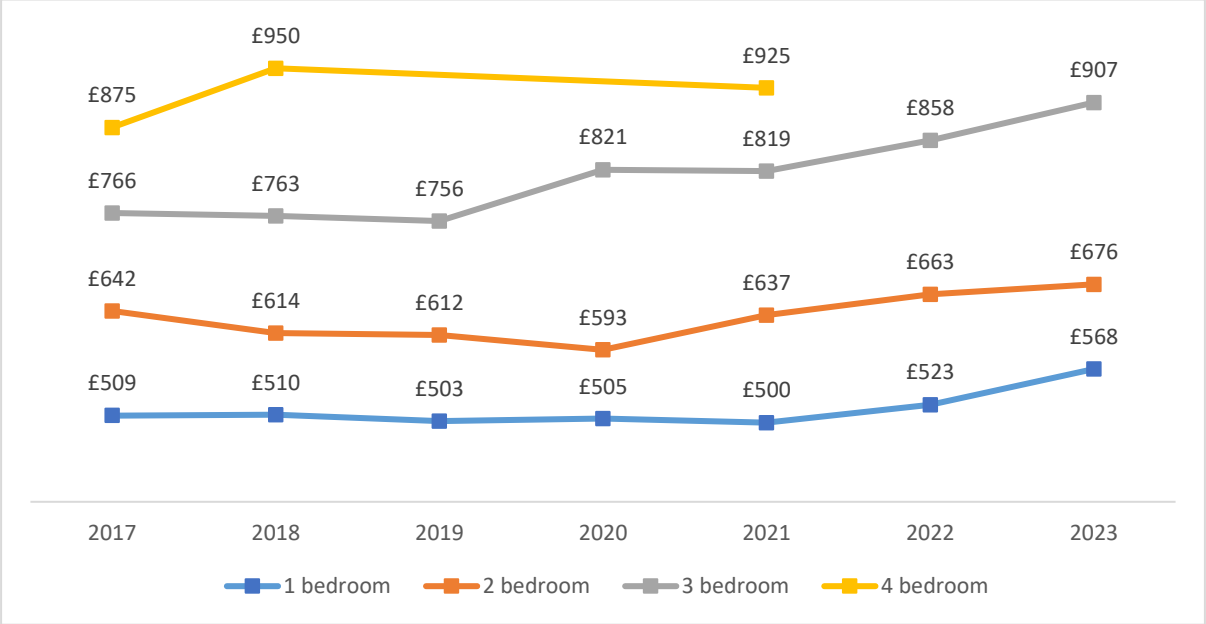
Source: Aberdeenshire Council Affordable Housing Team

2.79 However, there is significant variation across Aberdeenshire. Figures 2.32 and 2.33 show that rents for properties in the Aberdeenshire part of the Aberdeen HMA are significantly higher than those in the Rural HMA. For example, in 2023 the average rent for a 3-bed property in the Aberdeen HMA (£907) was 40% more than in the Rural HMA (£649).

2.80 Prices in the Aberdeenshire AHMA are often more similar to those in Aberdeen City and in fact the average rent for 1 bed properties is higher in the Aberdeenshire part of the AHMA (£568) than in the City (£514). Aberdeenshire AHMA prices are tracking the City trend of a recent uplift in prices more closely than the RHMA although prices in the City are increasing at a faster rate than in Aberdeenshire.

[7] Missing values are due to there being no advertised 4 bed properties for some years.

Figure 2.32: Average Monthly Rents in Aberdeenshire part of Aberdeen HMA



Source: Aberdeenshire Council Affordable Housing Team

Figure 2.33: Average Monthly Rents in Rural HMA

Source: Aberdeenshire Council Affordable Housing Team

Key Issues:

- Average private rental prices peaked in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire in 2014 before decreasing rapidly and falling below the Scottish average.
- Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire was the only area of Scotland to see rents for 1 bed flats drop over the last 10 years (-11% compared to +31% for Scotland). 2 bed flats saw just a 3% increase compared to +33% in Scotland.
- However, in the last year there has been a reversal of this trend and rental prices are now increasing rapidly, particularly in Aberdeen City.

Social Rents

2.81 Tables 2.13, 2.14 and 2.15 below show average monthly rents for council and RSL properties from 2016/2017 to 2021/22. Monthly council rents are slightly higher in Aberdeenshire than in Aberdeen City for 1 and 2 bedroom properties, however the gap widens for 3 and 4 bedroom properties where rents in Aberdeenshire are £65 more expensive for 4 bed properties. RSL rents are slightly higher than council rents.

Table 2.13: Average Monthly Rents Aberdeen City Council

Year	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22[8]
1 Bed	£282.92	£282.20	£301.12	£301.40	£313.28	£312.80
2 Bed	£296.12	£296.36	£316.56	£316.48	£333.04	£329.04
3 Bed	£327.88	£327.04	£349.56	£349.60	£363.32	£363.40
4 Bed	£344.20	£360.60	£383.88	£384.20	£398.20	£397.76

Source: Scottish Housing Regulator (2022)

Table 2.14: Average Monthly Rents Aberdeenshire Council

Year	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
1 Bed	£279.92	£291.16	£300.32	£313.20	£328.48	£337.12
2 Bed	£284.00	£295.08	£306.28	£321.56	£339.72	£349.48
3 Bed	£329.56	£342.40	£354.84	£373.36	£394.04	£406.12
4 Bed	£371.92	£385.88	£400.88	£423.08	£446.40	£463.12

Source: Scottish Housing Regulator (2022)

[8] Rent freeze for 2021/22 - average rent differences. As ACC have been buying back properties & building new ones which are now on the charge, the average rents will not stay the same even if there is a rent freeze.

Table 2.15: Average Monthly Rents Registered Social Landlords in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire

Year	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
1 Bed	£361.96	£327.60	£339.65	£352.21	£367.99	n/a
2 Bed	£355.38	£368.12	£383.11	£396.41	£416.87	n/a
3 Bed	£392.25	£401.70	£419.38	£436.50	£455.74	n/a
4 Bed	£426.44	£435.15	£454.44	£472.98	£496.64	n/a

Source: Scottish Housing Regulator (2022)

2.82 The disparity between social and private average monthly rents has decreased over time in both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. Table 2.16 below shows how much cheaper council average monthly rents were than private rents for different sized properties in 2016/17 compared with 2021/22.

Table 2.16: Social Rent compared to Private Rent by Local Authority

	Aberdeen City Council vs Aberdeen City Private rents		Aberdeenshire Council vs Aberdeenshire Private rents	
	2016/17	**2021/22**	**2016/17**	**2021/22**
1 Bed	-93%	-43%	-88%	-38%
2 Bed	-162%	-95%	-135%	-64%
3 Bed	-237%	-152%	-137%	-99%
4 Bed	-349%	-279%	-162%	-100%

Source: Scottish Housing Regulator, Citylets, Aberdeenshire Council Affordable Housing Team

2.83 Using 2 bedroom properties as an example, in 2016/17 it was 162% cheaper to rent a council property than a private property in Aberdeen City and 135% cheaper in Aberdeenshire. By 2021/22, it was 95% cheaper to rent a council property in Aberdeen City and 64% cheaper in Aberdeenshire. This was due to the decrease in average rents in the private sector following the oil price drop and local economic downturn and affected all sizes of properties. Despite this narrowing of the gap between private and council rents, private rents are still a minimum of around 40% more than council rents.

Mid-Market Rent

2.84 Mid-Market Rent (MMR) is an initiative from the Scottish Government to provide quality, affordable homes for low to moderate income households. Prospective tenants should have means to pay rent without claiming benefits and be individuals or households on low or modest gross annual incomes. Mid-Market Rents are usually higher than social housing rents but lower than private sector rents.

2.85 Within Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire many Registered Social Landlords provide MMR properties as well as social housing including: Langstane,

Castlehill, Hillcrest, Places for People, Sanctuary, Osprey, Grampian, LAR, and Aberdeenshire Council.

2.86 Table 2.17 below shows the stock of MMR units owned and managed by the Registered Social Landlords who operate in the Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. It also shows the average rents and the relet timescales. According to the Scottish Government Literature Review[9] of rent affordability in the affordable housing sector, rental charges tend to sit between 20% above social rents and 80% of the LHA or else 80% of local median private rent but never exceed the LHA.

Table 2.17: RSL mid-market rental units in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire

	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	Total	Relet time(Days)	Average Rent
Castlehill	7	19	2	0	28	41.83	£542.85
Langstane	11	20	10	0	41	96.55	£532.78
Grampian	16	163	27	2	208	78	£595.00
Hillcrest	5	73	4	0	82	56.4	£580.00
Osprey	16	50	22	0	88	65	£637.39
Sanctuary	8	94	22	0	124	118	£608.26
Create Homes	17	22	12	0	51	39.9	£580.00

Source: Individual RSLs 31/3/2022

2.87 Information from some of the larger MMR providers say that the position on MMR in Aberdeen City has improved over the past two years and they are not experiencing any particular issues with voids, re-lets or lack of demand at the moment however some 2-bedroom flats are in less demand.

Key Issues:

- The gap between private and social rents has narrowed in recent years. However social rents, and particularly council rents continue to be significantly more affordable than private rents.

Income Trends

2.88 Three different data sources are used to look at income trends. The primary source of data to assess affordability against house prices and rents will be the Scottish Government's 2018 Local Level Household Income Estimates (LLHIE) as this is the dataset used in the HNDA tool. However, it is helpful to look at two other datasets to get a broader overview of income trends, including the change over time and more detailed geographical analysis. These two sources are CACI Paycheck[10], and the Annual Survey of Hours

[9] rent-affordability-affordable-housing-sector-literature-review (1).pdf

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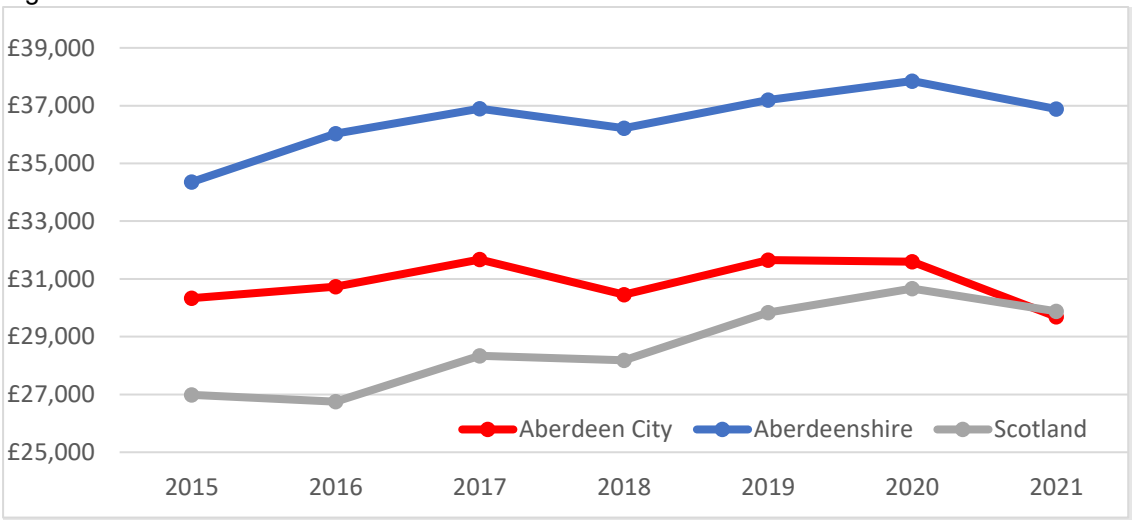
and Earnings both of which are updated on an annual basis with the most recent updates in 2021.

CACI Paycheck

2.89 Figure 2.34 below shows the change in median annual household income since 2015. Incomes in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire have seen slower growth in recent years than in Scotland as whole. Median income in Scotland rose by 11% over this period while in Aberdeenshire it was 7%, and in Aberdeen City there was a fall of 2%. All areas saw a fall from 2020 to 2021 because of the Covid-19 pandemic but this drop was particularly sharp in Aberdeen City, dropping from £31,593 to £29,693 which was just below the Scottish figure.

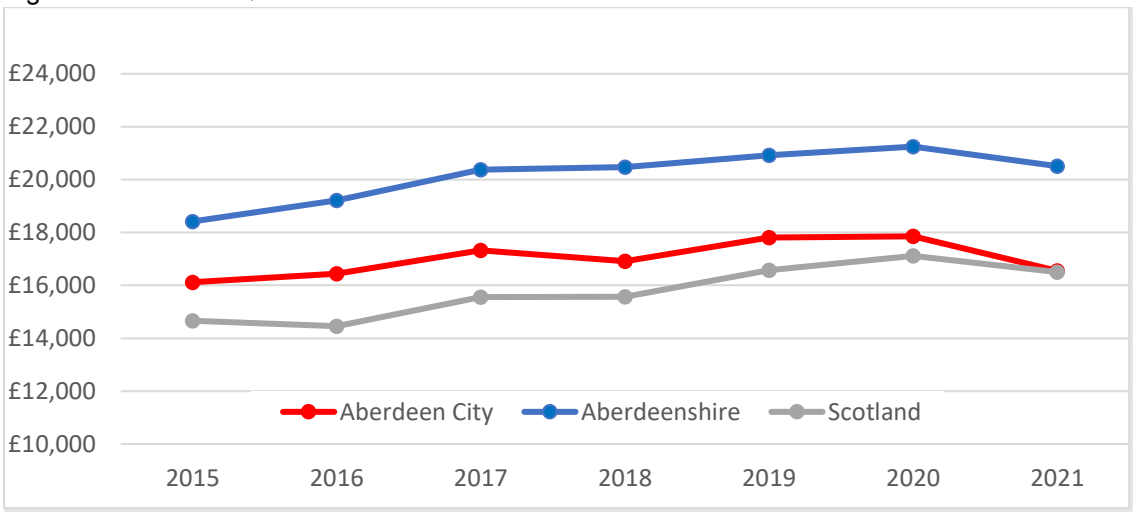
Figure 2.34: Median Annual Household Income 2015-2021



Source: CACI (2021)

2.90 The trend in lower quartile income followed a similar pattern to median household income, as can be seen from figure 2.35 below.

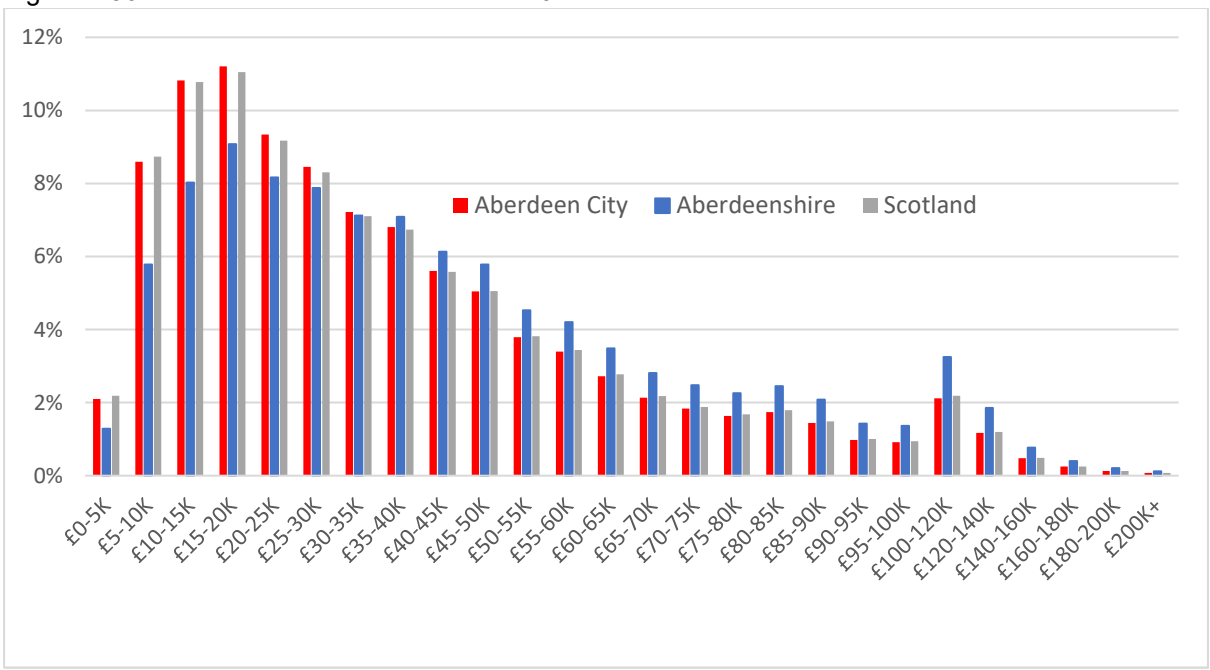
Figure 2.35: Lower Quartile Annual Household Income 2015 – 2021



Source: CACI (2021)

2.91 Figure 2.36 below shows income distribution by percentage of households within each income band. It is clear from this that while income in Aberdeen City tracks the Scottish distribution very closely, in Aberdeenshire there are fewer households in the lower income bands and more in the wealthier categories.

Figure 2.36: Household Income Distribution 2021



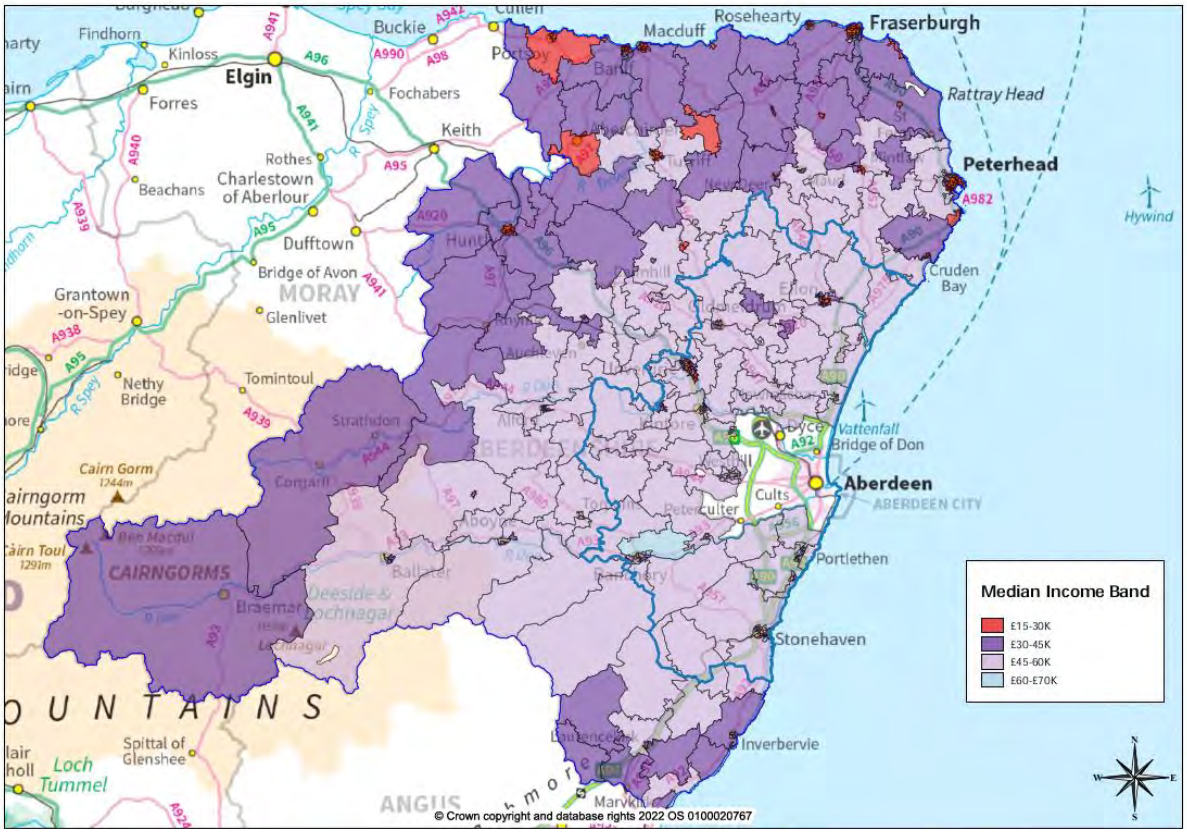
Source: CACI (2021)

2.92 Figure 2.37 below shows how median incomes vary geographically across Aberdeenshire[11]. Datazones with the lowest household incomes are found mainly in the north and west of the area, and within most of the main towns. Out of the ten datazones with the lowest median household income (ranging

[11] This information is not currently held for Aberdeen City

from £15,545 to £20,428 per year), eight are found in Fraserburgh and Peterhead with the remaining two in Huntly. The most common household income band across Aberdeenshire is the £45-60K band, with 44% of all households in this category, including the majority in the Aberdeen HMA. The wealthiest datazones (income >£60,000 per annum) are found to the west and south of Aberdeen City, including Westhill, Stonehaven and Banchory and the surrounding areas.

Figure 2.37: Median Income by Datazone



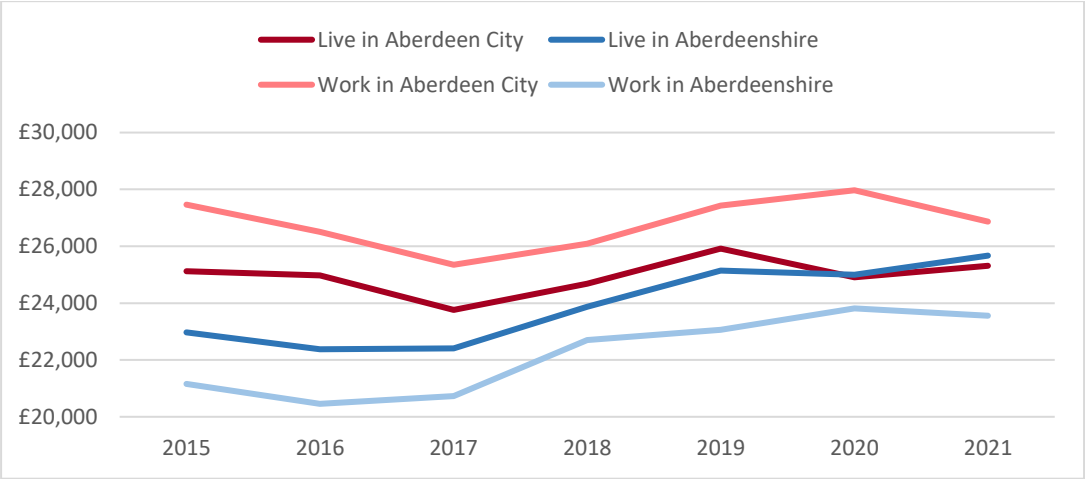
Source: CACI (2021)

Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)

2.93 The ASHE is a national dataset which provides income data for individuals rather than households. A household may have single or multiple earners, and those individuals may be full or part time or a combination of both.

2.94 The data is available based on where people live (residence based), or where they work (workplace based). Figure 2.38 below shows that for most of the period from 2015 to 2021 the highest individual earnings were found in people who work in Aberdeen City (which will include both those who live in the city and those who live in Aberdeenshire but whose workplace is in the city).

Figure 2.38: Median annual gross pay by residence and workplace 2015-2017



Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings

2.95 Earnings were lower amongst people working in Aberdeenshire (£23,561 in 2021 compared to £26,871 for city based workers). Up until 2019 earnings were lower for people living in Aberdeenshire than for those living in the city which appears to contradict CACI data for this same period, but it is important to remember that CACI is measuring household income not individual earnings. Aberdeenshire tends to have a greater proportion of larger family households than Aberdeen City. As a result, it is more likely that there will be two or more earners in each household pushing total household income up higher than the city even if individual earnings are slightly lower.

Household Incomes

2.96 Table 2.18 below shows lower quartile and median incomes for different parts of the area using the 2018 Local Level Household Income Estimates (LLHIE) produced for the Scottish Government.

Table 2.18: Annual household income by area

Area	Median	Lower Quartile
Aberdeen City	£29,120	£17,160
Aberdeenshire	£36,400	£21,320
Aberdeenshire part of AHMA*	£43,253	£25,112
Aberdeen HMA	£32,760	£19,240
Rural HMA	£32,240	£18,720
Aberdeenshire part of Cairngorms NP	£34,320	£20,800
HNDA Area* (Aberdeen City and whole of Aberdeenshire)	£33,291	£18,533
Scotland	£28,600	£17,160

Source: Local Level Household Income Estimates 2018 except those with * which are not available from LLHIE, CACI Paycheck 2021[12] figure used instead

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2.97 Incomes across the area remain higher than for Scotland although in Aberdeen City the median figure is now only slightly above the Scottish average and the lower quartile figure is the same. This reflects a recent fall in incomes resulting from the local economic impact of the oil price fall in 2014. Incomes remain high across much of Aberdeenshire, particularly in the Aberdeen HMA part but there has also been a recent levelling of income growth.

Key Issues:

- Median household income growth from 2015 was below the Scottish average of 11%. In Aberdeen City, there was a fall of 2% with incomes dropping below the Scottish average. In Aberdeenshire, incomes remain high compared to Scotland but had a lower rate of growth over the period of 7%.

- Lower quartile incomes in Aberdeen City are the same as in Scotland while in Aberdeenshire they are higher, particularly in the Aberdeenshire part of the Aberdeen Housing Market Area.

Affordability of Housing for Sale

2.98 Comparing income with house price indicates how affordable housing is to the population. The HNDA tool uses an assumption that a household can afford to buy a house if the price is no more than four times annual income. Table 2.19 below shows house prices across different parts of the Housing Market Area.

Table 2.19: Lower Quartile and Median House Price 2019/20

	Lower Quartile	Median
Aberdeen City	£110,000	£161,000
Aberdeenshire	£134,998	£193,000
Aberdeenshire part of Aberdeen HMA	£165,000	£216,222
Aberdeen HMA	£127,000	£180,000
Rural HMA	£110,000	£165,000
Aberdeenshire part of Cairngorms NP	£156,875	£195,300
Scotland	£100,000	£156,000

Source: Registers of Scotland/CHMA

2.99 Table 2.20 below shows the ratios between house prices and income for lower quartile and medians. Buying a house is unaffordable if the ratio is more than four (shaded red), and affordable if it is below four (shaded green).

Table 2.20: House price to income affordability ratios by area

	LQ price/LQ income	LQ price/ Median income	Median price/ Median income
Aberdeen City	6.4	3.8	5.5
Aberdeenshire	6.3	3.7	5.3
Aberdeenshire part of Aberdeen HMA	8.5	4.8	6.3
Aberdeen HMA	6.6	3.9	5.5
Rural HMA	5.9	3.4	5.1
Aberdeenshire part of Cairngorms NP	7.5	4.6	5.7
Scotland	5.8	3.5	5.5

Source: Registers of Scotland, LHIE, CACI

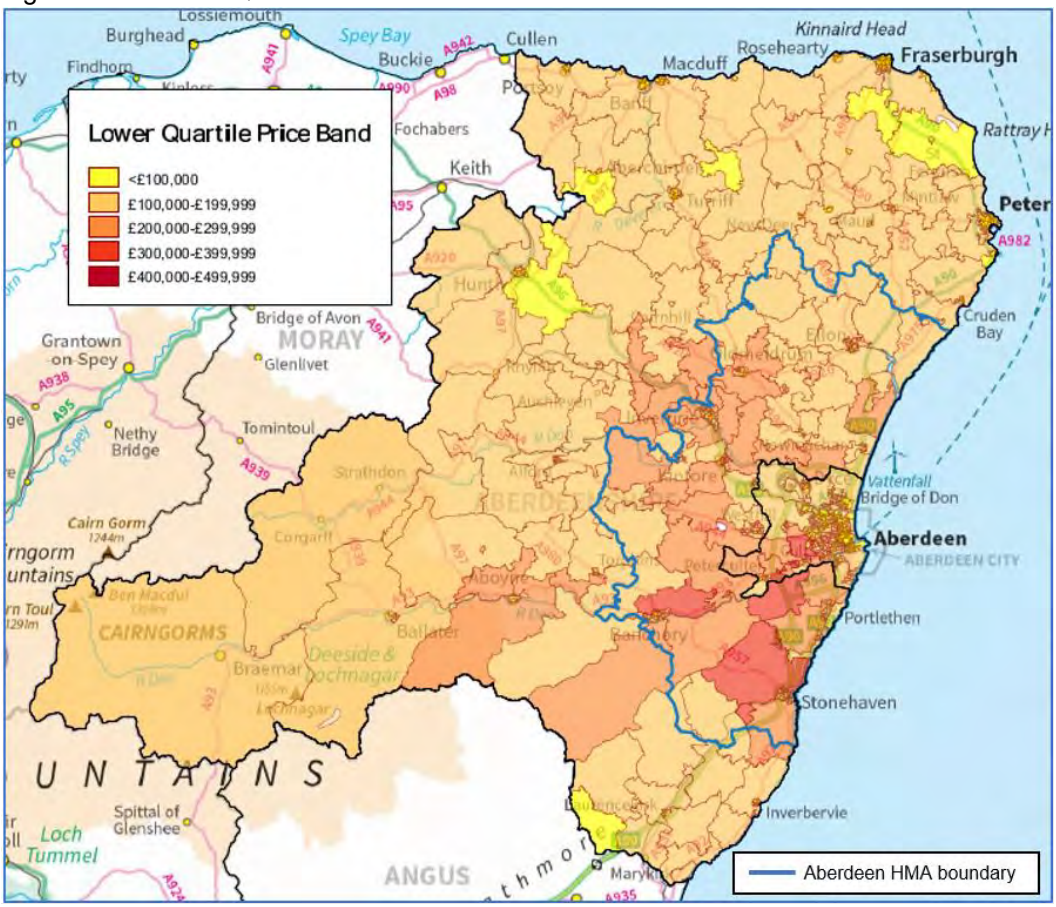
2.100 Using this measure of affordability, households with lower quartile income cannot afford to buy a lower quartile property in any part of the area. Lower quartile house prices are around 6 - 8 times higher than lower quartile incomes. That said, affordability is better now than it was at the time of the last HNDA when even in the Rural HMA, where house prices tend to be lower, the ratio was 7.0 while in the Aberdeen HMA it was 8.4 times annual household income.

2.101 Housing in the lower quartile is more affordable for those on median incomes, with house prices being less than four times income in much of the area, except for the Aberdeenshire part of the Aberdeen HMA, and the Aberdeenshire part of the Cairngorms National Park, where affordability is still an issue. This however is an improvement on the situation at the time of the last HNDA when both Aberdeen City and the Aberdeen HMA were not affordable to those on median household incomes. Median house prices remain out of reach of those on median incomes in all parts of the area.

2.102 Although there are issues with affordability across both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, a more fine-grained analysis using datazones shows that there is considerable variation in house prices within local authority areas and within housing market areas. So, if households can move to a different part of the area, it may be possible to find more affordable housing. Figures 2.39, 2.40 and 2.41 (maps) show how lower quartile prices vary between datazones across the area. For this analysis, the average (median) of lower quartile prices over the five years from 2015 to 2020 was used.

2.103 In Aberdeenshire, the lowest prices (less than £100,000) are found only in the more peripheral parts of the Rural HMA, and mainly in the north of Aberdeenshire. The most expensive housing (lower quartile price more than £300,000) is found in the Aberdeen HMA, to the south and west of Aberdeen City.

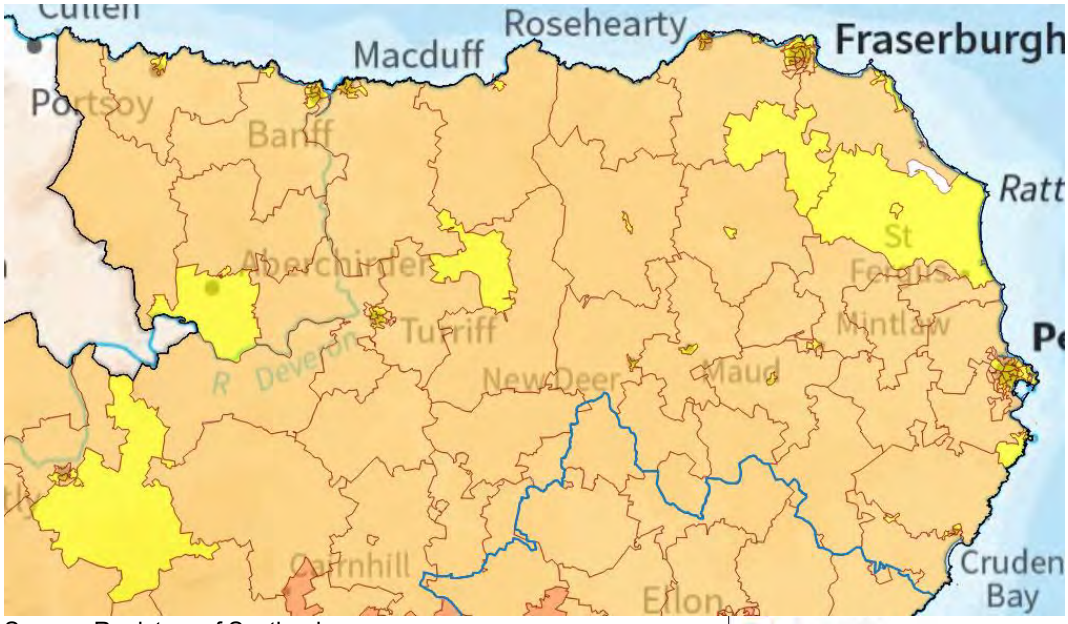
Figure 2.39: Lower Quartile House Price in Aberdeenshire



Source: Registers of Scotland

2.104 Figure 2.40 below gives more detail for the north of Aberdeenshire showing the concentration of datazones with lower house prices concentrated in Peterhead, Fraserburgh, Banff/Macduff, Turriff and Huntly and some of their surrounding rural areas and smaller settlements.

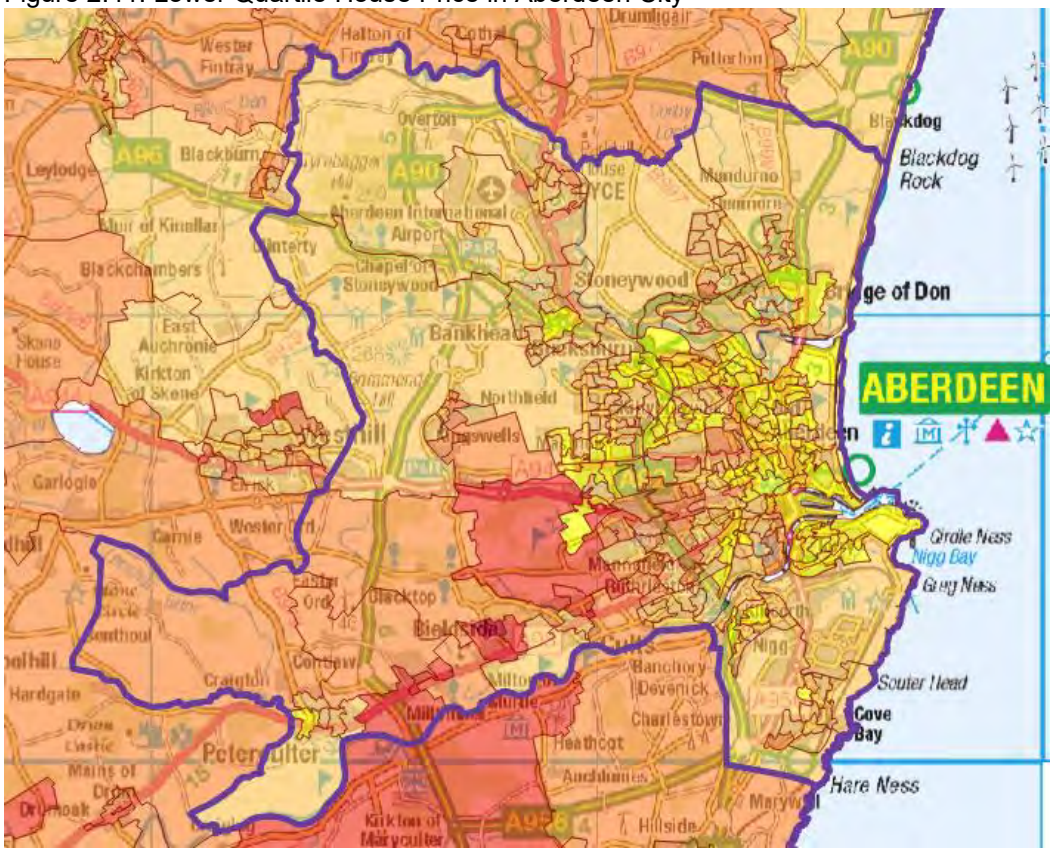
Figure 2.40: Lower Quartile House Price in Northern Aberdeenshire



Source: Registers of Scotland

2.105 In Aberdeen City, the lowest prices are found in areas closer to the City Centre and where there are a higher number of flats including Torry, Seaton, Mastrick and Tillydrone. The most expensive areas are found to the west of the City in Hazlehead, Cults, Bieldside and Milltimber.

Figure 2.41: Lower Quartile House Price in Aberdeen City



Source: Registers of Scotland

2.106 A similar spatial pattern was seen in lower quartile house prices across Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire in the 2017 HNDA but there are now a significantly greater number of data zones which fall into the more affordable price bands. There were very few data zones in the <£100,000 category in the previous HNDA. Now 169 out of 623 or 27% of all data zones are in this category. 57% of the data zones in this category are in Aberdeen City.

2.107 It is important to note that the ability of a household to move to a more affordable part of the area is dependent on range of factors including the location of employment, schools and family or social support networks. In addition, areas which have lower cost housing are often those with a higher proportion of small flats because they tend to be less expensive than houses. If the size and characteristics of a household mean that living in a flat is not appropriate, then just moving to a less expensive area will not help if there are no affordable family houses. Therefore, while a reduction in price at the lower end of the market might help individuals and couples, particularly first-time buyers looking for flats, it may have little impact on affordability pressures in the family housing segment of the market.

2.108 It is also true that although house prices have fallen in some areas, incomes have also fallen or at least levelled off, so it would be incorrect to assume that affordability has improved significantly for everyone. This situation has been exacerbated in recent months by high inflation and the resulting 'cost of living crisis' as increases in the cost of goods and services have outstripped income growth. This impacts on the affordability of housing partly due to the increased cost of servicing mortgages and a reduction in the ability of first-time buyers to save for deposits. In addition, the benefit of moving to a cheaper area to buy a more affordable house may be cancelled out by rising fuel costs to access employment and services.

Affordability of Housing to Rent

2.109 There is not one standard accepted measure of the affordability of rents relative to income, but both the Office for National Statistics (ONS)[13] and research undertaken by the Scottish Government[14] suggest that for rent to be considered affordable it should not exceed 30% of gross household income.

2.110 Table 2.21 uses a variety of data sources to show the average cost of rents for 2 bed properties across the area within different market sectors.

[13] https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/bulletins/privaterentalaffordabilityengland/2012to2020

[14] https://www.gov.scot/publications/rent-affordability-affordable-housing-sector-literature-review/

Table 2.21: Average monthly rent for 2 bed properties in 2021

	Private Rents (ScotGov)	Private Rents (Citylets)	Private Rents (Aberdeenshire Council)	Council Rents	RSLRents[11]
Aberdeen City	N/A	£633	N/A	£333.04	£421.59
Aberdeenshire	N/A	N/A	£594.57	£339.72	£413.80
Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire	£649.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Aberdeenshire AHMA	N/A	N/A	£636.82	N/A	N/A
Rural HMA	N/A	N/A	£499.41	N/A	N/A

Sources: Scottish Government Private Sector Rent Statistics; Citylets; Aberdeenshire Council Affordable Housing Team; CHMA Datapack

2.111 Tables 2.22 and 2.23 compare these rent levels against the lower quartile and median incomes to assess affordability. If rent is more than 30% of income it is shaded red (unaffordable), if less than this it is considered affordable (shaded green). This analysis shows that rents in the private sector are not affordable for households on lower quartile incomes and these households would be dependent on provision within the social sector. Affordability is worse in Aberdeen City and the Aberdeenshire part of the Aberdeen HMA. Rents are much more affordable for those on median incomes in all parts of the area.

Table 2.22: Rent for 2 bed properties as a proportion of lower quartile income

	Private Rents (ScotGov)	Private Rents (Citylets)	Private Rents (Aberdeenshire Council)	Council Rents	RSL Rents
Aberdeen City	N/A	44%	N/A	23%	29%
Aberdeenshire	N/A	N/A	33%	19%	23%
Aberdeen City and Aberdeen shire	42%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Aberdeenshire AHMA	N/A	N/A	40%	N/A	N/A
Rural HMA	N/A	N/A	32%	N/A	N/A

Sources: CHMA Datapack (2021); Aberdeenshire Council Affordable Housing Team; Citylets

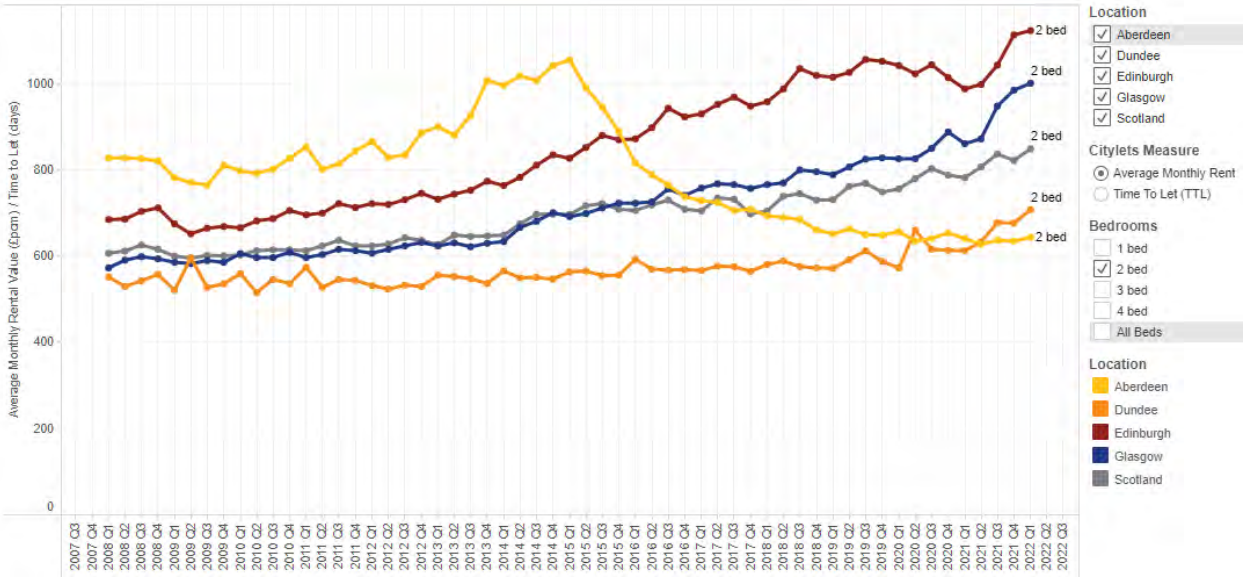
Table 2.23: Rent for 2 bed properties as a proportion of median income

	Private Rents (ScotGov)	Private Rents (Citylets)	Private Rents (Aberdeenshire Council)	Council Rents	RSL Rents
Aberdeen City	N/A	26%	N/A	14%	17%
Aberdeenshire	N/A	N/A	20%	11%	14%
Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire	23%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Aberdeenshire AHMA	N/A	N/A	22%	N/A	N/A
Rural HMA	N/A	N/A	19%	N/A	N/A

Sources: CHMA Datapack (2021); Aberdeenshire Council Affordable Housing Team; Citylets

2.112 There has been a very significant shift in affordability in the private rented sector since the time of the last HNDA, particularly in Aberdeen City. Figure 2.42 below shows the significant drop in rental prices in Aberdeen City following the downturn in the oil and gas sector in 2014. Up until 2015, rents had consistently been well above the average for other Scottish cities with the monthly rent for a 2-bed property in Aberdeen peaking at £1,053 in Q1 2015. Since then, rents have fallen sharply and the average rent for a 2-bed property is now cheaper than in any other Scottish city at £642, which is a 39% reduction over 7 years.

Figure 2.42: Average monthly rent for 2 bed properties 2007-2022 Scottish cities



Source: Citylets

2.113 As a result of this trend, rents are now much more affordable. At the time of the last HNDA, a household with median income would have had to pay 37% of their income to afford a 2-bed property in Aberdeen City. Now that figure is 26% which is within the affordable range.

Mortgages

Mortgage Interest Rates

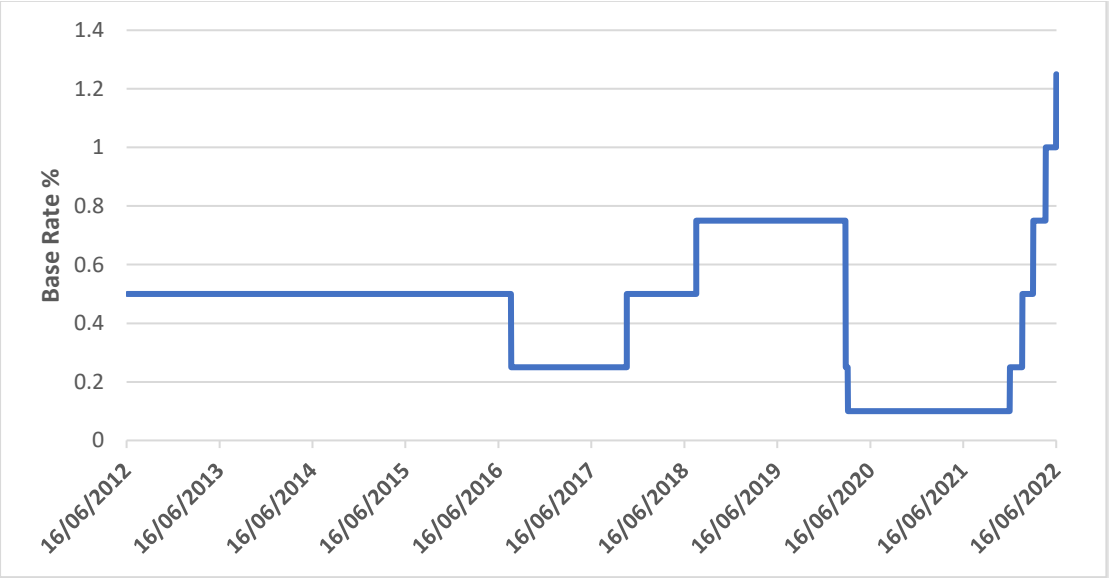
2.114 Since 2020, UK average interest rates on new variable rate loans had remained in the region of 1.5% to 2% and stood at 1.6% by December 2021, whilst new fixed rate loans had similarly drifted down to 1.58% by December 2021. However, these figures do not reflect recent increases to interest rates made by the Bank of England since January 2022 in response to rising inflation. From March 2020 to December 2021 base rates had remained steady at the particularly low rate of 0.1% and for the past 10 years since 2012 they had remained low at below 1%. On 3 Feb 2022 Bank of England increased the base rate from 0.25% to 0.5% and again increased it to 0.75% on 17 March 2022, to 1% on 5 May 2022 and a further increase to 1.25% on 16 June 2022 which is the highest level in 13 years.

2.115 The Q1 2022 data suggests that average variable and fixed rates on new mortgages have already been raised by lenders in response. The uplift in the base rate since the start of 2022 is estimated to have increased the average monthly payment by around £100 on an average new variable rate mortgage and by £50 on an average outstanding variable rate mortgage in Scotland.

2.116 Recent interest rate rises are an attempt by the Bank of England to combat rising inflation which has increased to around 9% in Q2 of 2022 and could reach 11% by the end of 2022 see figure 2.43 below. The Bank of England have largely attributed the rate of inflation to rises in global energy and commodity prices, recently exacerbated by Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. There remains uncertainty about whether the base rate will increase further this year, although this is considered likely, which would make variable mortgages and new fixed rate mortgages more expensive and house purchase less affordable.[15]

[15] Further information can be found at: Interest rates and Bank Rate | Bank of England
Scottish Housing Market Review: Q1 2022

Figure 2.43: Bank of England Base Rate 2012-2022



Source: Interest rates and Bank Rate | Bank of England

First Time Buyers

2.117 First-time buyers in Scotland still face a significant deposit barrier in relation to buying a property and the gap between purchase price and deposit has widened. The average deposit for 2021 is in the region of £37,000 which is 22% of the average house price in 2021, an increase of 4% since 2020. The overall number of first-time buyers in Scotland increased markedly to 24% from 2020 to 2021. The average age of a first-time buyer in Scotland is 31 in 2021, up from 29 in 2011 and slightly below the UK average of 32.[16]

2.118 As at Q4 2021, the average Loan to Value (LTV) ratio for a first-time buyer in Scotland is 82.1%, up 4.8% annually, which likely reflects the return of high LTV ratio mortgages (partly due to the UK Government's Mortgage Guarantee Scheme launched in April 2021) whose availability fell substantially early in the Covid-19 pandemic. The mean LTV ratio for Home Movers also increased slightly 71.2%, up 1.4% over the one-year period. This indicates that the market is starting to recover from the effect of the pandemic with loans classified as high LTV and high LTI (loan-to-income) increasing. Scottish Housing Market Review: Q1 2022.

[16] More information can be found at: Halifax First-Time Buyer Review 2021 (lloydsbankinggroup.com)

Key Issues:

- Lower quartile house prices are around 6-8 times higher than lower quartile incomes across the area. The Aberdeenshire part of the Aberdeen Housing Market Area is the least affordable location, with house prices unaffordable even for those on median incomes.
- Private sector rents are not affordable for those on lower quartile incomes across most of the area.
- The recent fall in house prices and rental levels has only had a marginal impact on affordability because incomes have also fallen. In addition, substantial increases in mortgage interest rates and reduced supply of rental properties are both exacerbating affordability pressures.

Economic Trends

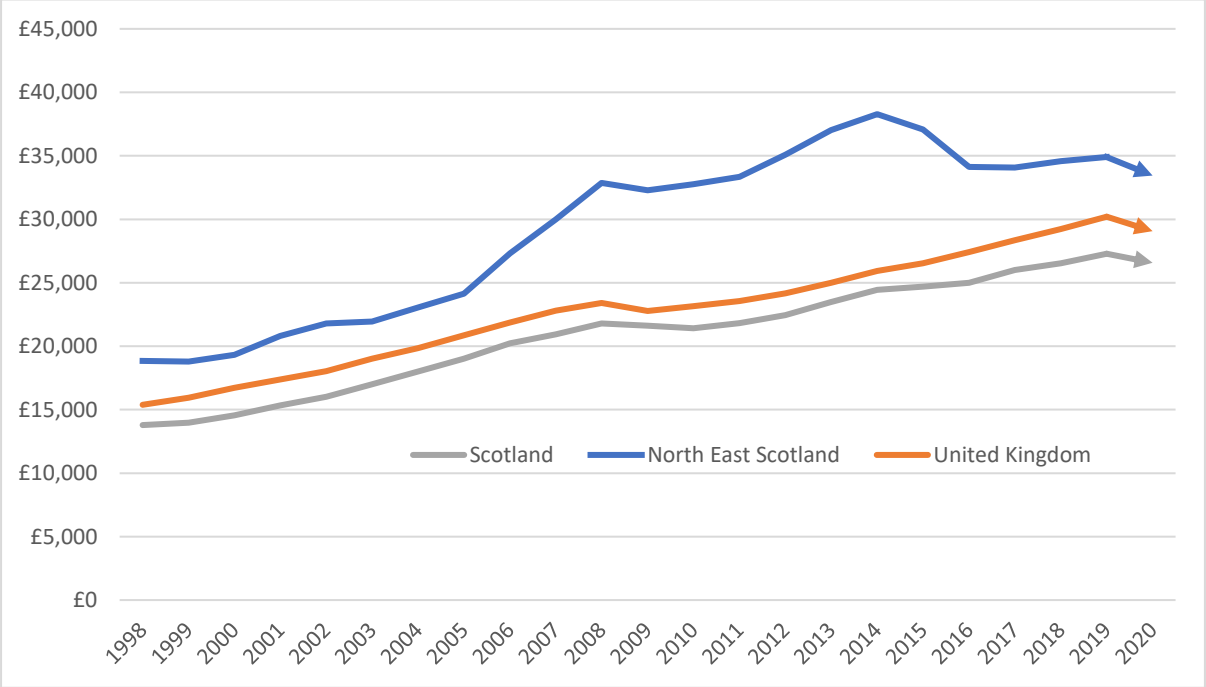
Economic Growth

2.119 Gross Value Added (GVA) is a good indication of a region's economic performance and overall economic well-being. The latest figures published by ONS in May 2022 indicate see figure 2.44 below:

- In 2020, North East Scotland[17] had a GVA per head of £33,441 which was the fifth highest of areas in the UK outside of London. This regional figure is the average of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. GVA per head was 15% and 26% higher than that of the UK and Scotland respectively.
- Within Scotland's regions, North East Scotland had the fourth highest figure after Edinburgh City, Glasgow City and Shetland.
- Following a prolonged period of growth in GVA per head in North East Scotland, there was a significant decrease between 2014 and 2017 due to the downturn in oil and gas prices. Meanwhile growth continued for the rest of Scotland and the UK. Nearly all areas of the UK saw a fall in 2020 as the pandemic hit.

[17] North Eastern Scotland ITL2 Area (International Territorial Level)

Figure 2.44: GVA per head of population 1998 – 2020



Source: Regional Gross Value Added (Balanced) Per Head and Income Components, ONS 2021 Regional gross value added (balanced) per head and income components - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk

Labour Market

2.120 The largest employment industry sector in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire in 2020 was health, which equated to 14.6% of all jobs in the region. This includes employment at the regional hospital, Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, local medical and dental practices as well as care and social work activities.

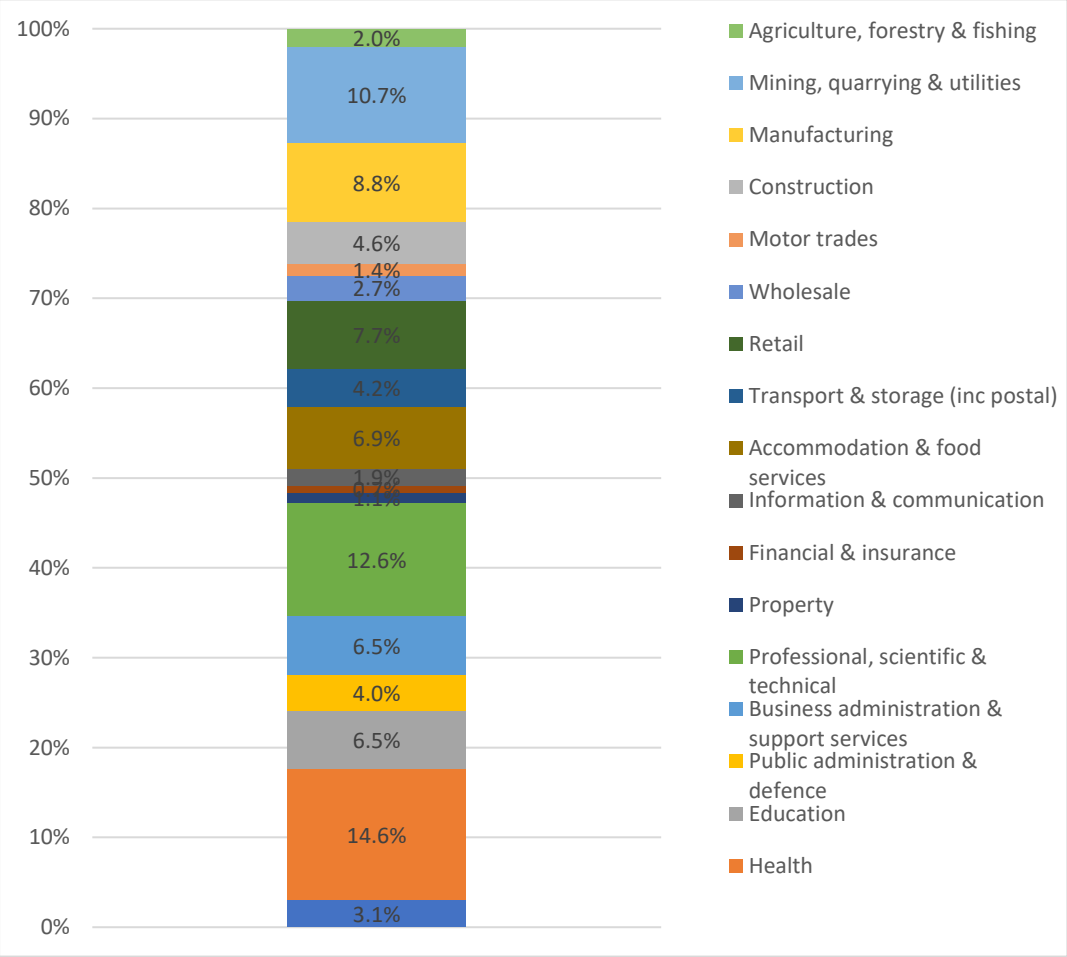
2.121 The region also has a high proportion of the population employed in the professional, scientific, and technical industry at 12.6% (this rises to 13.8% for city employment levels). This sector includes employment relating to legal, accounting, management consultancy, engineering and scientific research activities. This sector reflects the regional focus on research and development, primarily centred round the oil and gas industry, however the number of jobs has slightly decreased over time (previously in 2015 this was 13.5% and the largest employment sector).

2.122 The mining, quarrying and utilities industry is also regionally significant with 10.7% of the employees in the Northeast working in this sector, 12.5% in Aberdeen City and 8.0% in Aberdeenshire. This is considerably higher than in Scotland as a whole (2.7%) and Great Britain (1.3%). This sector includes activities relating to petroleum and gas extraction and the associated support services.

2.123 Regionally there was a very low reliance on the public sector in 2020, with only 19% of those in employment in the Northeast working in the public sector. This is lower than the Scottish national average of 24.1%. However, this represents a 2.4% rise in the number of public sector employees from 2015 to 2020.

2.124 Figure 2.45 below details the Business Register and Employment Survey 2020 and highlights the prevalent trades within the Northeast.

Figure 2.45: Employment Industry sectors Northeast Scotland 2020



Source: Business Register and Employment Survey, via Nomis (2020)

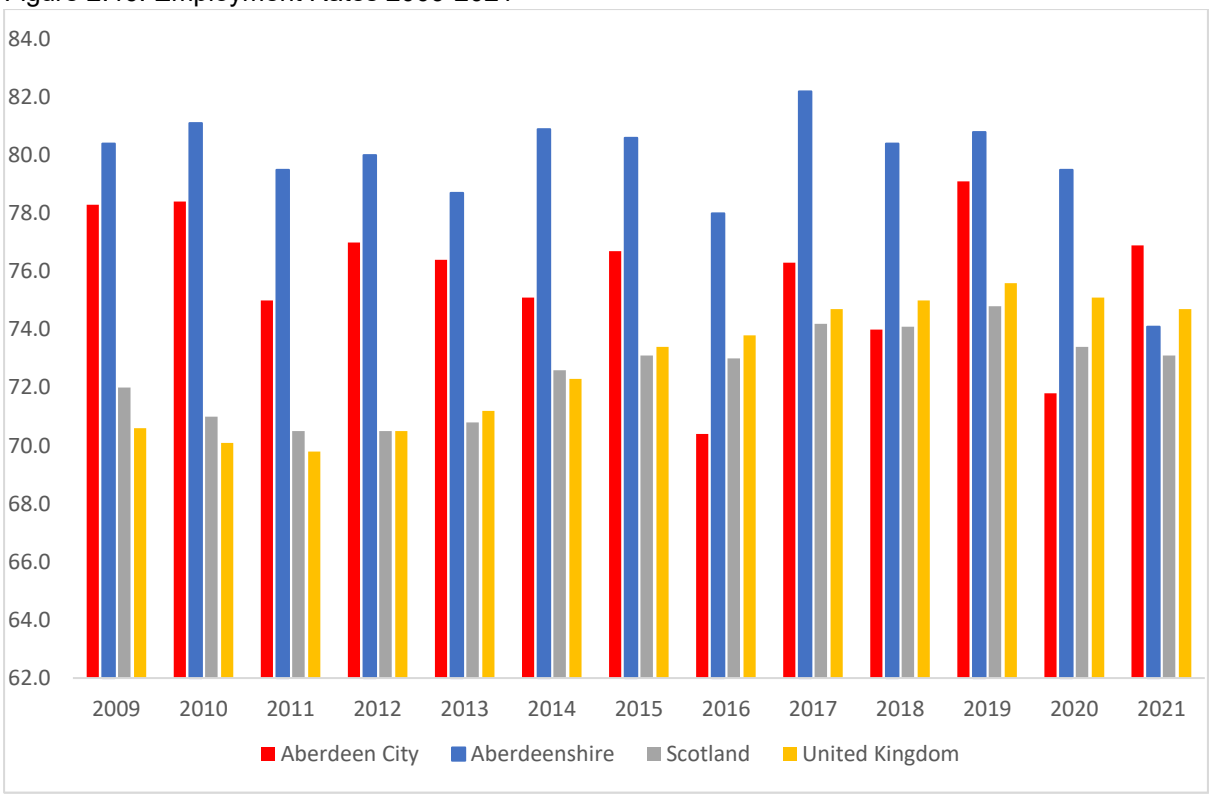
Economic Activity

2.125 Employment rates reflect the number of people either employed or actively seeking employment. In 2019, the employment rate in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire stood at 79.1% and 80.8% respectively. This was higher than the Scottish average of 74.8% and the UK average of 75.8%.

2.126 The employment rates fell in 2020 across all regions see figure 2.46, however Aberdeenshire rates remained above Aberdeen City as well as Scotland and UK average at 79.6%. A fall in the rates in Aberdeenshire was apparent in

2021, with a decrease to 74.1% and under the UK rate of 74.9%. Aberdeen City rates rose from 71.6% in 2020 to 76.9% in 2021. Over the same period, the Scotland (73.1%) and UK (74.7%) rates remained like those in 2020.

Figure 2.46: Employment Rates 2009-2021



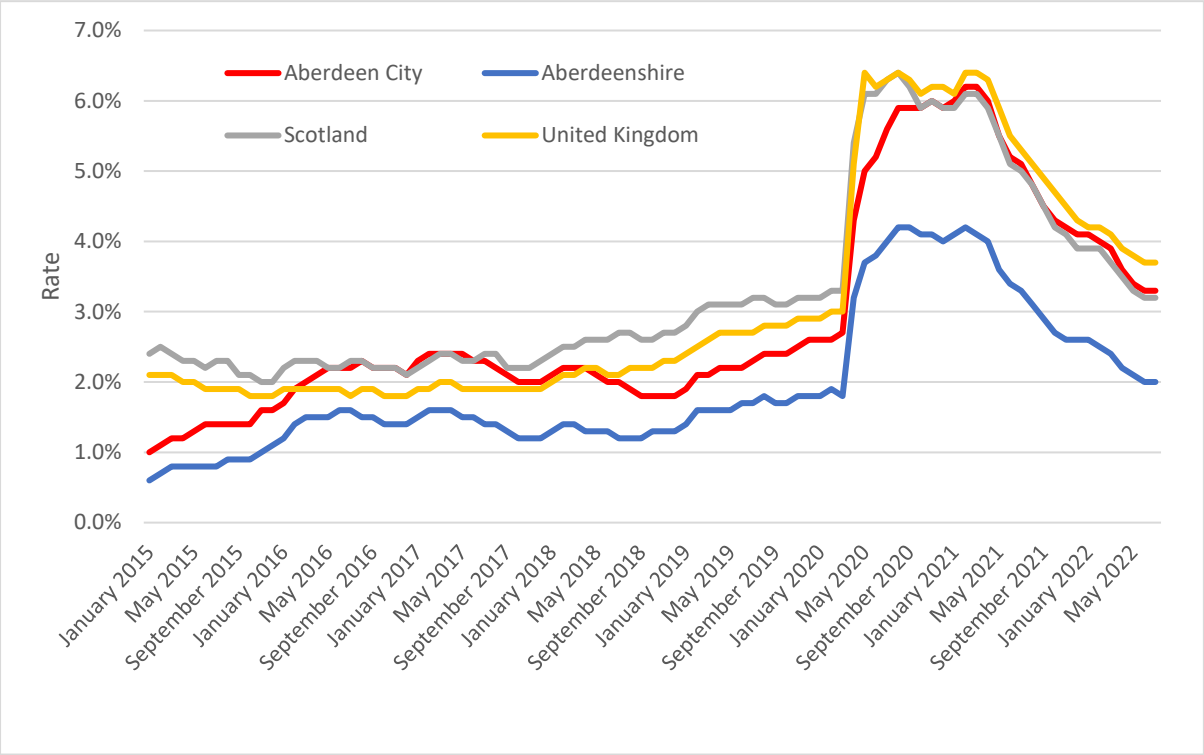
Source: Annual Population Survey, employment rates Jan – Dec from 2009 to 2021, via nomis (2022)

Unemployment

2.127 The unemployment level is a strong indicator of short-term changes in the local economy. Figure 2.47 below shows that from 2015 to 2017 the claimant rate increased in both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire in response to the local economic downturn whilst rates decreased or remained steady across Scotland and the United Kingdom. In Aberdeen City, the unemployment rate climbed above the UK level to around the same as the Scottish rate. Rates decreased slightly in both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire until late 2018, with Aberdeen City dropping once again below Scotland and the UK.

2.128 Across all regions there was a gradual rise in unemployment rates from early 2019 followed by a very sharp increase in 2020 as the Covid-19 pandemic hit with Aberdeen City tracking the Scottish and UK rates at around 5-6%. Rates in Aberdeenshire followed the same pattern but peaked at around 4%. These high unemployment rates continued up until Spring 2021 before beginning to decline. By July 2022 the rate in Aberdeen City was 3.3% and in Aberdeenshire 2.0%, compared to Scotland at 3.2% and the UK at 3.7%.

Figure 2.47: Unemployment Rate (Claimant Count) January 2015 – July 2022



Source: Claimant Count, Nomis (2022)

Key Issues:

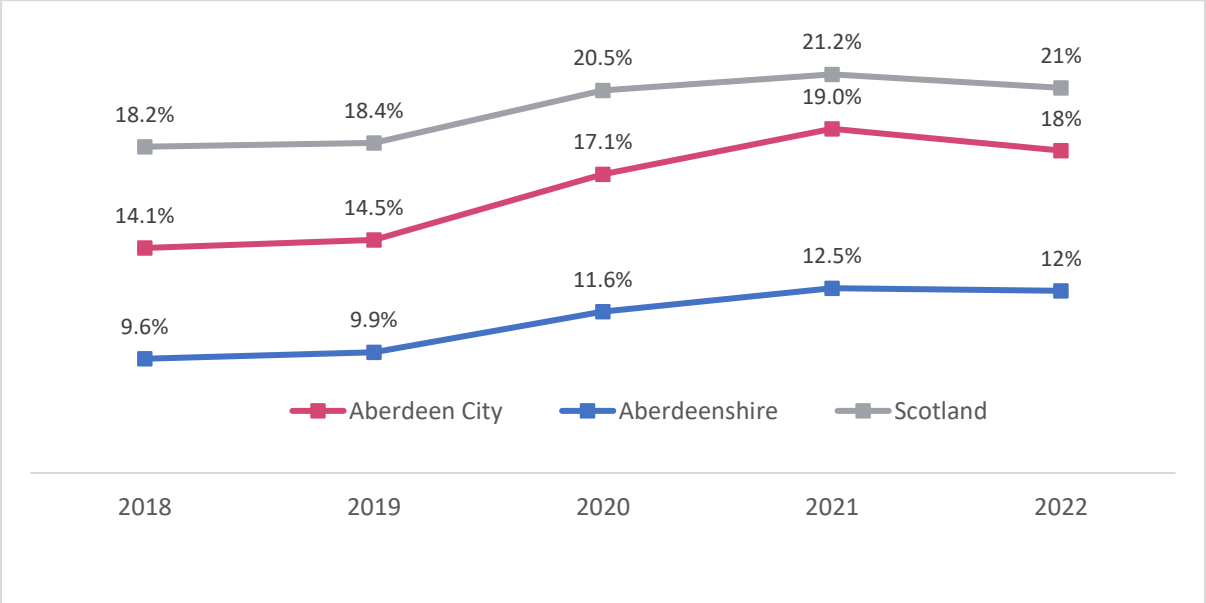
- Following a prolonged period of economic growth in North East Scotland, there was a significant decline between 2014 and 2017 due to the downturn in oil and gas prices. However economic performance remains above the average in Scotland and the rest of the UK.
- Employment in the region remains focused on activities related to oil and gas extraction although this has begun to decline.
- Unemployment rates in the area have historically been much lower than in Scotland but in Aberdeen City this has changed in recent years with unemployment at similar rates to Scotland (3.3% in Aberdeen City, 3.2% in Scotland). In Aberdeenshire the unemployment rate remains low at 2.0% but has increased since 2015 when it was below 1%.

Housing Benefit and Universal Credit

2.129 The number of people claiming housing benefit has been declining in recent years because payment for housing costs is now included within Universal Credit. Therefore, to look at the overall trend for people claiming help with housing costs we need to combine statistics on Housing Benefit with the Housing Cost Element of Universal Credit. Figure 2.48 shows the change in the proportion of households claiming Housing Benefit or the housing element of Universal Credit since 2018.

2.130 The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic is clear with a significant increase in the proportion of households needing help with housing costs in 2020 and 2021 in Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Scotland. This corresponds to the trend in unemployment rates in Figure 2.47. The rise in claimants for housing costs was particularly steep in Aberdeen City, from 14.1% in 2018 to 19.0% in 2022, an increase of more than one third. Aberdeenshire followed a similar pattern although the proportion was lower at 12.5% in 2021. In all areas there has been a slight decrease over the last year, but it is too early to say whether this is likely to indicate the beginning of a downward trend.

Figure 2.48: Proportion of households claiming housing benefit or housing element of universal credit

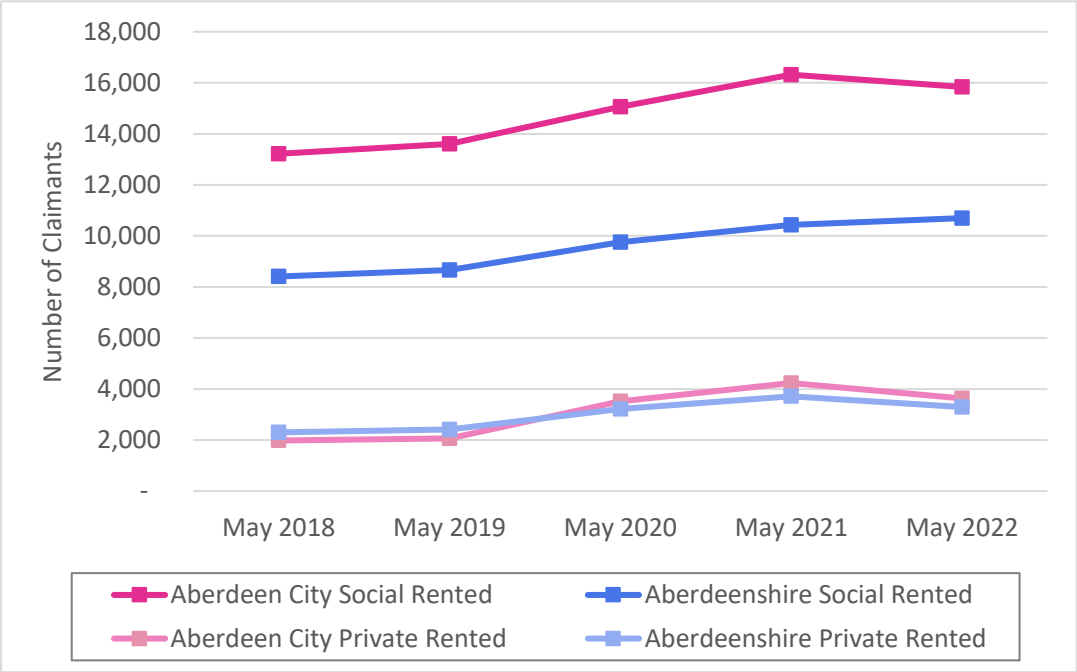


Source: DWP via Stat-Xplore - Households on Universal Credit, Housing Benefit Claimants

2.131 Figure 2.49 shows the breakdown by tenure for people claiming help with housing costs in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. A greater number of tenants in the social rented sector claim these benefits than those in the private sector and there are more claimants in the social rented sector in Aberdeen City than Aberdeenshire. The number of claimants in the private rented sector is very similar in both authorities. In Aberdeenshire in the social rented sector there was an increase in claimants from 2021 to 2022 (from

10,437 to 10,698) which is contrary to the overall trend for a decrease in the last year.

Figure 2.49: Housing Benefit/Universal Credit claimants by tenure 2018- 22



Source: DWP via Stat-Xplore - Households on Universal Credit, Housing Benefit Claimants

Deprivation

2.132 While the Northeast is one of the least deprived areas in Scotland there are significant geographical variations across the region, with areas of deprivation and households at high risk of poverty. Table 2.24 below highlights relative deprivation rates across the area according to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD2020), using the 20% threshold for identifying spatial concentrations of multiple deprivation.

Table 2.24: Regional Share of the Most Deprived 20% of Scotland 2020

	Number of Datazones	Data Zones in most deprived 20% in Scotland	% of all Data zones in area
Aberdeen City	283	29	10.25%
Aberdeenshire	340	9	2.65%
Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire	623	38	6.1%

Source: SIMD (2020); Scottish Government (2020)

2.133 Aberdeenshire has only 9 datazones out of 340 that fall within the 20% most deprived in Scotland and none in the 5% most deprived. Overall deprivation in Aberdeenshire is concentrated in Fraserburgh and Peterhead.

2.134 However, there are some variations when individual domains are considered. Many of the rural communities across Aberdeenshire score poorly in terms of access, with 44% of the local datazones ranking in the 20% of the most deprived areas in Scotland for this domain. Rural areas around Insch, Aboyne, Dunecht and New Pitsligo are particularly badly affected as well as remote parts of Donside and within the Cairngorms National Park. The 20% most deprived datazones for income, housing, health and employment domains follow the overall deprivation pattern and are found in Peterhead and Fraserburgh.

2.135 In Aberdeen City, there are 29 datazones out of 283 that fall within the most deprived and 1 datazone in the 5% most deprived (Woodside). The datazones falling within the 20% most deprived can be found in Ashgrove, Kincorth, Mastrick, Middlefield, Northfield, Seaton, Stockethill, Tillydrone, and Woodside, as well as parts of George Street.

2.136 As with Aberdeenshire, there are variations when individual domains are considered. Most notably, just over a third (35%) of datazones within the City rank in the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland for housing. These are concentrated mainly in and around the centre of the city. The location of the 20% most deprived datazones for other domains broadly follows the pattern of overall deprivation. The exception to this is the access domain, where the 21 datazones in the 20% most deprived are located mainly on the outskirts of the city in otherwise more affluent areas including Bieldside, Culter, Cults, Denmore, Dyce, Hazlehead, Kingswells and Milltimber.

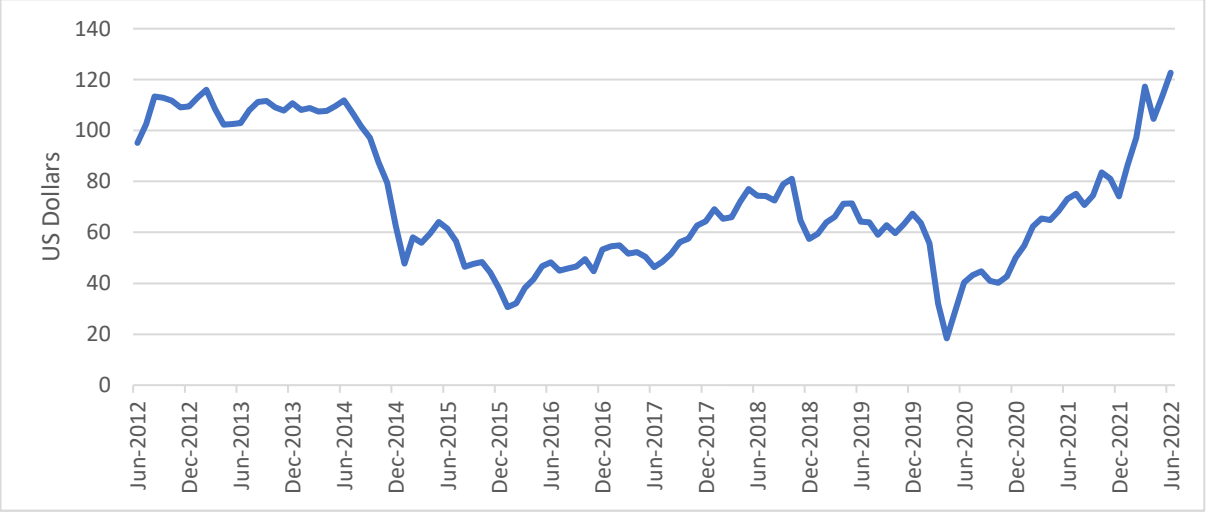
Key Issues:

- The rise in claimants for Universal Credit housing costs was particularly steep in Aberdeen City, from 14.1% in 2018 to 19.0% in 2022, an increase of more than one third. Aberdeenshire followed a similar pattern although the proportion was lower at 12% in 2022.
- In Aberdeen City, there are 29 datazones out of 283 that fall within the 20% most deprived in Scotland and 1 datazone in the 5% most deprived. 35% of datazones fall within the 20% most deprived for the housing domain. Aberdeenshire has only 9 datazones out of 340 that fall within the 20% most deprived and none in the 5% most deprived.

Oil Price and Energy Transition

2.137 In Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire although the economy has a range of strengths and specialisms, local economic performance has been intrinsically linked to the oil and gas industry. Inevitably, the downturn in the price of oil in 2014 (figure 2.50) has had a significant impact on the region's economy. In the three years prior to July 2014 the price of oil ranged from $100 to $120 per barrel (monthly averages). From July 2014, the price of oil per barrel dropped significantly, reaching its lowest price in over a decade in January 2016 at $31 per barrel before stabilising around the $60 per barrel mark until early 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic caused prices to drop further still to $18 in April 2020 but they had recovered to pre-pandemic levels by early 2021. A sharp rise to costs above $100 per barrel from March 2022 is linked to the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the effect this has had on global energy prices. According to the US Energy Information Administration, the Brent spot average price per barrel is predicted to fluctuate but remain over $100 per barrel until the end of 2022, although there is considerable uncertainty due to ongoing events in Ukraine and the impact on the global supplies.[18]

Figure 2.50: Brent Crude Oil Price Per Barrel June 2012 - June 2022



Source: US Energy Information Administration, EIA (2022)

2.138 An Economic Outlook report published by KPMG in June 2020 predicted that the two Scottish local authorities to be worst affected over the year to 2021 were Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire due to a combination of the COVID-19 pandemic and the significant decline in oil price. The outlook following the recent increase in oil prices linked to the war in Ukraine has yet to be determined.

[18] Short-Term Energy Outlook - U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA)

Energy Transition

2.139 In April 2020 the Institute for Government set out the UK net zero target of 2050 and the associated need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in response to the climate change emergency. Energy supply is the second highest emitting sector after transportation, although emissions have reduced in recent years due to the phasing out of coal and increasing use of renewables.

2.140 The Regional Economic Strategy for the North East (2015) is focused on the Aberdeen City region moving towards being a globally recognised integrated energy cluster leading the energy transition by decarbonising oil and gas production; providing net-zero solutions across offshore renewables, carbon capture, storage and hydrogen; along with creating green energy jobs for the future.

2.141 The North Sea Transition Deal was published in 2021 to clarify the vital role that the oil and gas industry plays in helping the UK government meet its energy requirements as well as providing solutions, skills, and technologies to achieve net zero by 2050. The Deal provides investment to help the UK move from fossil-fuel dependency to a low carbon economy in a managed way, including supporting up to 40,000 direct and indirect supply chain jobs and achieving a 60Mt reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. In June 2021 the Scottish Government announced investment of £26 million in the Energy Transition Zone. The Energy Transition Zone is adjacent to Aberdeen's new south harbour development and is expected to directly support 2,500 green jobs by 2030 alongside a further 10,000 transition-related jobs.

2.142 More recently and in response to world events, the British Energy Security Strategy published in April 2022 aims to ensure an orderly transition to net zero and evidenced a continued need for a contribution from oil and gas in addition to new offshore wind and nuclear initiatives. It is hoped that this may provide investors with the necessary confidence to invest in North Sea projects and give some reassurance to Aberdeen and Northeast communities concerning jobs.[19]

[19] UK energy strategy to 'breathe new life' into North Sea and Net Zero (energyvoice.com)
UK net zero target | The Institute for Government
North-east economy to be worst-hit in Scotland due to oil price and pandemic, says KPMG - News for the Energy Sector (energyvoice.com)
Regional Economy | ONE (opportunitynortheast.com)
NSTA Overview (nstauthority.co.uk)
£26m to develop Energy Transition Zone in Aberdeen (opportunitynortheast.com)
UK Economic Outlook June 2020 - Hard Times (assets.kpmg)
North Sea Transition Deal (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Outlook for Northeast Energy Sector

2.143 KPMG in Aberdeen City are of the opinion that the direction of travel is clear amongst oil and gas companies who are gearing up for a decade of rapid sustainable transformation. The Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce (AGCC) has reported that companies in the UK's oil and gas sector expect their businesses to transform substantially across the next decade, with firms predicting that on average the share of their business outside of oil and gas will jump from 21% in November 2021 to 47% by 2030.

2.144 The AGCC 'Oil and Gas Survey' (May 2021) found that 75% of contractors interviewed expected to become more involved with renewables work over the coming 3-to-5-year period and that oil and gas activity would account for 68% of their business activities by 2025, down from 86% currently. The AGCC Energy Transition 35th Survey (May 2022) states that most sector businesses are diversifying away from oil and gas and they expect nearly 50% of business to be outside of oil and gas by 2030.

2.145 Energy industry contractors' confidence in the UKCS had improved from -76% at the end of 2020 because of the Covid 19 pandemic to +6% by mid-2021 as the outlook improved. Following the end of the pandemic, 44% of firms have indicated their intention to diversify away from oil and gas. Three quarters of companies' report being either 'moderately' or 'extremely' optimistic about Aberdeen, Scotland and the UK playing a leading role as a future energy hub and think that strong sustainability credentials are critical to their long-term success.

2.146 The Fraser of Allander Institute agrees that opportunities are to be found in renewable technologies. They say that seizing Scotland's full economic potential of renewable technologies can create new industries, bring growth to rural areas, and generate sustainable employment. They add that potential for renewables to provide significant but sustainable opportunities for many local economies cannot be understated. However, at this stage the scale and quality of jobs that need to be created in the renewables sector to replace those lost in the oil and gas sector because of the net-zero energy transition aspirations has yet to be seen.[20]

[20] UK's oil and gas sector presses ahead with diversification, but skills shortages and funding concerns may create a barrier to net zero ambitions (agcc.co.uk)
Oil-and-Gas-Survey-33.pdf (agcc.co.uk)
AGCC-Energy-Transition-survey-35-report.pdf
Do Renewables Provide an Answer to Climate Policy Trade-Offs? | FAI (fraserofallander.org)

Key Issues:

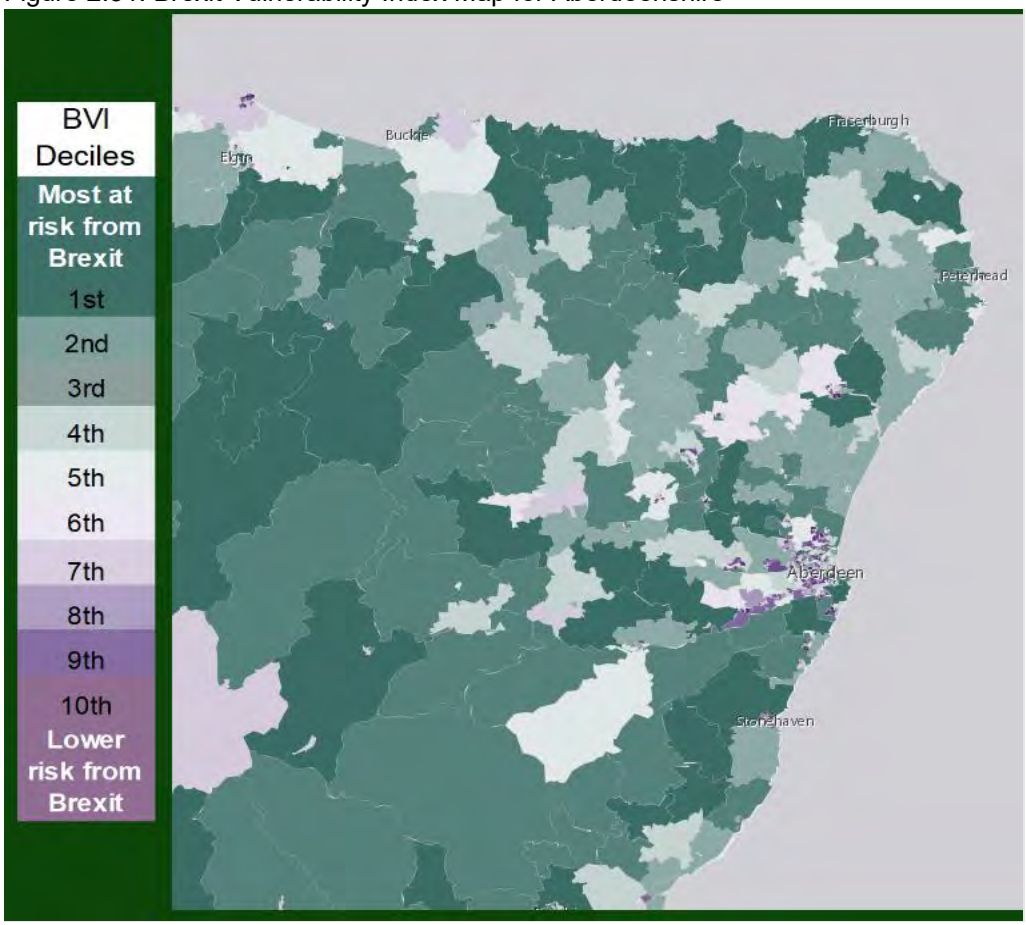
- The downturn in the price of oil in 2014 has had a significant negative impact on the region's economy. While recent oil price increases may provide a boost in the short term, the focus is now on energy transition and developing a sustainable and resilient diversified economy which capitalises on new technologies. There remains some uncertainty about the type and scale of employment opportunities likely to result from this.

Impact of Leaving EU

2.147 The Brexit Vulnerabilities Index published by the Scottish Government in October 2019 identifies how vulnerable all datazones in Scotland are to the consequences of Brexit. This is based on an assessment of a range of variables including access to services, working age population, migration, number of workers in Brexit sensitive industries and dependency on European funding. Predominantly rural and island areas are found to be at a proportionally greater risk. The Western Isles has the highest concentration, with 53% of its datazones regarded as being in the most vulnerable category. Areas of Scotland nearer to the Central Belt with relatively diversified economies are generally less vulnerable.

2.148 Nearly one third of Aberdeenshire's 340 datazones fall into this 'most vulnerable' category which is the 9th highest out of the 32 local authorities. These datazones are spread across Aberdeenshire with concentrations around Fraserburgh and the North Coast communities, as well as rural parts of Donside, Deeside, Ythanside and areas of South Aberdeenshire. Aberdeenshire has 79,000 people living in the most vulnerable datazones, the third highest number in Scotland after Glasgow City and Highland.

Figure 2.51: Brexit Vulnerability Index Map for Aberdeenshire



Source: Brexit Vulnerability Index Map

2.149 In contrast just 9% of Aberdeen City's datazones are in the most vulnerable category which is the 27th highest out of 32 local authorities. The most vulnerable datazones are located close to the city centre and harbour areas, as well as Dyce, Torry and Tullos. 24,000 people in Aberdeen City live within these most vulnerable datazones.

Figure 2.52: Brexit Vulnerability Index Map for Aberdeen City

Source: Brexit Vulnerability Index Map

2.150 There have been numerous news stories reporting that Scotland's supply chain has been adversely affected by the impact of both Brexit and COVID-19 across a wide range of sectors from farming and construction to retail. Leaving the European Union (EU) has resulted in a shortage of HGV drivers across the UK which has had an influence on delivery of supplies. The additional checks required on lorries entering the EU from the UK has been difficult for the exporting of perishable goods, particularly seafood from Scotland, and has involved additional expenditure. Prior to Brexit, three quarters of Scotland's seafood exports went to the EU. Northeast local news coverage has suggested that impact from Brexit is anticipated to hit Scotland's farming, food and drink industry. In addition, the oil and gas industry expect some repercussions as 5% of the North Sea workforce are European and there are also supply chain delays. The reduction in EU workers has also impacted recruitment for the tourism and hospitality industry in Scotland. [21]

[21] Scotland's supply chain 'left exposed by impact of Brexit and Covid' - STV News
Brexit: Nine ways leaving the EU has impacted on Scotland | The National
Brexit: How has leaving the EU impacted Scotland's fishing industry? | The National
Analysing the potential impact of Brexit on the north of Scotland's economy (pressandjournal.co.uk)
Brexit: The economic impact a year on - BBC News

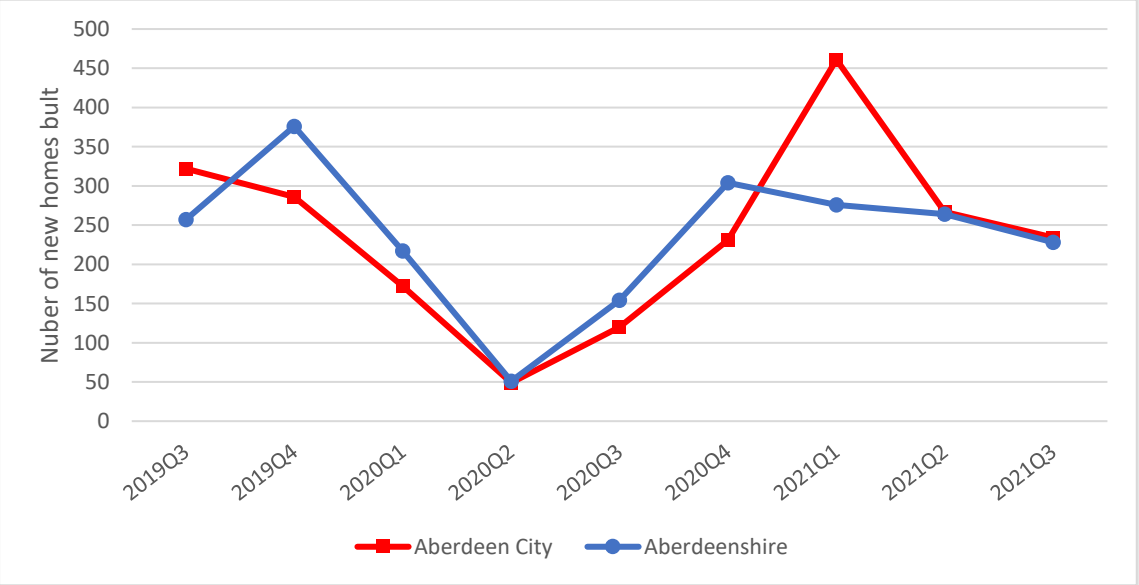
Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic

2.151 The Scottish Government stated in August 2021 that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant economic impact on Scotland as a whole. Earlier in 2021, Stuart McIntyre of the Fraser of Allander Institute suggested that Aberdeen and the wider Northeast had been exposed to greater economic fallout from the pandemic compared to other parts of the country - “Not only is it facing the effect of the downturn in the oil and gas sector, but the economic hit from the pandemic”.[22]

2.152 Previous sections of this report have referred to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic as evident in various datasets covering economic trends. This section looks at the significance of the pandemic and associated restrictions on new housebuilding and housing transactions.

2.153 The varying levels of restrictions on building site activity during the pandemic has had a significant effect on housebuilding over the past two years. In Scotland there were 33% fewer new homes completed in 2020/21 compared to 2019/20. In Aberdeenshire the decrease over this period was also 33% with a lower decrease in Aberdeen City of 20%, equating to an overall decrease in housebuilding of 27% between 2019/20 and 2020/21. Figure 2.53 below shows the particularly dramatic drop in Q1 and Q2 of 2020 at the start of the pandemic when building site activity was halted, although completions started to increase again from the end of 2020 as site restrictions eased.

Figure 2.53: New Housebuilding Completions Q3 2019 to Q3 2021

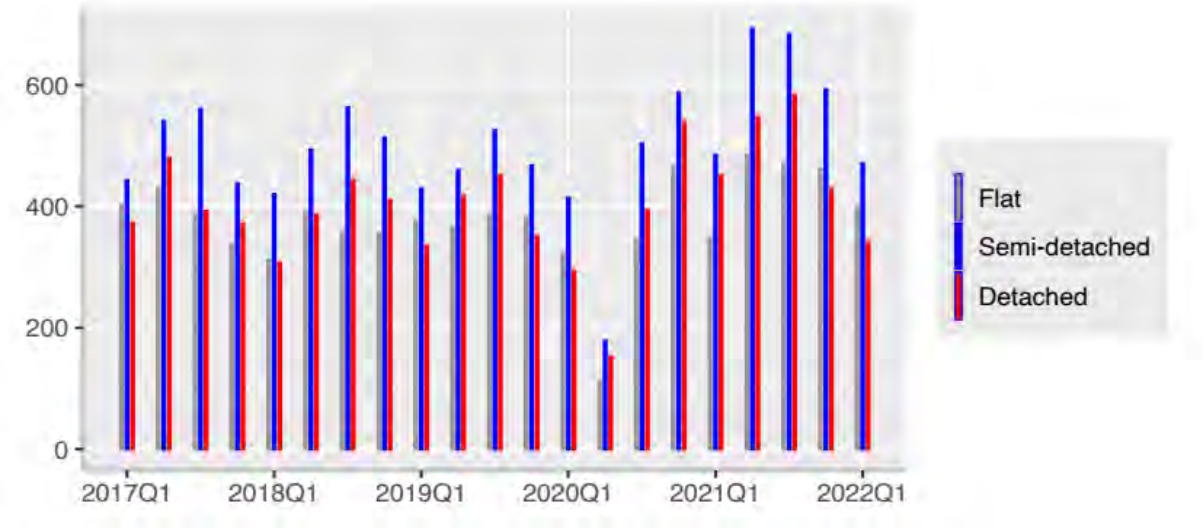


Source: Housing Statistics 2020 & 2021: Key Trends Summary - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

[22] COVID impacts Scotland’s finances - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)
'Economic fallout' in Aberdeen laid bare - News for the Energy Sector (energyvoice.com)

2.154 The effect of the pandemic on activity in the wider housing market can be seen in the Figure 2.54 below from the Aberdeen Solicitors Property Centre report for Q1 2022. This shows the significant fall in transactions in Q2 2020 at the start of the pandemic when there were restrictions on house viewing and house moving. The recovery to pre-pandemic levels as restrictions eased was swift.

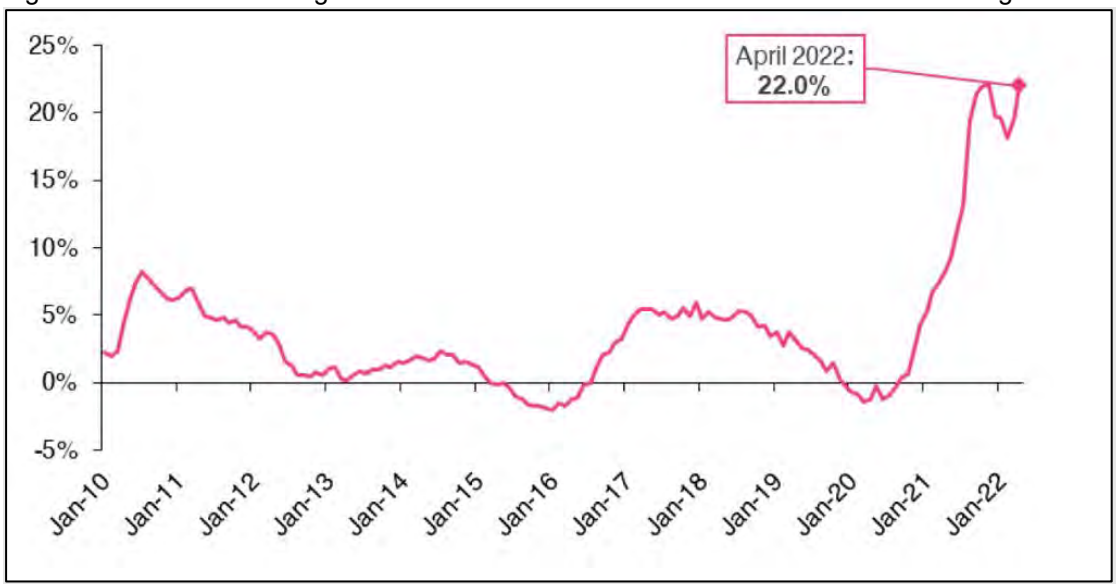
Figure 2.54: Residential transactions per quarter in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Q1 2017 to Q1 2022



Source: Aberdeen Housing Market Report (aspc.co.uk)

2.155 The delivery of new housing has also been negatively impacted by a significant increase in construction materials and costs since late 2020 and shortages of key materials. Figure 2.55 shows the increase in the cost of materials for housing, driven by the pandemic but exacerbated by complications resulting from Brexit, and in recent months rising sharply again in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine with a 22% annual increase reported in April 2022. This volatility of costs makes business planning challenging for both private and public sector housing providers.

Figure 2.55: Annual Change in Price of Construction Materials for New Build Housing UK



Source: Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy; Scottish Housing Market Review Q2 2022

Key Issues:

- One third of Aberdeenshire datazones are regarded as being in the 'most vulnerable' category to the consequences of Brexit. This relates particularly to supply chain issues, exports and labour and is focused on more rural and/or peripheral parts of the area.
- The delivery of new housing continues to be negatively impacted by a significant increase in construction materials and costs since late 2020 and shortages of key materials.

Key Issues for Local Housing Strategy and Local Development Plans

Topic	Key Issues Identified in the HNDA
Demographic issues for the local housing market	1. Following a prolonged period of strong population growth, both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire saw decreases in population from 2015 in response to local economic circumstances. 2. Compared to Scotland, both areas have seen an above average increase in older age groups and a decrease in young adults. 3. Population projections indicate a higher rate of increase in population in Aberdeenshire than Aberdeen City in future years. The main increases are in older age groups, and particularly those aged 75+ in Aberdeenshire. 4. After a long period of positive net in-migration up to 2014, there was a reversal of this trend from 2015 and both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire saw negative net migration for a few years. There remains uncertainty over the future direction and pattern of migration trends post Covid-19 and Brexit. 5. Aberdeenshire has a larger average household size (2.27 persons per household) than Aberdeen City (2.02 persons per household). Household size has been decreasing in both areas and this trend is projected to continue. 6. The number of households is projected to increase by 3% in Aberdeen City and 6% in Aberdeenshire by 2028. This may be a conservative estimate of household growth as recent migration trends indicate a higher level of growth is more likely. 7. In Aberdeen City the largest projected increase is in single adult households (+4.4%) while in Aberdeenshire it is households with 2 adults (+10.2%). In both City and Shire the largest percentage increases are in older households, particularly those aged 75+, with projected increases of 18.8% in Aberdeen City and 42.6% in Aberdeenshire.
Affordability issues for the local housing market	1. House prices in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire had been well above the Scottish average for many years. This changed from 2015 onwards when this area saw significant decreases while prices in

	Scotland rose steadily, and in 2020 the average price in Aberdeen City dropped below the Scottish average. 2. Lower quartile prices across the area remain above those in Scotland, with the highest prices found in the Aberdeenshire part of the Aberdeen Housing Market. 3. Average private rental prices peaked in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire in 2014 before decreasing rapidly and falling below the Scottish average. 4. Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire was the only area of Scotland to see rents for 1 bed flats fall over the last 10 years (-11% compared to +31% for Scotland). 2 bed flats saw just a 3% increase compared to +33% in Scotland. 5. However, in the last year there has been a reversal of this trend and rental prices are now increasing rapidly, particularly in Aberdeen City. 6. The gap between private and social rents has narrowed in recent years. However social rents, and particularly council rents continue to be significantly more affordable than private rents. 7. Median household income growth since 2015 was below the Scottish average of 11%. In Aberdeen City, there was a fall of 2% with incomes dropping below the Scottish average. In Aberdeenshire, incomes remain high compared to Scotland but had a lower rate of growth over the period of 7%. 8. Lower quartile incomes in Aberdeen City are the same as in Scotland while in Aberdeenshire they are higher, particularly in the Aberdeenshire part of the Aberdeen Housing Market Area. 9. Lower quartile house prices are around 6-8 times higher than lower quartile incomes across the area. The Aberdeenshire part of the Aberdeen Housing Market Area is the least affordable location, with house prices unaffordable even for those on median incomes. 10. Private sector rents are not affordable for those on lower quartile incomes across most of the area.

	11. The recent fall in house prices and rental levels has only had a marginal impact on affordability because incomes have also fallen. In addition, substantial increases in mortgage interest rates and reduced supply of rental properties are both exacerbating affordability pressures.
Economic issues for the local housing market	1. Following a prolonged period of economic growth in North East Scotland, there was a significant decline between 2014 and 2017 due to the downturn in oil and gas prices. However economic performance remains above the average in Scotland and the rest of the UK. 2. Employment in the region remains focused on activities related to oil and gas extraction although this has begun to decline. 3. Unemployment rates in the area have historically been much lower than in Scotland but in Aberdeen City this has changed in recent years with unemployment at similar rates to Scotland (3.3% in Aberdeen City, 3.2% in Scotland). In Aberdeenshire the unemployment rate remains low at 2.0% but has increased since 2015 when it was below 1%. 4. The rise in claimants for Universal Credit housing costs was particularly steep in Aberdeen City, from 14.1% in 2018 to 19.0% in 2022, an increase of more than one third. Aberdeenshire followed a similar pattern although the proportion was lower at 12% in 2022. 5. In Aberdeen City, there are 29 datazones out of 283 that fall within the 20% most deprived in Scotland and 1 datazone in the 5% most deprived. 35% of datazones fall within the 20% most deprived for the housing domain. Aberdeenshire has only 9 datazones out of 340 that fall within the 20% most deprived and none in the 5% most deprived. 6. The downturn in the price of oil in 2014 has had a significant negative impact on the region's economy. While recent oil price increases may provide a boost in the short term, the focus is now on energy transition and developing a sustainable and resilient diversified economy which capitalises on new technologies. There remains some uncertainty about the type and scale of employment opportunities likely to result from this.

	7. One third of Aberdeenshire datazones are regarded as being in the 'most vulnerable' category to the consequences of Brexit. This relates particularly to supply chain issues, exports and labour and is focused on more rural and/or peripheral parts of the area. 8. The delivery of new housing continues to be negatively impacted by a significant increase in construction materials and costs since late 2020 and shortages of key materials.

Informing the Assumptions and Choice of Scenarios for the HNDA Tool

2.156 While all the key issues identified in this chapter are relevant to decision making about assessing housing need and demand, the following points will directly influence the choice of assumptions made when running the scenarios in the HNDA Tool, so these have been summarised below. More detail on this will follow in Chapter 4.

- It is likely that future net migration and the consequent growth in household numbers will be higher than shown in the 2018-based household projections. The focus should therefore be on the Principal and High Migration projections when running scenarios.
- Over the last decade, the build rate for new affordable homes has been low. It is more realistic to assume in the tool that it will take 10 years rather than 5 years for existing need to be cleared.
- There has been a decline in income growth in Aberdeen City in recent years and this trend looks likely to continue during the period of energy transition. As a result, the tool should be run on a low-income growth assumption for Aberdeen City. In Aberdeenshire, the rate of income growth is more in line with the national trend so the default tool assumption can be used.
- Although there has been some recent volatility in local house prices, they now appear to be tracking national trends which supports the use of the default growth option in the tool.
- There has also been a period of volatility in rental prices, but recent significant increases suggest that the use of a moderately high growth assumption in the tool is likely to be most appropriate.

2.157 Remaining assumptions in the tool should be kept as the default since evidence from Chapter 2 indicates either the local situation is broadly in line with the national trend or that no local evidence is available to suggest otherwise.

Chapter 3: Housing Stock Profile

Core Output 4: Housing stock profile, pressures, and management issues

- Consider what existing stock is available to meet local housing needs and identify any under-supply or surplus of housing types.
- Show where existing housing stock is pressured and could be managed differently to meet the housing needs.
- Describe the types and number of in-situ solutions used.
- Stock should be considered by size, type, condition, occupancy (overcrowding and under-occupancy), concealed households and turnover (re-lets and voids), tenure and location.

Introduction

3.1 This chapter profiles the physical characteristics of the existing stock, any stock pressures, stock management issues and in-situ solutions. It presents characteristics of the stock by size, type, location, condition, and occupancy across all tenures. It draws comparisons with national data and highlights differences between Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, and where possible, the Scottish average. The information in this chapter does not feed into the estimates of future additional housing need as set out in chapter 4, however it will inform future decisions on housing stock and housing related policy in the local housing strategies produced for both local authorities.

Methodology

3.2 The evidence around housing stock is presented by local authority area using data from national data sources, where possible, and data from Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils and the Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) that operate in the local authority areas directly where necessary. The use of national data sources is preferred as it allows comparisons to be drawn between national and local authority figures, putting the local context into the larger picture. Where appropriate, longer-term trends have been included, usually using data from the last five years: 2017/18 to 2021/22. While national datasets are relatively robust, in some cases they rely on survey samples which provide indicative figures only. Data around house condition is taken from the Scottish House Condition Survey which is based on three-year rolling averages with a two-year delay in reporting. Where possible, more than one dataset has been checked for overall accuracy. All sections of Chapter 3 have been issued in draft form to the project team, regional housing partners and wider Housing Market Partnership as part of the HNDA consultation process, with feedback gathered, recorded and appropriate amendments made.

Housing Stock Profile

3.3 This section profiles the local housing stock by numbers, size, type, condition, tenure, and location. This analysis is presented at a local authority level and compared to national averages where available.

Location

3.4 Aberdeen City is an urban local authority located in the Northeast of Scotland and is bounded on all sides by Aberdeenshire Council. Aberdeen is the third most populous city in the country after Glasgow and Edinburgh. Aberdeen is one of Scotland's 32 local government council areas, and has a 2020 population estimate of 198,590, making it the United Kingdom's 39th most populous built-up area. Since 1975, the main industry and employer is oil and gas exploration, however since 2014 there has been a significant downturn in the oil price which has seen many jobs lost and has resulted in a reduction in house prices and private rents. Aberdeen City owns and manages over 22,000 council homes and has a program to deliver 2,000 new affordable homes.

3.5 Aberdeenshire is a predominantly rural area in Northeast Scotland that includes the Cairngorm mountains, agricultural lowlands, and coastal landscapes. There are six administrative/committee areas: Banff and Buchan, Buchan, Garioch, Formartine, Kincardine and Mearns, and Marr, and the largest settlements in Aberdeenshire are split relatively evenly between these areas. Figure 3.1 is a map of Aberdeenshire, showing the six areas. Table 3.1 shows the proportion of dwelling types and median dwelling size by Aberdeenshire area. Typically, we see more flats and smaller dwellings in the larger settlements, and more larger dwellings and detached properties in rural areas.

Figure 3.1 Aberdeenshire Area Map

Source: Aberdeenshire Council

3.6 Banff and Buchan is located to the north of Aberdeenshire along the north coast. Banff and Buchan contains 14% of Aberdeenshire's population and has 15% of Aberdeenshire's housing stock. The largest settlements in Banff and Buchan are Fraserburgh (the third largest settlement in Aberdeenshire) and Banff. Fraserburgh has a population of 12,570 and Banff a population of 4,000. Proportionally Banff and Buchan has more dwellings that are flats (14%) and terraced (18%) then Aberdeenshire as a whole (12% and 12% respectively), a similar proportion of semi-detached (31% compared with 29%) and significantly fewer detached (36% compared with 47%). The median number of rooms of dwellings in Banff and Buchan is 4, compared to 5 for Aberdeenshire as a whole.

3.7 Buchan is in the north-east coastal area of Aberdeenshire, contains 16% of Aberdeenshire's population and has 17% of Aberdeenshire's housing stock. The largest settlement in Buchan is Peterhead, which is also the largest settlement in Aberdeenshire, with a population of 19,060. Proportionally Buchan has more dwellings that are flats (20% - the highest proportion of flats out of the six Aberdeenshire areas) and semi-detached (33%) than Aberdeenshire as a whole (12% and 29% respectively), a similar proportion of terraced (14% compared with 12%) and significantly fewer detached (33% compared with 47%). The median number of rooms for dwellings in Buchan is 4, compared to 5 for Aberdeenshire as a whole.

3.8 Formartine is located to the north of central Aberdeenshire with its eastern edge running along the east coast. It borders Banff and Buchan and Buchan to the north, Garioch and Aberdeen City to the south and Marr to the west. Formartine contains 17% of Aberdeenshire's population and has 16% of Aberdeenshire's housing stock. The largest settlements in Formartine are Ellon and Turriff. Ellon has a population of 10,070 and Turriff a population of 4,700. Proportionally Formartine has fewer dwellings that are flats (8% - the lowest proportion of flats out of the six Aberdeenshire areas) and terraced (8% - the lowest proportion of terraced out of the six Aberdeenshire areas), the same proportion of semi-detached (29%) and significantly more detached (55% compared with 47%). The median number of rooms for dwellings in Formartine is the same as Aberdeenshire as a whole: 5.

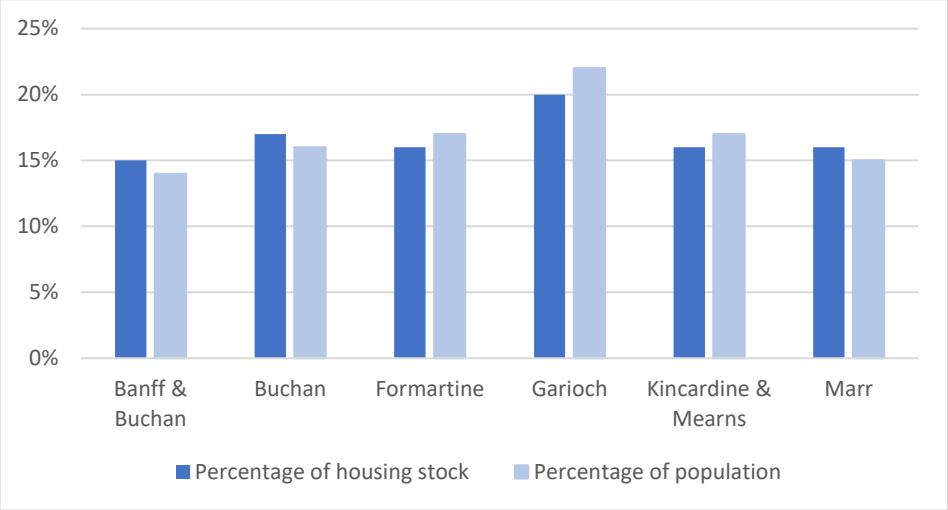
3.9 Garioch is located in the centre of Aberdeenshire and borders Formartine to the north, Marr to the west, Aberdeen City to the east and Kincardine and Mearns to the south. Garioch contains 22% of Aberdeenshire's population and has 20% of Aberdeenshire's housing stock. The largest settlements in Garioch are Inverurie (the second largest settlement in Aberdeenshire), Westhill and Kintore. Inverurie has a population of 14,660, Westhill a population of 12,110 and Kintore a population of 4,700. Garioch's dwelling type proportions are similar to that of Aberdeenshire as a whole: 13% of Garioch properties are flats, 10% are terraced, 28% are semi-detached and 49% are detached, while Aberdeenshire has 12% flats, 12% terraced, 29% semi-detached and 47% detached. The median number of rooms for dwellings in Garioch is the same as Aberdeenshire as a whole: 5.

3.10 Kincardine and Mearns is located to the south of Aberdeenshire along the east coast, it borders Aberdeen City and Garioch to the north and Marr to the west. Kincardine and Mearns contains 17% of Aberdeenshire's population and has 16% of Aberdeenshire's housing stock. The largest settlement in Kincardine and Mearns is Stonehaven with a population of 11,150. Kincardine and Mearns's dwelling type proportions are similar to that of Aberdeenshire as a whole: 11% of Kincardine and Mearns properties are flats, 13% are terraced, 29% are semi-detached and 47% are detached, while Aberdeenshire has 12% flats, 12% terraced, 29% semi-detached and 47% detached. The median number of rooms for dwellings in Kincardine and Mearns is the same as Aberdeenshire as a whole:

3.11 Marr is located to the west of Aberdeenshire and contains part of the Cairngorms National Park. Marr contains 15% of Aberdeenshire's population and has 16% of Aberdeenshire's housing stock. The largest settlements in Marr are Banchory and Huntly. Banchory has a population of 7,440 and Huntly a population of 4,550. Proportionally Marr has less flats (9%) than Aberdeenshire as a whole (12%), a similar proportion of terraced (13% compared with 12%), the same proportion of semi-detached (29%) and significantly more detached (57% - the highest proportion of detached dwellings out of the six Aberdeenshire areas). The median number of rooms

for dwellings in Kincardine and Mearns is the same as Aberdeenshire as a whole: 5.

Figure 3.2. Percentage of housing stock and population by Aberdeenshire area



Source: Aberdeenshire Council Area Profiles (2022)

Table 3.1 Proportion of dwelling types and median dwelling size (all tenures) by Aberdeenshire area

	Flat	Terraced	Semi-detached	Detached	Median No of Rooms
Banff & Buchan	14%	18%	31%	36%	4
Buchan	20%	14%	33%	33%	4
Formartine	8%	8%	29%	55%	5
Garioch	13%	10%	28%	49%	5
Kincardine & Mearns	11%	13%	29%	47%	5
Marr	9%	13%	29%	57%	5
Aberdeenshire	**12%**	**12%**	**29%**	**47%**	**5**

Source: National Records of Scotland, Dwellings by Type; Dwellings Median Number of Rooms (2017)

Number of Dwellings & Number of Households (Estimates)

3.12 Table 3.2 below highlights the number of dwellings in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire for all tenures from 2006 to 2021. Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire account for 9.08% of Scotland's housing stock. The increase in the number of dwellings from 2006 to 2021 for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire are higher than the Scottish average, particularly in Aberdeenshire with a 15.78% increase and Aberdeen with a 12.54% increase compared to a 10.72% increase in Scotland.

3.13 The increase in the number of dwellings from 2016 to 2021 for Aberdeen City is also higher than the Scottish average with a 6.22% increase compared to a

3.85% increase in Scotland whereas in Aberdeenshire this was more in line with Scotland at 3.66%.

Table 3.2: Number of dwellings (all tenures) in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire

Local Authority	2006	2010	2016	2020	2021	Change 2016/21		Change 2006/21	
						Number	%	Number	%
Aberdeen City	108,618	110,968	115,080	120,980	122,242	7,162	6.22%	13,624	12.54%
Aberdeenshire	104,226	109,552	116,421	119,854	120,682	4,261	3.66%	16,456	15.78%
Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire	212,844	220,520	231,501	240,834	242,924	11,423	4.93%	30,080	14.13%
Scotland	**2,416,071**	**2,488,496**	**2,575,687**	**2,653,725**	**2,674,993**	**99,306**	**3.85%**	**258,992**	**10.72%**

Source: National Records of Scotland (2021)

3.14 Table 3.3 below shows the estimates for the number of households for Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, and Scotland. An adjustment has been made to remove additional student halls of residence from the household count. This adjustment affects Aberdeen City (2017 to 2021).

3.15 Scotland's population has increased by 8% over the last 20 years. Average household size has been decreasing over this period, from 2.27 people per household in 2001 to 2.12 in 2021. Aberdeen City has seen household size reduce from 2.13 to 2.02 while Aberdeenshire has seen a reduction from 2.47 to 2.27. As more people live in smaller households or alone (in 2021, 36% of households were estimated to be one person living alone), the number of households has increased at a faster rate than it would due to a population increase alone.

Table 3.3: Number of households (estimates) for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire

Local Authority	2006	2010	2016	2020	2021	Change 2016/21		Change 2006/21	
						Number	%	Number	%
Aberdeen City	100,521	103,285	106,749	108,893	108,844	2,095	1.92%	8,323	8.28%
Aberdeenshire	98,892	104,017	110,296	112,713	113,861	3,565	3.31%	14,969	15.14%
Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire	199,413	207,302	217,045	221,606	222,705	5,660	2.54%	23,292	11.68%
Scotland	**2,295,185**	**2,364,850**	**2,446,171**	**2,507,625**	**2,528,823**	**82,652**	**3.27%**	**23,292**	**10.18%**

Source: National Records of Scotland (2021)

Key Issues:

- Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire have both seen an above average increase in the number of dwellings over the last 15 years.
- Over the same period Aberdeenshire has also seen an above average increase in the number of households.

Dwelling Sizes

3.16 Estimates of dwelling sizes are set out in Tables 3.4 and 3.5 below. In Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, 41% of dwellings contain 1 to 3 rooms, 46% have 4 to 6 rooms and 12% have 7 or more rooms. There is a much higher percentage of dwellings with 1-3 rooms in Aberdeen City (56%) compared to Scotland (42%), whereas in Aberdeenshire, there is a much lower percentage of dwellings of that size (27%). This may be due to the sizable percentage of multistorey flats in Aberdeen City which mainly consist of 1 and 2-bedroom flats. This is supported by the figures for number of bedrooms per dwelling: there are much higher percentages of 1 bed properties in Aberdeen City than Aberdeenshire or the Scottish average, particularly for owner-occupier and private rented tenures. The Scottish average is 5% of owner-occupier dwellings with 1 bed, compared with 11% in Aberdeen City, and Aberdeen City has 40% of private rented dwellings with 1 bed compared with the Scottish average of 24%. Aberdeenshire also has a much higher percentage of dwellings with 4 or more rooms, which is higher than Aberdeen City and the Scottish average. Aberdeenshire has 38% of owner-occupier dwellings with 4+ bedrooms, compared with 19% in Aberdeen City and the Scottish average of 24%.

Table 3.4: Rooms per dwelling in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire

	1-3 rooms		4-6 rooms		7 or more rooms		Median number
Aberdeen City	56%	64,444	38%	43,730	7%	8,055	3
Aberdeenshire	27%	31,433	55%	64,031	18%	20,955	5
Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire	41%	95,877	46%	107,761	12%	29,010	4
Scotland	**42%**	**1,090,180**	**50%**	**1,297,833**	**6%**	**155,740**	**4**

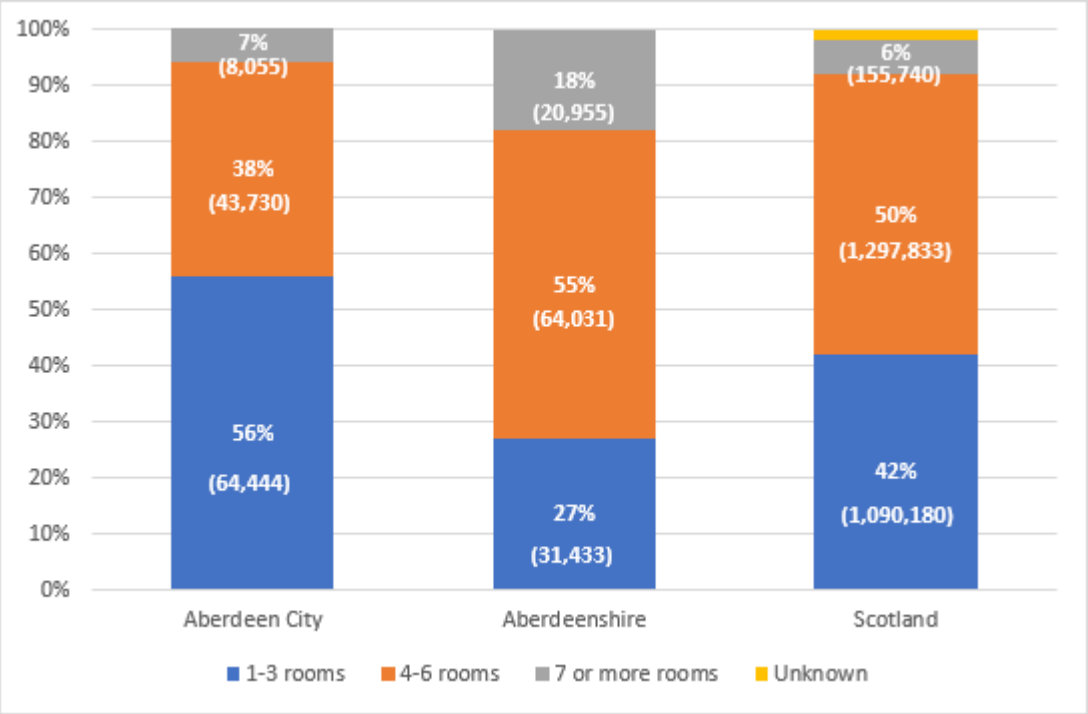
Source: National Records of Scotland, Characteristics of Dwellings (2017)

Table 3.5: Number of bedrooms per dwelling in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire

	% owner-occupier				% social housing				% private rented			
	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4+ bed	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4+ bed	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4+ bed
Aberdeen City	11%	32%	38%	19%	33%	53%	14%	-	40%	48%	11%	2%
Aberdeenshire	1%	21%	40%	38%	48%	25%	24%	4%	-	-	-	-
Scotland	**5%**	**28%**	**43%**	**24%**	**27%**	**45%**	**25%**	**3%**	**24%**	**49%**	**21%**	**6%**

Source: Scottish Household Survey (2019)

Figure 3.3: Proportion of dwellings by number of rooms



Source: National Records of Scotland, Characteristics of Dwellings (2017)

3.17 The data on dwelling size from National Records of Scotland relates to number of rooms, while data from the Scottish Household Survey relates to number of bedrooms, and both data sources are now several years old. It is clear from both data sources that Aberdeen City has more smaller dwellings, particularly in owner-occupier and private rented tenures, and Aberdeenshire has more larger properties. This picture is unlikely to have changed significantly in recent years.

Types of Dwelling

3.18 Table 3.6 below highlights that there are significant differences in the mix of house types in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. Aberdeen City has a predominance of flats (55%) whereas flats only make up 12% of the dwellings in Aberdeenshire. In Aberdeen City 86% of private-rented properties and 72% of social housing properties are flats. In Aberdeenshire, 47% of the housing stock are detached properties compared to only 11% in Aberdeen City. 96% of Aberdeenshire's owner-occupier properties are houses. The predominance of flats in Aberdeen City (particularly in the social housing and private rented sectors) and detached properties in Aberdeenshire stand out from the national housing mix, as does the very high percentage of house ownership (compared with flats) in Aberdeenshire. It should also be noted that Aberdeen City Council has 3,897 multi-storey properties, this represents 17.4% of the stock which consists of 33 bedsits, 1,471 one bedroom and 2,393 two-bedroom properties.

Table 3.6: Dwelling types

	Flat	Terraced	Semi-detached	Detached
Aberdeen City	55%	18%	16%	11%
Aberdeenshire	12%	12%	29%	47%
Scotland	38%	20%	20%	21%

Source: National Records of Scotland, Characteristics of Dwellings (2017)

Table 3.7: Dwelling types by tenure

	% owner-occupier			% social housing			% private rented		
	House	Flat	Other	House	Flat	Other	House	Flat	Other
Aberdeen City	75%	24%	1%	27%	72%	1%	14%	86%	1%
Aberdeenshire	96%	4%	0%	60%	36%	4%	-	-	-
Scotland	**81%**	**19%**	**0%**	**44%**	**54%**	**1%**	**36%**	**64%**	**1%**

Source: Scottish Household Survey (2019)

Key Issues:

- Aberdeen City has a high percentage of multi-storey flats and dwellings with 1-3 rooms, and a low percentage of detached dwellings and dwellings with 4-6 rooms.
- Conversely Aberdeenshire has a low percentage of flats and terraced dwellings and dwellings with 1-3 rooms, and a high percentage of semi-detached and detached dwellings and dwellings with 7 or more rooms.

Dwelling Condition/Quality

3.19 Table 3.8 below shows the dwelling condition for social housing. The Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) is a measure of housing quality set by the Scottish Government for the social sector to have achieved by 2015. It introduced a minimum housing standard intended to ensure that no property ever falls below this level. It means that social landlords must make sure their tenant's homes are energy efficient, safe, and secure, not seriously damaged and have kitchens and bathrooms that are in good condition.

3.20 In 2021, the energy efficiency elements of SHQS were replaced by the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESSH) which landlords should have met by 2020. In practice, many properties have not yet been brought up to EESSH and as such, this means the number of properties failing the SHQS has increased.

3.21 The Scottish Housing Regulator publishes detailed annual information on Council and RSL progress in achieving the SHQS. In 2022, 14.35% of social housing in Aberdeen City, 16.7% in Aberdeenshire and 25.4% in Scotland are failing to meet SHQS.

Table 3.8: Dwelling condition as per SHQS (social housing)

Landlord	Total stock for SHQS	Stock failing SHQS	Percentage of Stock failing
Aberdeen City Council	22,402	3,216	14.35%
Social landlords in Aberdeen City (average)	4,797	314	6.54%
Aberdeenshire Council	13,083	2,185	16.7%
Social landlords in Aberdeenshire (average)[23]	**3,018**	**570**	**18.89%**

Source: Scottish Housing Regulator (2022) & relevant RSLs (2022)

3.22 The Scottish House Condition Survey (SHCS) publishes figures on the percentage of dwellings that fail SHQS overall and for specific criteria including energy efficiency (using previous standards that did not require full compliance with EESSH), modern facilities/services and safety/security. This applies SHQS to all tenures and therefore gives data for owner-occupied and private rented properties.

Table 3.9: Percentage of dwellings failing SHQS by tenure.

		Housing Stock All Tenures	Owner-Occupied	Social Housing	Private rented
Failing SHQS overall	**Aberdeen City**	44%	41%	44%	51%
	Aberdeenshire	43%	42%	46%	45%
	Scotland	**42%**	**42%**	**37%**	**52%**
Failing SHQS 'Energy Efficient' criterion	**Aberdeen City**	33%	33%	28%	44%
	Aberdeenshire	40%	40%	36%	42%
	Scotland	**31%**	**32%**	**26%**	**36%**
Failing SHQS 'Modern Facilities and Services' criterion	**Aberdeen City**	7%	4%	11%	9%
	Aberdeenshire	3%	3%	*	-
	Scotland	**7%**	**6%**	**7%**	**13%**
Failing SHQS 'Health Safe and Secure' criterion	**Aberdeen City**	9%	10%	7%	13%
	Aberdeenshire	4%	4%	*	*
	Scotland	**12%**	**12%**	**8%**	**19%**

Source: Scottish House Condition Survey (2016-2018)

3.23 Table 3.9 above shows that 42% of housing stock in Scotland is failing the SHQS overall, which is comparable with Aberdeen City (44%) and Aberdeenshire (43%) and suggests a high level of SHQS non-compliance. The proportion of owner-occupied stock failing SHQS is remarkably similar for Aberdeen City (41%), Aberdeenshire (42%) and Scotland (42%). There is some variation in the proportion of private rented stock failing SHQS, which is

[23] Data aggregated from the following RSLs: Castlehill, Grampian, Langstane and Places for People

lower in Aberdeenshire (45%) compared with Aberdeen City (51%) and the Scottish average (52%). In terms of Social Housing, both Aberdeen City (44%) and Aberdeenshire (46%) have a higher level of overall non-compliance than Scotland (37%), based on the figures from the latest Scottish House Condition Survey in Table 3.9.

3.24 However, the Scottish Housing Regulator publishes detailed annual information on Council and RSL progress in achieving the SHQS, as reported in Table 3.8, and these figures show a much higher level of compliance – social housing failing the SHQS overall was 37% in the SHCS data, but Scottish Housing Regulator figures from 2022 show that this has fallen to 25%. Given the information published by the Scottish Housing Regulator is based on detailed inspection regimes by landlords, the quality of this information is likely to be far greater than the data reported through the SHCS which has a low sample size in comparison and is based on data from 2016-2018. It is useful to see figures for the owner-occupied and private rented tenures though, which the Scottish Housing Regulator data does not cover. The Scottish Housing Regulator figures are also only for overall SHQS performance and not the individual criteria.

3.25 By referring to the SHCS data in table 3.9, it can been seen that most failures come from the 'Energy Efficient' criterion, with performance in the social housing tenure better for this criterion than in the owner-occupied or private rented tenures, likely due to regulatory requirements that only apply to social housing. Improved energy efficiency would benefit tenants and owner/occupiers as energy price rises in recent years have squeezed household budgets. Aberdeenshire Council tenants indicated in the 2020-21 Tenant Satisfaction Survey that this was very important to them: when asked to score the importance of investing in energy efficiency measures 46% of respondents rated this as very important. It will be interesting to see if this increases in the next Tenant Satisfaction Survey, due to be run at the start of 2024.

Table 3.10: Percentage of dwellings with stock condition issues by tenure.

		Housing Stock All Tenures	Owner-Occupied	Social Housing	Private rented
	Aberdeen City	1%	*	*	-
	Aberdeenshire	3%	3%	*	*
Below Tolerable Standard	**Scotland**	**2%**	**1%**	**1%**	**2%**
	Aberdeen City	76%	71%	86%	74%
	Aberdeenshire	58%	55%	66%	64%
Disrepair (Any / basic)	**Scotland**	**70%**	**66%**	**76%**	**79%**
	Aberdeen City	61%	57%	68%	62%
	Aberdeenshire	39%	35%	49%	50%
Disrepair to Critical Elements	**Scotland**	**52%**	**49%**	**53%**	**63%**
	Aberdeen City	42%	38%	49%	44%
	Aberdeenshire	28%	24%	32%	44%
Urgent Disrepair	**Scotland**	**29%**	**26%**	**30%**	**37%**
	Aberdeen City	4%	2%	4%	10%
	Aberdeenshire	5%	5%	*	*
Extensive Disrepair	**Scotland**	**6%**	**5%**	**6%**	**8%**
	Aberdeen City	6%	6%	6%	*
	Aberdeenshire	2%	2%	-	*
Dwellings with rising or penetrating damp	**Scotland**	**3%**	**3%**	**2%**	**5%**
	Aberdeen City	16%	13%	20%	18%
	Aberdeenshire	9%	8%	10%	14%
Dwellings with condensation	**Scotland**	**8%**	**6%**	**12%**	**13%**

Source: Scottish House Condition Survey (2016-2018)

3.26 Aberdeenshire dwellings seem to be in better condition than the Scottish average on several criteria: lower proportions of dwellings with any/basic disrepair across all tenures and lower proportions of dwellings with disrepair to critical elements for owner-occupied and private rented tenures. However, there are higher levels of urgent disrepair for dwellings with private rented tenure, and the levels of disrepair and other dwelling issues are still significant across the various criteria, even if not higher than the Scottish average. There is also a higher proportion of owner-occupied dwellings in Aberdeenshire that are Below Tolerable Standard (3%) than the Scottish average (2%).

3.27 Aberdeen City dwellings are in worse condition than the Scottish average on several criteria: higher levels of any/basic disrepair for owner-occupied and social housing tenures, higher levels of disrepair to critical elements for owner-occupied and social housing, and higher levels of urgent disrepair for dwellings across all tenures. Aberdeen City dwellings of all tenures also have higher levels of condensation than Aberdeenshire or the Scottish average.

3.28 While most disrepair can be repaired and will therefore not impact on housing need and demand some cases of extensive disrepair and serious structural issues could lead to the requirement for new housing stock if not mitigated through repairs/improvements. Aberdeen City's Asset Management Plan and Aberdeenshire Council's Home Improvement Plan aim to improve the quality of Council housing stock through a variety of measures, which should help to maintain stock levels and not adversely impact housing need and demand. Aberdeenshire Council has also formed a working group to help tackle the issue of damp, condensation, and mould. This working group is still in the data gathering stage, but the aim is to respond to and, where appropriate, implement the Housing Ombudsman's recent recommendations on damp, condensation, and mould. The main focus of the group will be on Council housing stock but will also include private sector housing.

Key Issues:

- There are high levels of disrepair in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire housing stock. This has improved significantly for the social housing stock in meeting SHQS but remains an issue for other sectors.
- In terms of improving SHQS compliance in the social housing sector, the main driver is the need for compliance with EESSH, as indicated by the majority of SHQS failures stemming from the "Energy Efficient" criterion.
- Scotland's housing stock shows high levels of disrepair in general, and particularly for private rented tenure. Aberdeenshire dwellings show similar or lower levels of disrepair to the Scottish average across all tenures.
- Aberdeen City dwellings show higher levels of disrepair than the Scottish average, particularly for owner-occupied and social housing tenures.
- Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council's respective Asset Management Plan and Home Improvement Plan will be important when working to resolve issues with disrepair in Council housing stock.

Dwellings by Tenure

3.29 Table 3.11 below shows the proportion of dwellings by tenure for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. Although the SHCS has a low sample size, the proportions are very similar to those from the 2011 Census, so there can be some confidence in their reliability. Aberdeen City has a lower proportion of owner-occupied dwellings (56%) than the Scottish average of 61%, and a higher proportion of social housing (30%) and private rented (14%) than the Scottish averages of 26% and 13% respectively. In contrast, Aberdeenshire has a higher proportion of owner-occupied dwellings (71%) than the Scottish average, and lower proportions of social housing (18%) and private rented (11%).

Table 3.11: Housing Tenure: proportion of dwellings by tenure

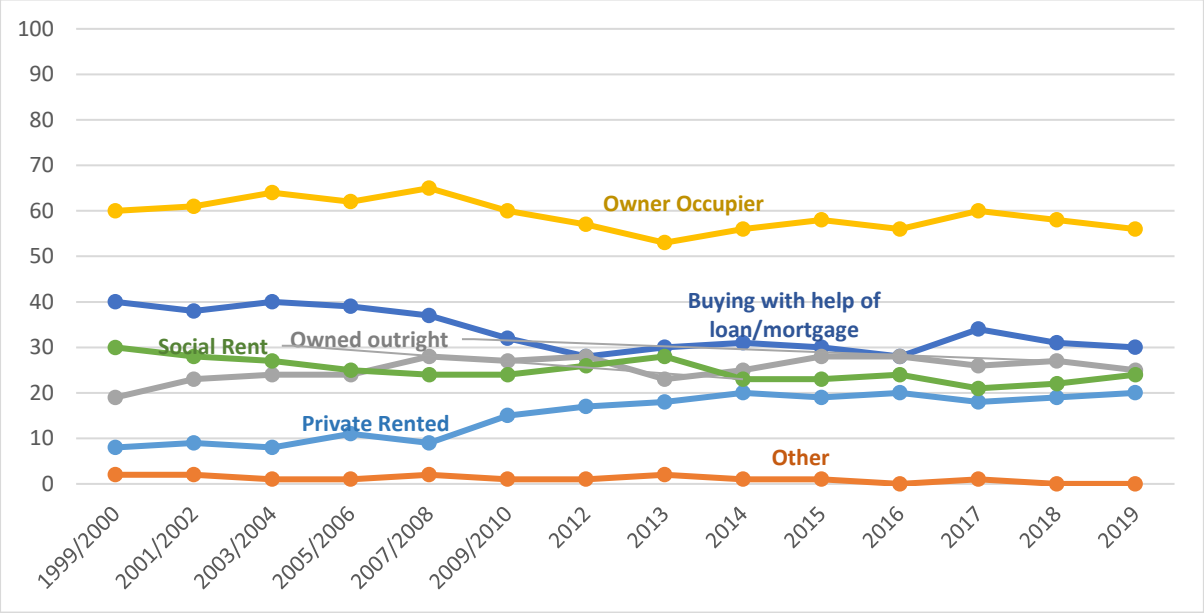
	Owner-occupied	Social Housing	Private Rented
Aberdeen City	56%	30%	14%
Aberdeenshire	71%	18%	11%
Scotland	61%	26%	13%

Source: Scottish House Condition Survey (2016-2018)

3.30 Long term tenure trends for Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Scotland are set out in Figures 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6 below[24]. Aberdeen City has seen an increase in the proportion of private rented dwellings over the period, keeping it at a level that is consistently higher than the national average, which has also been increasing over the period. In comparison, Aberdeenshire has not seen the same trend of steady long-term increase in the proportion of private rented dwellings, with the proportion fluctuating over the period but remaining relatively stable and at a lower level.

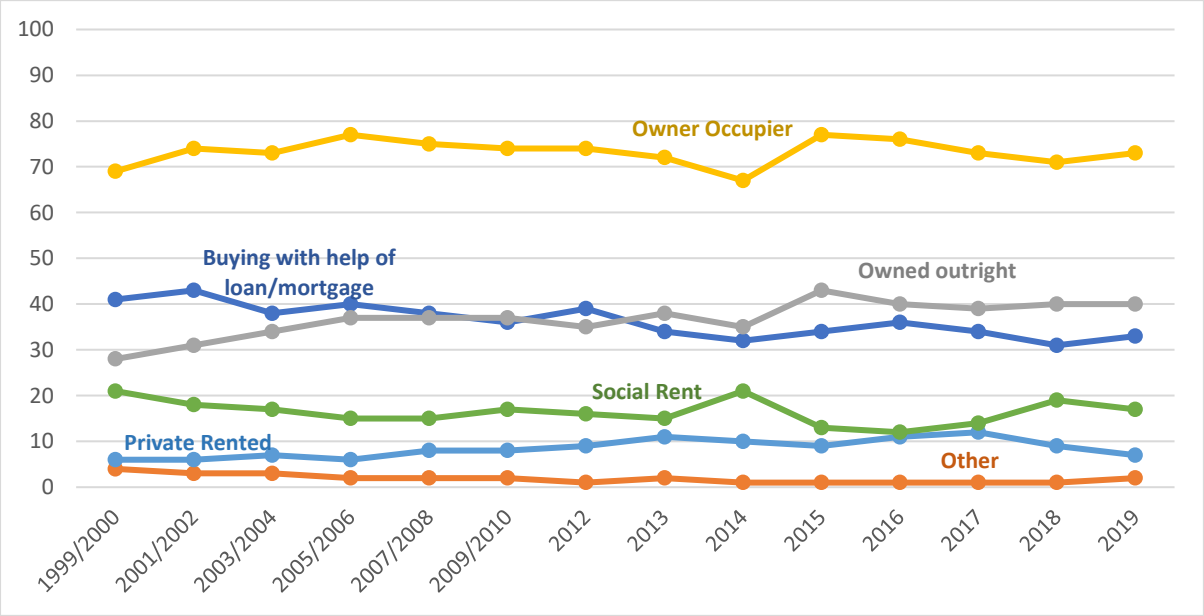
[24] Data for 2011 is only available for Scotland as a whole, no local authority data exists for 2011.

Figure 3.4. Housing tenure trends: Aberdeen City, 1999 - 2019



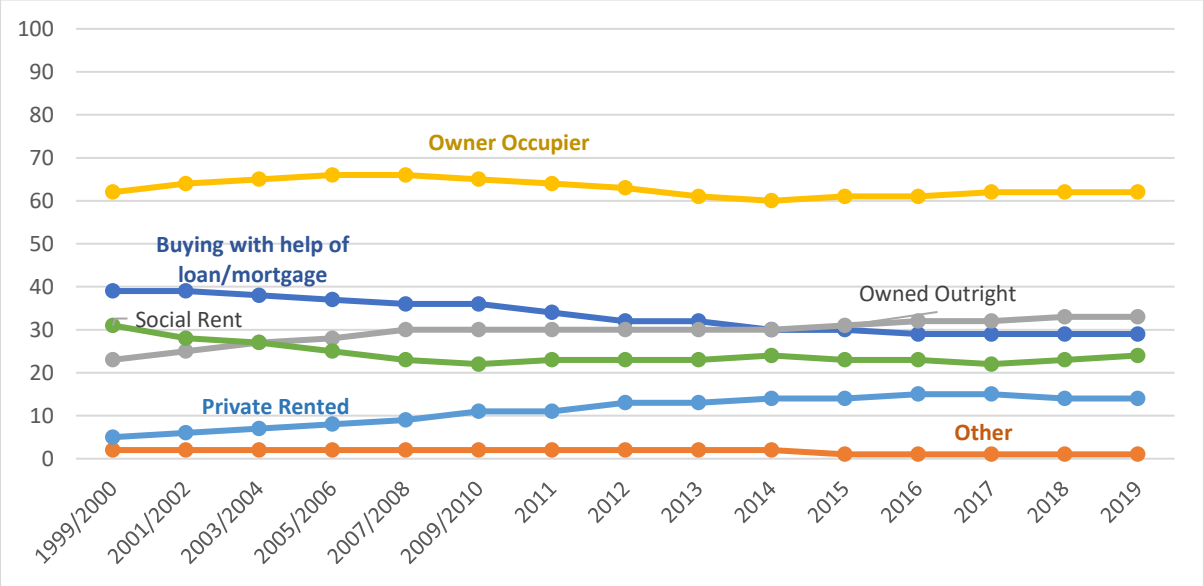
Source: Scottish Household Survey (2019)

Figure 3.5. Housing tenure trends: Aberdeenshire, 1999 – 2019



Source: Scottish Household Survey (2019)

Figure 3.6. Housing tenure trends: Scotland, 1999 - 2019



Source: Scottish Household Survey (2019)

Key Issues:

- Aberdeen City has seen an above average increase in the proportion of private-rented dwellings over the last 20 years.
- Aberdeenshire has not seen the same trend of steady long-term increase in the proportion of private rented dwellings, with the proportion fluctuating over the period but remaining relatively stable and at a lower level.

Stock Pressures

3.31 This section will identify where stock is pressured and where stock is in low demand. It will consider overcrowded and concealed households, under occupation, turnover, and the volume of empty and second homes. This analysis will be presented for both local authorities. Both overcrowded and concealed households are considered likely to generate a need for additional housing as they are unlikely to be counted within the household projections and will not release a home for use by another household when they move on. Although this section will refer to housing need in relation to waiting list numbers, it is important to note that these numbers alone will not be a reliable way to measure existing and future housing need. Applications on waiting lists can often be outdated and no longer required, and some applicants may already be viewed as having housing which meets their needs. Waiting lists may, however, indicate areas of local authority housing stock where there is particular pressure.

Local Authority Housing

3.32 Together Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils own and manage a total of 35,440 properties. These are profiled in Table 3.12 below.

3.33 Total stock figures are provided in table 3.12, which are broken down into general needs or amenity/sheltered/very sheltered-type housing and by the number of bedrooms. Amenity, sheltered, and very sheltered properties would only be let to individuals with particular needs, and are covered in Chapter 5 on specialist provision. A breakdown of the total stock showing the percentage of properties which are general needs without major adaptations, general needs with major adaptations and amenity/sheltered/very sheltered is detailed in Figure 3.7. Major adaptations are classed as housing adapted or built for wheelchair use, housing adapted or built for ambulant disabled, or other housing specially adapted or built for the disabled (definitions taken from S1B Scottish Government return). Other adaptations to properties can be added or removed to suit tenants' needs, so reporting stock with minor adaptions e.g., handrails, grab rails etc was not deemed necessary as a property that is currently adapted to suit the particular needs of a tenant may be removed when it is let in the future to another tenant with different needs.

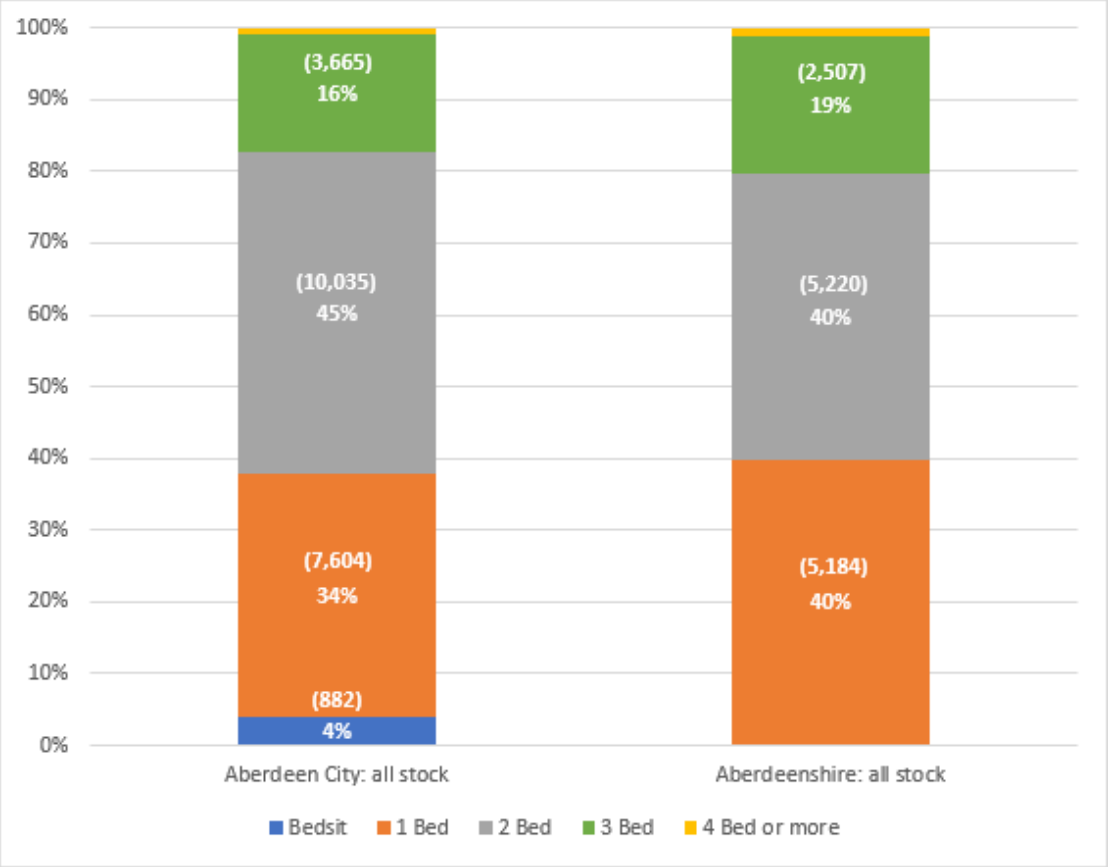
3.34 Other tables later in the document where percentages are used, including those for housing applications, relets, void rent loss and refusals, are based on total stock figures and not net figures. It is not practical or possible in some cases to re-run reports to provide historical data based on the net stock figure.

Table 3.12: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire: housing stock by type and number of bedrooms

	Bedsit	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed or more	Total
Aberdeen City						
General needs	800	4,644	9,625	3,660	216	18,945
	3.6%	20.7%	43.0%	16.3%	1.0%	84.6%
Amenity/Sheltered/Very Sheltered	82	2,960	410	5	0	3,457
	0.37%	13.21%	1.83%	0.02%	0.00%	15.43%
Total stock	**882**	**7,604**	**10,035**	**3,665**	**216**	**22,402**
	3.9%	**33.9%**	**44.8%**	**16.4%**	**1.0%**	**100.0%**
Aberdeenshire						
General needs	10	3,807	5,115	2,486	160	11,578
	0.1%	29.1%	39.1%	19.0%	1.2%	88.5%
Sheltered/Very Sheltered Stock	2	1,376	104	23	0	1,505
	0.0%	10.5%	0.8%	0.2%	0.0%	11.5%
Total stock	**12**	**5,184**	**5,220**	**2,507**	**160**	**13,083**
	0.1%	**39.6%**	**39.9%**	**19.2%**	**1.2%**	**100.0%**

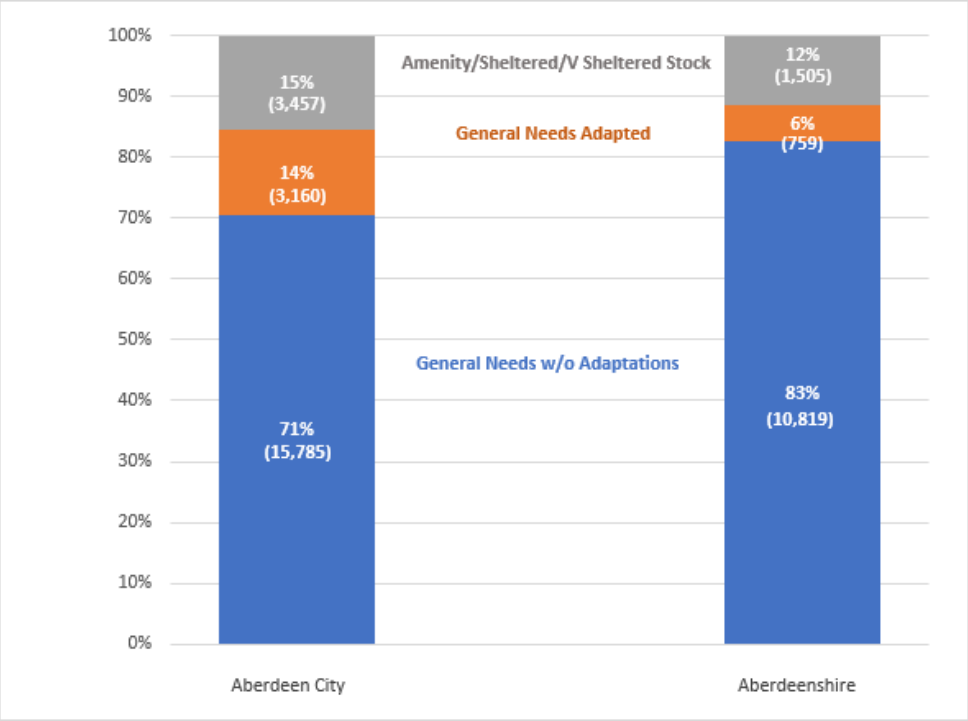
Source: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council Housing Management Databases, Property details (March 2022)

Figure 3.7: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire: stock breakdown by number of bedrooms



Source: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council Housing Management Databases, Property details (2022)

Figure 3.8: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire: stock breakdown by type



Source: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council Housing Management Databases, Property details (March 2022)

3.35 Aberdeen City Council has a total stock of 22,402 properties and Aberdeenshire Council has 13,083. In addition to Aberdeen City's 3,457 amenity, sheltered and very sheltered properties, Aberdeen City Council has 3,160 mainstream adapted properties. There are also 216 new build units which have been provided in the last 12 months at our "Wellheads" development. Aberdeenshire Council has 1,505 sheltered and very sheltered properties and 759 mainstream adapted properties.

3.36 As can be seen from table 3.13 below, there is significant pressure on social housing in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. Aberdeen City Council has 4,750 applicants on its waiting lists of which 3,321 have a housing need and 1,429 have no housing need, as determined by the allocation policy. Aberdeenshire Council has 4,880 applicants on its waiting lists of which 4,344 have a housing need and 536 have no housing need.

3.37 Table 3.13 below shows the number of applicants for the various property sizes as of 31 March 2022 for both local authorities. The figures in brackets show the number of applicants with a particular housing need for each property size. Aberdeenshire figures are shown broken down by area level.

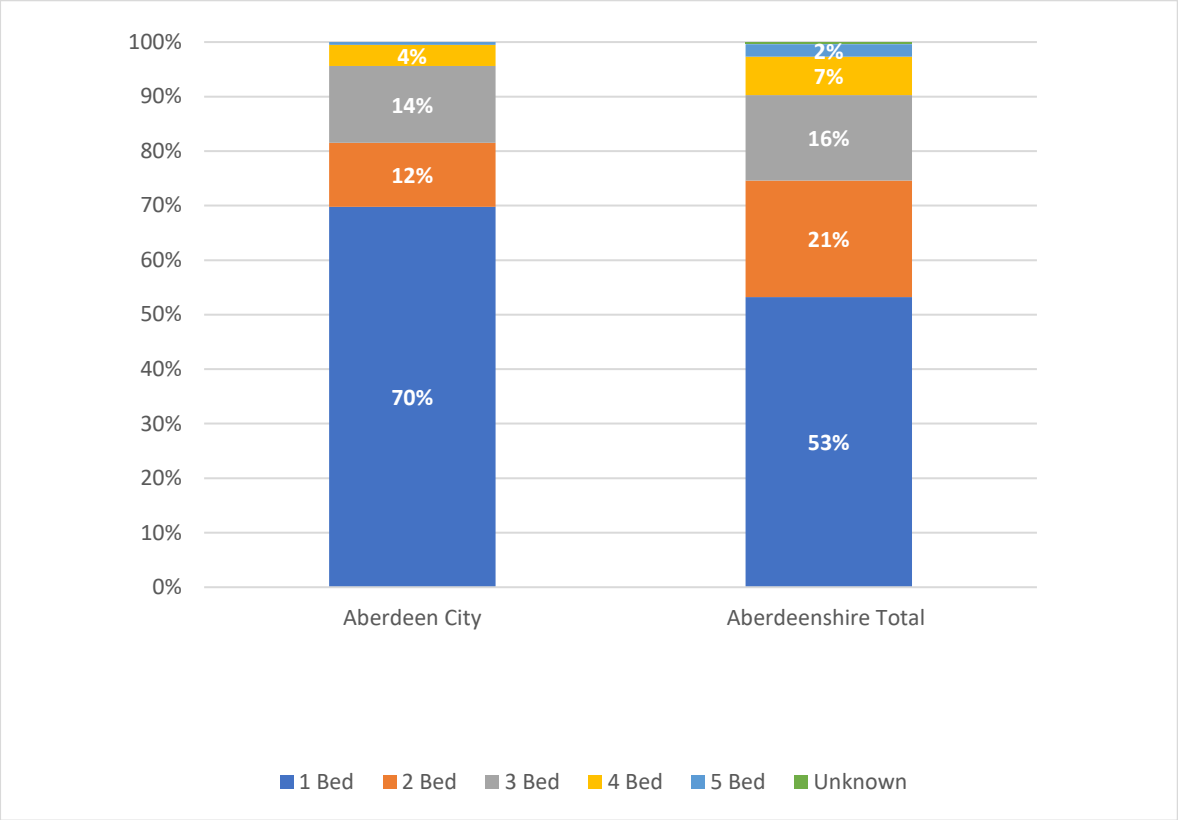
Table 3.13: Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire Council: waiting lists by bedroom size as of 31.3.22.

Area	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	5 Bed	Unknown[25]	Total
Aberdeen City	3,051	906	631	144	18	0	4,750
	(2,317)	(388)	(468)	(130)	(18)		(3,321)
Aberdeenshire							
Banff and Buchan	425	141	95	35	22	31	749
	(396)	(132)	(93)	(35)	(22)	(3)	(681)
Buchan	383	178	92	48	15	32	748
	(369)	(172)	(90)	(47)	(15)	(5)	(698)
Formartine	343	140	121	43	10	33	690
	(320)	(126)	(115)	(43)	(10)	(2)	(616)
Garioch	635	272	187	79	27	36	1236
	(580)	(233)	(180)	(77)	(26)	(2)	(1,098)
K&M	371	169	137	67	19	30	793
	(319)	(145)	(127)	(66)	(19)	(2)	(678)
Marr	345	134	81	36	9	30	635
	(310)	(118)	(76)	(35)	(9)	0	(548)
Other	18	5	1	0	1	4	29
	(17)	(5)	(1)	0	(1)	(1)	(25)
Aberdeenshire Total	**2,520**	**1,039**	**714**	**308**	**103**	**196**	**4,880**
	(2,311)	**(931)**	**(682)**	**(303)**	**(102)**	**(15)**	**(4,344)**

Source Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council Housing Management Databases, Waiting List details (2022)

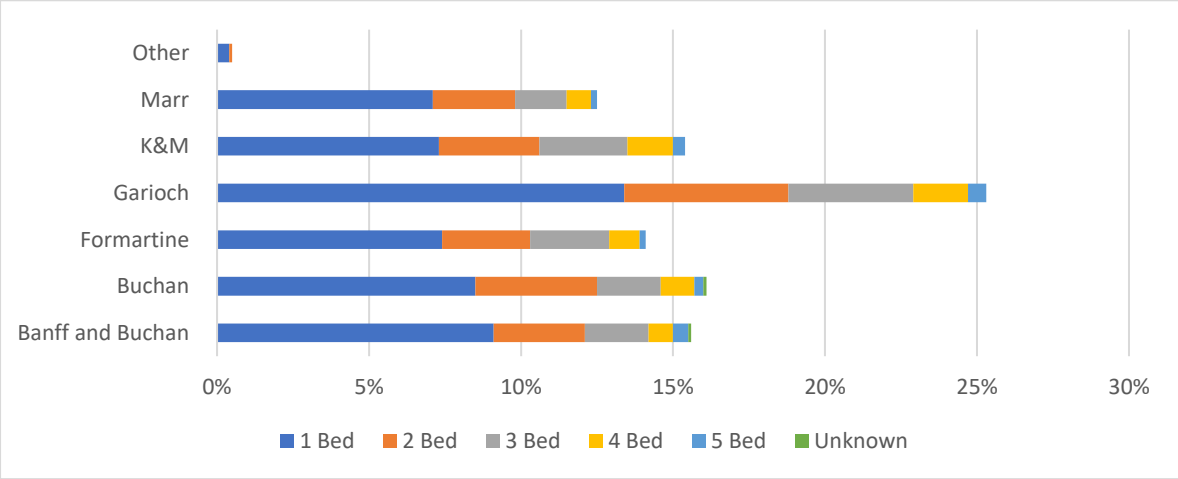
[25] Unknown Bedroom Size indicates applications awaiting assessment.

Figure 3.9: Percentage of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council waiting list applications with housing need by bedroom size on 31 March 2022



Source: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council Housing Management Databases, Waiting List details (31 March 2022)

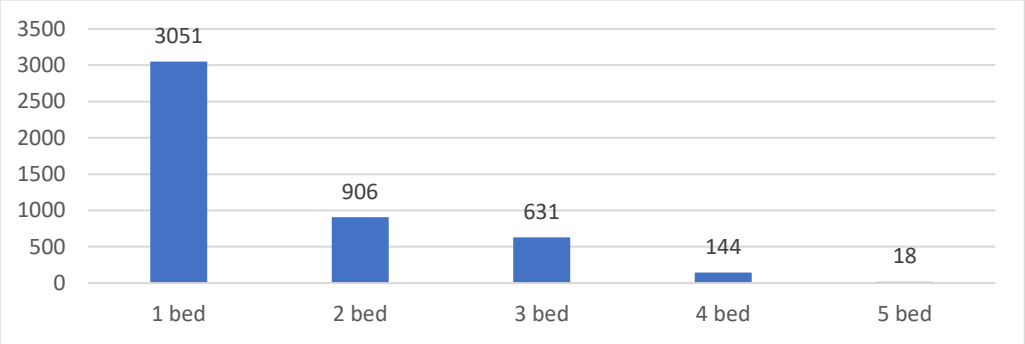
Figure 3.10: Percentage of Aberdeenshire Council waiting list applications with housing need by Aberdeenshire Area on 31 March 2022



Source: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council Housing Management Databases, Waiting List details (31 March 2022)

3.38 As seen in figure 3.11 below, one-bedroom properties are in high demand in Aberdeen City from homeless applicants, general waiting list applicants and those seeking to downsize. Of the 4,750 housing applications for 2021/2022, 3,051 were seeking a one-bedroom property (nearly 70% of total applications).

Figure 3.11: Aberdeen City: housing applications by number of bedrooms



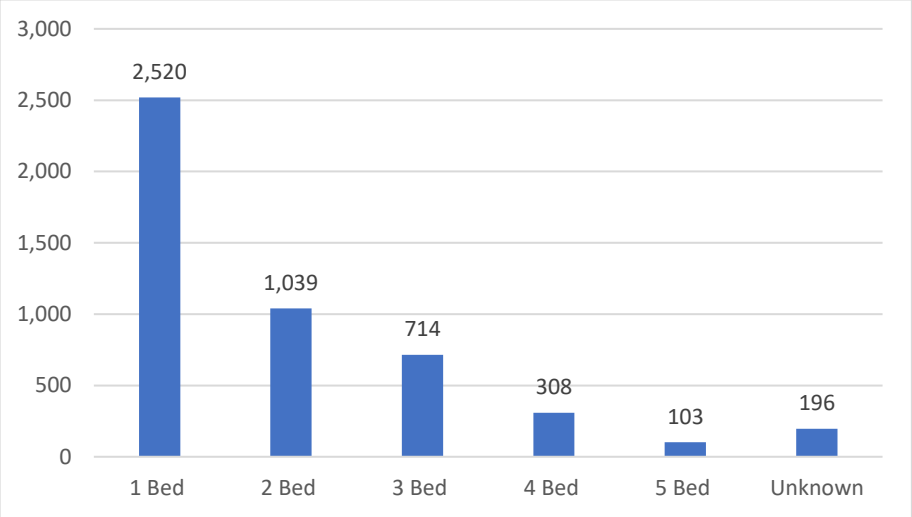
Source: Aberdeen City Council Housing Management Database, Waiting List details (2022)

Key Issues:

- 70% of Aberdeen City applications with a housing need require a one-bedroom property, and 12% require a two-bedroom property. 38% of Aberdeen City properties are bedsit or one-bedroom, and 45% of properties are two-bedroom.
- This suggests that in the future there will be a shortage of one-bedroom properties, as there is a significant disparity between the demand levels and the stock available.
- It seems likely there will be a surplus of two-bedroom properties available, due to the number of applications being far below the actual stock level.

3.39 As seen in figure 3.12 below, the greatest pressure in Aberdeenshire is also on one-bedroom homes, with 53% of all applicants with a housing need requiring a one-bedroom property. When compared with the Aberdeenshire stock profile, 40% of the total housing stock is one-bedroom, and when looking at general needs properties in particular (removing sheltered and very sheltered), this falls to 29%. A substantial proportion of waiting list applicants requiring one-bedroom properties are homeless applicants, who generally are not eligible for sheltered housing. While many other applicants requiring a one-bedroom property are eligible for sheltered housing, many of these people are instead interested in a general needs property that could be adapted to suit their needs.

Figure 3.12: Aberdeenshire: housing applications by number of bedrooms



Source: Aberdeenshire Council Housing Management Database, Waiting List details (2022)

3.40 Garioch is the most pressured area within Aberdeenshire, accounting for over 25% of all applications with a housing need. Over half (53%) of these Garioch applications need a one-bedroom property. 50% of Garioch stock is one-bedroom; of these one-bedroom properties 40% are sheltered/very Sheltered and 60% are mainstream. Only 20% of Garioch waiting list applicants are interested in sheltered accommodation. While the overall proportion of one-bedroom stock (50%) is in-line with waiting list demand (51%), only 60% of the one-bedroom stock is mainstream which accounts for 80% of waiting list demand.

3.41 Aberdeenshire Council performs a ranking of its settlements based on stock turnover and the number of waiting list applicants who have selected a particular settlement as their first choice. Based on this ranking method, Inverurie (the largest settlement in Garioch) is the most pressured settlement in Aberdeenshire. Stonehaven (the largest settlement in Kincardine & Mearns) is the second most pressured, and Peterhead (Aberdeenshire's largest settlement located in Buchan) is the third most pressured settlement. Tables 3.14 and 3.15 below provide a breakdown of the one-bedroom stock and waiting list for the most pressured area (Garioch) and the three most pressured settlements.

Table 3.14 One-bedroom stock breakdown for most pressured area and settlements

Area/Settlement	1-bed stock	% of stock	1-bed stock mainstream	% of 1-bed stock	1-bed stock sheltered	% of 1-bed stock
Garioch	968	50%	584	60%	384	40%
Inverurie	458	53%	239	52%	219	48%
Stonehaven	161	38%	140	87%	21	13%
Peterhead	388	26%	351	90%	37	10%

Source: Aberdeenshire Council Housing Management Database, Property details 2022

Table 3.15 One-bedroom waiting list breakdown for most pressured area and settlements.

Area/Settlement	1-bed WL	% of WL	1-bed WL mainstream	% of 1-bed WL	1-bed WL sheltered	% of 1-bed WL
Garioch	580	53%	463	80%	117	20%
Inverurie	275	56%	205	75%	70	25%
Stonehaven	129	53%	101	78%	28	22%
Peterhead	180	51%	154	86%	26	14%

Source: Aberdeenshire Council Housing Management Database, Waiting List details 2022

3.42 53% of Inverurie properties are one-bedroom; of those one-bedroom properties 48% are sheltered/very sheltered and 52% are mainstream. 56% of Inverurie waiting list applicants need a one-bedroom property; of these applicants only 25% are interested in sheltered accommodation. This suggests that Inverurie needs more mainstream one-bedroom stock to meet demand – while the overall proportion of one-bedroom stock (53%) is in-line with waiting list demand (56%), only 52% of the one-bedroom stock is mainstream which accounts for 75% of waiting list demand.

3.43 38% of Stonehaven stock is one-bedroom; of these properties 13% are sheltered/very sheltered and 87% are mainstream. 53% of Stonehaven waiting list applicants need a one-bedroom property; of these applicants 22% are interested in sheltered accommodation. This suggests that Stonehaven needs more one-bedroom stock to meet demand and may also need more sheltered housing provision – the proportion of one-bedroom stock (38%) is much lower than waiting list demand (53%), and proportionally only 13% of one-bedroom properties are sheltered/very sheltered while 22% of waiting list applicants are interested in sheltered one-bedroom accommodation.

3.44 26% of Peterhead stock is one-bedroom; of these properties 10% are sheltered/very sheltered and 90% are mainstream. 51% of Peterhead waiting list applicants need a one-bedroom property; of these applicants 14% are interested in sheltered accommodation. This suggests that Peterhead needs more one-bedroom properties to meet demand, but that the split of mainstream/sheltered stock is in-line with waiting list applications – the proportion of one-bedroom stock (26%) is much lower than waiting list demand (51%), and proportionally 10% of one-bedroom properties are sheltered with waiting list demand for one-bedroom sheltered accommodation at 14%.

Key Issues:

- 53% of Aberdeenshire applications with a housing need require a one-bedroom property and 21% require a two-bedroom property. 40% of Aberdeenshire properties are one-bedroom and 40% are two-bedroom.
- Garioch is the most pressured area within Aberdeenshire, accounting for over 25% of all applications with a housing need. Inverurie is the most pressured settlement in Aberdeenshire. These trends indicate there is likely to be a shortage of one-bedroom properties available.

3.45 Table 3.16 below shows the number of applicants registered on Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire's housing lists as of the 31st of March over the last 5 years. This gives a snapshot in time of the number of people waiting for housing: this is the number of existing and new applications where individuals are still waiting to be housed and does not include applications that have been cancelled or closed for any reason, including where individuals have been housed. The trend over this period has shown fewer housing applications registered year-on-year for Aberdeen City, and a large drop in the number of applications registered in 2021/22 for Aberdeenshire.

Table 3.16: Number of housing applications on waiting lists as of 31st March over 5 years.

Year	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Aberdeen City Applications	6,631	6,240	6,110	5,806	4,750
Aberdeenshire Applications	6,548	6,241	6,108	6,338	4,880

Source Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council Housing Management Databases, Waiting List details (March 2022)

3.46 The trend of fewer housing applications year-on-year for Aberdeen City may be caused by the increase in the 3,000 new affordable homes built by Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire over the period and the downturn in rents in the private rented sector. Aberdeen City Council also reintroduced an annual check of those on its housing lists, asking applicants to confirm their application details and whether they wish to remain on our lists. Those applicants who do not respond are cancelled from the housing lists.

3.47 Aberdeenshire Council moved to a new system for online housing applications in 2021/22 to facilitate Choice-Based Lettings (CBL). At that time, everyone on the existing waiting list was invited to create a new application on the new system. Many people did not create new applications, therefore resulting in a drop in the total number of applicants on the waiting list in 2021/22 (in the previous 4 years the total number of applicants on the waiting list had remained relatively stable). As at the end of July 2022 there were 5,214 applications on the waiting list, showing that numbers are increasing and will likely return to pre-Housing Online levels in the future.

Table 3.17: New housing applications received each year.

Year	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Aberdeen City Applications	3,705	4,224	3,674	3,846	3,773
Aberdeenshire Applications	4,752	4,773	4,822	4,371	5,077

Source Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council Housing Management Databases, Waiting List details (March 2022)

3.48 Table 3.17 above shows the number of new applications received each year over the last 5 years. The number of new applications received has been relatively stable for Aberdeen City. Aberdeenshire saw a 10% drop in new applications in 2020/21 compared with 2019/20 because of pandemic restrictions on people moving house and a moratorium on evictions in the private rented sector. The number of new applications has bounced back in 2021/22 to a number more comparable with pre-pandemic years. This suggests that the fall in the total number of applicants registered on Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire's housing lists is not due to fewer new applications being received each year and is likely due to older applications being withdrawn/cancelled or applicants being housed.

Key Issues:

- Aberdeen City has seen a year-on-year reduction in the number of applicants on its waiting lists each year for the last 5 years, reducing from 6,631 on 31st March 2018 to 4,750 on 31st March 2022.
- The number of applicants on Aberdeenshire's waiting lists over the last 5 years was stable until a sharp drop in 2021/22, which coincides with the move to a new system for online housing applications to facilitate Choice-Based Lettings.
- The number of new applications received in-year to both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire has remained relatively stable over the same 5-year period. This suggests that the level of applications being received is unlikely to change significantly in the coming years.

Low Demand

3.49 Aberdeen City currently do not have any stock categorised as low demand, due to the housing list demand figures a decision was taken some years ago at senior level not to classify any properties as low demand. However certain property types are currently proving difficult to let, including two-bedroom tenement flats and multi-storey blocks. The statutory Scottish Government and Scottish Housing Regulator returns that are submitted annually also state that we do not have low demand.

3.50 Table 3.18 below shows low demand Aberdeenshire Council stock. Aberdeenshire currently categorise stock as low demand where there are four

or less applicants waiting for a property of that size, type, and location (broken down to settlement, i.e., town or village, level) or where a property is void and has three or more offers refused for non-personal reasons (for example for reasons such as location of the property).

Table 3.18: Aberdeenshire Council - low demand stock (excluding sheltered and very sheltered housing properties) at 31 March 2022

Area	Bedsit	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4+ Bed	Total
Banff & Buchan	0	5	37	13	0	**55**
Buchan	0	1	21	4	1	**27**
Formartine	0	0	1	2	0	**3**
Garioch	1	1	0	0	1	**3**
Kincardine & Mearns	0	2	3	0	0	**5**
Marr	0	2	0	1	0	**3**
Total	**1**	**11**	**62**	**23**	**2**	**96**

Source: Aberdeenshire Council Housing Management Database, Property details (2022)

3.51 65% of the Aberdeenshire Council stock categorised as low demand is two-bedroom.

Overcrowded and Concealed Households

3.52 A concealed household is defined as one 'living in a multi-family household in addition to the primary family, such as a young couple living with parents. Table 3.19 below shows the projected concealed households from the 2011 Census which is the most up to date data available due to the delay in the 2022 Census.

Table 3.19: Concealed households

Concealed Households	Aberdeen City Council	Aberdeenshire Council	Scotland
All families	1.7%	2.5%	1.2%
aged 24 and under	9.2%	15.2%	10.0%
aged 25 to 34	2.0%	3.0%	2.6%
aged 35 to 49	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%
aged 50 to 64	0.3%	0.2%	0.4%
aged 65 to 74	0.6%	0.8%	1.0%
aged 75 to 84	0.7%	0.6%	1.0%
aged 85 and over	0.5%	0.9%	1.0%

Source: National Records of Scotland (2011)

3.53 The Centre for Housing Market Analysis (CHMA) has produced estimates for local authority areas from the Scottish Household Survey (SHS) and Scottish House Condition Survey (SHCS) using 2016-2018 data. See table 3.20 below which shows the CHMA estimates for Aberdeen City with 1.59% of households overcrowded compared to 1.35% in Aberdeenshire and 2.39% for Scotland. Aberdeenshire has 1.17% concealed households compared to Aberdeen City at 0.84% and Scotland at 1.26%.

3.54 It should be noted that the CHMA figures do not include an age break-down (like the census figures), and the definition of a concealed household by CHMA is different than the definition used for the census. Because concealed families constitute a small proportion of total families overall (Scottish 2011 Census), this makes them hard to detect in surveys with small local authority sample sizes, such as the SHS and SHCS. Such low sample numbers result in data suppression for quality purposes and prevent a detailed local authority analysis. These figures are therefore only an indicative guide, and this analysis is likely to hide variation in the rates across local authorities. These figures will be reviewed once detailed data from the 2022 Census becomes available.

Table 3.20: Local authority concealed family estimates from 2016-18, 3-year average

Local Authority	Overcrowded households[26]		Households with at least one concealed family[27]		Total Households
Aberdeen City	1,700	1.59%	900	0.84%	107,000
Aberdeenshire	1,500	1.35%	1,300	1.17%	111,000
Scotland	59,000	2.39%	31,000	1.26%	2,464,000

Source: CHMA (2016-18)

Underoccupied Households

3.55 Under-occupation occurs when a household lives in a home which has more bedrooms than required under the minimum bedroom standard, see table 3.21 below. Landlord allocation policies can vary and may set different bedroom standards.

Table 3.21: Households exceeding minimum bedroom standard by 2+ bedrooms.

Local Authority	All Housing Stock[28]	Tenure			Household Type		
		Owner-occupied	Social Housing	Private Rented	Families	Older	Other[29]
Aberdeen City	22%	35%	-	12%	33%	14%	19%
Aberdeenshire	45%	58%	-	29%	45%	31%	53%
Scotland	32%	46%	8%	14%	42%	18%	31%

Source: Scottish House Condition Survey (2016-18)

[26] Confidence Intervals: Aberdeen City 0.2 (95% CI 0.23 to 3.77), Aberdeenshire 0.1 (95% CI 0.21 to 2.21), Scotland 0.2 (95% CI 1.70 to 2.30)

[27] Confidence Intervals: Aberdeen City 0.84 (95 CI 0.31 to 1.99), Aberdeenshire 1.17 (95 CI 0.14 to 2.48), Scotland 1.26 (95 CI 1.02 to 1.50)

[28] Confidence Intervals: Aberdeen City 0.22 (95% CI 0.17 to 0.27), Aberdeenshire 0.45 (95% CI 0.39 to 0.51), Scotland 0.32 (95% CI 0.31 to 0.33)

[29] Other - These are all other household types which are made up of adults only and have no resident children.

3.56 The SHCS data does not include figures for under-occupation of social housing for Aberdeen City or Aberdeenshire due to the base sample being too small to report for this tenure. Reviewing transfer applicants from Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire can give some insight into the situation for Council stock – see table 3.22 below.

3.57 Aberdeen City can assign under-occupancy points when assessing an applicant's housing need. Aberdeenshire transfer applicants were reviewed and those who have at least one bedroom in excess recorded were determined to be under-occupying an Aberdeenshire Council property.

Table 3.22: Transfer applicants under-occupying a council property.

	Under-Occupying by number of bedrooms			
	1 Bedroom	2 Bedrooms	3 Bedrooms	Total
Aberdeen City 2019/20	100	19	0	119
Aberdeen City 2020/21	117	19	1	137
Aberdeen City 2021/22	153	31	1	185
Aberdeenshire 2021/22	171	46	2	219

Source: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council Housing Management Databases, Waiting List details (2022)

3.58 Table 3.23 below shows the number of transfer applicants rehoused who had previously been under-occupying a council property. This is a means of reallocating housing stock to ensure people are housed more suitably.

Table 3.23: Transfer applicants rehoused who had been under-occupying a council property.

	Under-Occupying by number of bedrooms				
	1 Bedroom	2 Bedrooms	3 Bedrooms	4 Bedrooms	Total
Aberdeen City 2019/20	50	15	1	0	66
Aberdeen City 2020/21	34	6	0	0	40
Aberdeen City 2021/22	61	16	0	0	77
Aberdeenshire 2019/20	57	10	0	0	67
Aberdeenshire 2020/21	35	18	1	0	54
Aberdeenshire 2021/22	76	20	1	1	98

Source: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council Housing Management Databases, Waiting List details (2022)

Key Issues:

- Aberdeen City Council is currently experiencing levels of low demand for two-bedroom tenement flats and multi-storey blocks.
- Levels of overcrowded and concealed households in both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire are showing as lower than the Scottish average based on CHMA 2016-18 figures. The 2011 Census however showed higher than average levels of concealed households for both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire and overcrowding in Aberdeen City was significantly above average. It will therefore be important to review the 2022 Census figures when they are published.
- Under occupation is highest in Aberdeenshire at 45%, compared with the Scottish average of 32%. Aberdeen City has a lower level of under occupation than the national average at 22%.

Stock Turnover

3.59 The number of tenancies terminated and the number of lets can be analysed together to give details of stock turnover. Turnover means that properties become void for a period between the old tenancy terminating and the new tenancy starting, and therefore impacts on void rent loss and makes void performance a key priority.

Tenancy Terminations

3.60 Termination of Tenancy is when a landlord or tenant decides to terminate (or not renew) a lease or rental agreement, state law often requires one party to give written notice of their decision to the other party, usually one month. This is sometimes known as a “notice to terminate” or “notice to quit”.

3.61 Landlords can terminate a tenancy for various reasons such as non-payment of rent or anti-social behaviour. Tenants on the other hand terminate for a vast number of reasons such as moving away from the area, renting/buying in the private sector, moving back to the family home due to inability to sustain the tenancy etc.

3.62 Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire have both had consistently higher percentages of tenancy terminations than the Scottish average over the last five years, and while the national trend is for tenancy terminations to be reducing Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire have seen increases. Table 3.24 below shows the number and percentage of tenancies terminated annually from 2017 to 2022.

Table 3.24: Number of tenancy terminations (by year and as a % of self-contained lettable stock)

	2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Aberdeen City	2,017	9.49%	2,072	9.69%	2,076	9.68%	1,812	8.45%	2,451	11.4%
Aberdeenshire	1,157	9.0%	1,209	9.4%	1,254	9.7%	1,096	8.5%	1,284	10.0%
Scotland	N/A	8.56%	N/A	8.56%	N/A	8.42%	N/A	6.95%	N/A	7.76%

Source: Scottish Housing Regulator (2022)

Table 3.25: Termination Reasons 2021/22

Termination Reason	Aberdeen City		Aberdeenshire	
	No.	%	No.	%
Transfer (Rehoused)	589	24%	312	22%
Deceased	407	16%	262	19%
No Reason Given	301	12%	290	21%
Hospital/Nursing Home or Prison	181	7%	141	10%
Moving Away	176	7%	4	0%
Change in circumstances	163	7%	-	-
Bought own Property	114	5%	82	6%
Renting in the Private Sector	133	5%	71	5%
Mutual Exchange of Property	-	-	92	7%
Abandonment	145	6%	54	4%
Transfer to another LA or RSL	164	7%	56	4%
Decamp prior to eviction - Arrears	40	2%	-	-
Neighbour Issues	31	1%	-	-
Assignation/Succession of tenancy	-	-	20	1%
Tenant changed mind	24	1%	8	1%
Eviction - Rent Arrears	7	0%	2	0%
Total	**2,475**		**1,394**	

Source: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council Housing Management Databases, Tenancy details 2022.

3.63 Aberdeen City has seen the number of terminations increase by 35.26% in 2021/2022 compared with 2020/21. 7% of tenancy terminations in 2021/22 were due to tenants moving away: with the increase in people working from home, many tenants are moving out of the city, and Brexit has resulted in a lot of Europeans returning to their country of origin. Others are buying homes

(5%) or moving to more attractive and affordable properties in the private rented sector (5%). For 2021/2022 the main reasons for terminations include transfers to other properties within our stock, accounting for 21.09% of termination reasons. With deaths accounting for 16.44% and those with no reason given accounting for 12.16%. See table 3.25 above.

3.64 Tenancy terminations in Aberdeenshire dropped in 2020/21 due to pandemic restrictions and have returned to pre-pandemic levels in 2021/22. The most common termination reason in 2021/22 was Transfer (Rehoused) which accounted for 22% of tenancy terminations, indicating that the council prioritise housing tenants in existing own stock. 19% of tenancies terminated with the reason Deceased, which is expected due to the high proportion of Sheltered housing properties. 21% of all tenancies terminated did not have a termination reason recorded – housing officers do request this information from tenants but often they refuse to answer. The council will work with the housing teams with the aim of reducing the proportion of tenancies ended without a termination reason, as this would provide more robust data that would allow to better analyse trends and implement strategies to improve tenancy sustainment in future.

Relets

3.65 A relet is a property where the previous tenancy has ended, or the property has been repossessed and a new tenancy has commenced. Relets are therefore a measure of stock turnover and are inextricably linked to tenancy terminations. Table 3.26 below shows the number of relets in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire over the past five years, and as a percentage of total stock.

Table 3.26: Number of relets per year for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire (as a % of total stock)

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Aberdeen City	1,813 (6.7%)	2,048 (9.32%)	1,968 (8.97%)	1,648 (7.45%)	1,945 (8.68%)
Aberdeenshire	972 (7.4%)	1,184 (9.0%)	1,334 (10.2%)	1,231 (9.4%)	1,379 (10.5%)

Source - Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council Housing Management Databases, Tenancy and Property details (March 2022)

3.66 Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire both have a higher turnover rate than the average for Scottish local authorities in 2021/22: the Scottish local authority average turnover rate in 2021/22 was 7.67%, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire had turnover rates of 8.68% and 10.5% respectively. It will be important to review trends in termination reasons going forward to understand the higher termination rates in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire that lead to higher turnover rates. Strategies to improve tenancy sustainment could then be implemented and monitored to assess their success. Void performance is also affected by turnover rates, as more properties becoming vacant will lead to higher levels of rent lost and longer relet times in areas where demand is not as strong.

Voids

Table 3.27: Vacant local authority stock as 31st March 2022 and as a % of total stock

	Aberdeen City		Aberdeenshire	
Temporary homeless accommodation	87	0.39%	68	0.52%
Awaiting demolition	1	0.00%	8	0.06%
Surplus to long term requirements	0	0.00%	47	0.36%
Part of modernisation programme	298	1.33%	42	0.32%
In low demand area	0	0.00%	76	0.58%
Normal letting stock	1,108	4.95%	285	2.19%
Unlettable - Care Provision / external reason	222	0.99%	89	0.68%
All vacant	1,716	7.66%	615	4.72%

Source: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council Housing Management Databases, Void and Property details 2022

3.67 Table 3.28 below shows the void rent loss for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire from 2017/18 to 2021/22. The rent loss for a void property is the amount of lost rental income (including services charges) for the time, measured in calendar days, between the date of termination of a previous tenancy or repossession (or from the date of handover to the landlord following the issue of the certificate of practical completion for new properties) and the start date of a new tenancy. Void rent loss is calculated by dividing the total amount of rent due for the reporting year by the total amount of rent lost through properties being void during the reporting year.

Table 3.28: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire - Void Rent Loss

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Aberdeen City	1.19%	1.47%	1.86%	2.53%	3.66%
Aberdeenshire	1.21%	1.49%	2.09%	2.70%	2.80%
Scotland	0.8%	0.9%	0.9%	1.4%	1.4%

Source - Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire (March 2022); SHR (Scottish Housing Regulator)

3.68 Void rent loss has been increasing for Scottish social landlords over the last three years, rising from 0.9% in 2019-20 to 1.4% in 2021/22. This demonstrates the impact of the pandemic and subsequent challenges on void performance for all local authorities. It is also important to note that while local authorities can aim to reduce void rent loss as far as possible, it will not be possible to avoid rent loss to voids completely. Stock will continue to turn over regularly as tenancies end, and local authorities will need to complete necessary repairs and advertise properties before they can be let again. However, Building Services are having some issues in recruiting and retaining craftsmen in the light of a stronger oil and gas sector which is having some impact upon the ability to carry out necessary works timeously and

subsequently void periods can be longer. With terminations continuing to increase, voids and the resulting rent loss continues to be an issue. Coupled with a strong new build focus some areas have become less desirable and consequently properties remain empty for longer.

3.69 In Aberdeenshire, void rent loss has risen for the past three years and in 2021/22 it took on average 93.44 days to relet empty properties. Given the relatively large proportion of sheltered housing owned by Aberdeenshire Council, the extended restrictions on lettings in these properties during the pandemic disproportionately affected the overall rent loss figures, with sheltered housing (which makes up 11% of overall stock) making up approximately 41% of our weekly void rent loss by the end of 2021/22. For mainstream housing, other pandemic-related factors have also had an impact, such as staff absences in repairs teams due to self-isolation, and challenges in obtaining parts and materials. There are further upcoming challenges such as the potential need to house Ukrainian refugees, availability of materials, a shortage of available contractors and staff, and increased costs due to inflation.

3.70 Aberdeenshire have implemented changes in order to improve void performance, including the implementation of a new voids procedure, new lettable standard, and realignment of the Housing Repairs team structure. The introduction of CBL is also expected to have a positive impact, and the percentage of offers refused has already started to reduce. In 2020/21 (the year before the introduction of CBL) 37% of offers were refused, in 2021/22 (CBL was introduced mid-year) 35% of offers were refused, and in 2022/23 32% of offers were refused. This downwards trend indicates that CBL is helping to reduce the percentage of offers refused, which will in turn have an impact on the time taken to relet properties and void rent loss.

3.71 In the case of Aberdeen City, the rent lost through void properties has more than doubled in the past three years and currently sits at 3.66% compared to the Scottish average of 1.4%. This increase may be due in part to a reduction in demand for two-bedroom flats and especially in multi-storey blocks. The drop in oil prices may have increased supply of one- and two-bedroom flats pushing rents down and made the private sector a more attractive place to rent.

3.72 One of the key issues facing Aberdeen City in the re-letting of stock are the number of offers which are refused. Table 3.29 below shows the number of offers generated and percentage of refusals for the last three years. On average it takes around 15 minutes for the Allocations team to develop a shortlist and select who should receive the offer. The table also shows the total hours needed on an annual basis to select applicants. In 2020/2021, almost 59% of those hours were spent working on offers which were subsequently refused.

Table 3.29: Aberdeen City - number of offers and refusals.

Year	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Offers made	4,103	4,132	4,129	5,359
Offers refused	48.7%	51.6%	58.5%	65.11%
Average time spent making offers (hours)[30]	1,025	1,033	1,032	1,339

Source: Aberdeen City Council, Housing Management Databases, Allocation details (2022)

3.73 Not only are refusals costly in terms of resources, including Allocation and Housing Management staff time, but they can also increase the void period, incurring rent loss. In the period 1st April 2020-31st March 2021 it took on average 113.9 days to re-let a property. This is higher than the Scottish average of 37.9 days. Average void loss as a percentage of rent due for all local authorities in Scotland was 1.1% and for Aberdeen was 2.53%. Many factors impact void times, but the refusal rate in Aberdeen is a contributory factor. Advertising available properties for people to bid on would help ensure preferences are met and attract active waiting list applicants who are more likely to accept the offer received.

3.74 The average relet time for Aberdeen City Council in 2021/22 was 164 days, compared to the Scottish average of 51.6 days for all social landlords (59.4 days when looking at local authorities only). This is an increase compared with figures from 2020/21, where the average relet time was 113.9 days compared to the Scottish average 56.3 days.

Key Issues:

- Aberdeen City tenancy terminations as a percentage of self-contained lettable stock was 11.4% in 2021/22, well above the Scottish average of 7.76%, and over a 35% increase on 2020/21.
- 21% of Aberdeenshire tenancy terminations do not have a termination reason recorded: increasing the recording of termination reasons would help with analysis and could inform policies and procedures around tenancy sustainment, stock turnover and void performance.
- Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire both have a higher turnover rate than the average for Scottish local authorities (7.67%) – 8.68% and 10.5% respectively.
- 7.66% of Aberdeen City total stock and 4.72% of Aberdeenshire total stock was void on 31st March 2022.
- Void rent loss in 2021/22 for Aberdeen City is 3.66%, and for Aberdeenshire it is 2.80%, both above the national average of 1.4%.
- 65% of all offers made by Aberdeen City are refused.

[30] This figure reflects the time spent by Allocations and Estate Management Staff

Registered Social Landlords

3.75 Table 3.30 below details the RSLs which operate in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire and shows a total of 9,427 self- contained owned properties. There are nine registered social landlords providing general needs housing in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. Their stock accounts for 4.05% of the dwellings in Aberdeenshire and 3.83% of the dwellings in Aberdeen. They have a significant role in the provision of social and mid-market rented housing across the region.

Table 3.30: RSL stock across Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire

RSL	Aberdeen City	Aberdeenshire	Total No. of Properties
Ark Housing Association Ltd	7	23	30
Aberdeen Soroptimist Housing Society Ltd	14	0	14
Blackwood Homes and Care	30	16	46
Castlehill Housing Association Ltd	871	493	1,364
Grampian Housing Association Ltd	1,380	1,241	2,621
Hanover (Scotland) Housing Association Ltd	0	39	39
Hillcrest	535	0	535
Langstane Housing Association Ltd	1,278	769	2,047
LAR Housing Trust	5	141	146
Places for People	61	146	207
Sanctuary	536	725	1,261
Osprey	80	1,037	1,149
Total	4,797	4,630	9,427

Source: Scottish Housing Regulator (2022)

Waiting Lists

3.76 Several of the larger housing associations operating in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire use These Homes, a Choice-Based Lettings platform for advertising empty properties. For ease and comparability of data, waiting list information for only RSLs using These Homes is presented. Table 3.31 below shows the number of housing applicants for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire as of 31 March 2022 for Castlehill, Grampian Housing Association, Sanctuary, and Hillcrest. There is high demand for one-bedroom properties: 46.2% of all applicants require a one-bedroom property.

Table 3.31: Current RSL applicants as of 31st March 2022

	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	5 Bed	6 Bed	Total
No. of Applicants	3,124	2,172	1,308	334	72	10	7,020
No. of applicants with a Priority Pass[31]	1,318	1,041	926	271	63	9	3,628

Source: These Homes 2022

3.77 Table 3.32 below shows the total number of new housing applications received annually for the following landlords operating in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire: Castlehill, Sanctuary, Hillcrest, Osprey, and Grampian Housing Association.

Table 3.32: RSL new housing applications received each year.

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Number of applications	6,234	5,767	5,909	5,316	4,595

Source: These Homes 2022

Key Issues:

- There is likely to be overlap between Council waiting lists and applicants on These Homes – many applicants who are on the Council waiting list for Aberdeen City or Aberdeenshire will also have an application on These Homes.
- The number of applications received each year for RSLs on These Homes further shows the significant pressure on social housing stock.

[31] A Priority Pass indicates housing need.

Empty Homes

3.78 In the HNDA 2017, it was identified that to make the best use of existing stock, both local authorities' local housing strategies should identify actions to bring empty homes back into use.

3.79 Both councils recognise the key role that empty homes play in meeting housing need and demand and have Empty Homes Officers in place to work with owners of long-term empty properties to help them bring them back into use.

3.80 The definition of a long-term empty home is a privately owned residential property that has been empty for six months or more and is liable for Council Tax. Table 3.33 below shows the number of long-term empty properties in both local authorities.

Table 3.33 Long term empty homes in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire

Year	Aberdeen City	Aberdeenshire	Scotland
2018	2,989	2,856	39,303
2019	3,790	2,975	41,062
2020	4,537	3,167	47,333
2021	6,006	2,583	43,766
2022	5,765	2,543	44,601

Source: National Records for Scotland (2023)

3.81 There are many reasons why a home may become long-term empty, but some general aspects relating specifically to Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire are:

- There has been a downturn in the global price of oil which led to an economic slump in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire with substantial job losses, business closures and impacts that extended to other industries. The local economy declined, and the housing market was affected with house prices dropping significantly and taking much longer to sell than previously. These factors may have had an impact on empty homeowners' ability to sell or rent out their property or to be able to afford any works required to bring their property up to standard, and perhaps a reluctance to sell or rent out the property until house prices started to rise again.

- The new Private Residential Tenancy which came into force in 2017 under new legislation offers tenants more security of tenure than the previous tenancy regime. This has possibly resulted in the prospect of becoming a landlord for empty property owners being too daunting and a reluctance for some landlords to relet their property once empty. Advice and information is readily available to support empty homeowners to become landlords.

- Covid-19 had further implications with regards to empty properties with restrictions on social distancing and moving house, with temporary business

closures and job furloughs. This made it challenging for empty homeowners to procure a contractor to do works. Materials were either very difficult to obtain or had increased significantly in price, which may be partly due to Covid-19, Brexit and the war in Ukraine.

- Impending changes in relation to energy efficiency standards within the private sector are also likely to present some challenges in respect of empty homes and encouraging and supporting their owners to bring them back into use. The costs of any works required may outweigh the short to medium term benefits, notwithstanding the desire to reduce carbon emissions/achieve net zero carbon. Furthermore, for some properties it may be very technically difficult to achieve these higher standards.

- The significant increase in long-term empty properties in Aberdeen City for 2021 and 2022 is believed to be the result of a recording error and is currently being investigated by the Empty Homes Service. The figure reported by NRS is 1,736 higher than the figure reported by the Scottish Government. The results of the investigation will be detailed in the upcoming Local Housing Strategy and updated figures will be provided if necessary.

3.82 Furthermore, because empty homes are privately owned properties, both councils are limited in what immediate action can be taken and resources that can be used if there is no engagement from owners. That said, both councils have an Empty Homes Officer or an Officer who deals with empty homes as part of their remit.

3.83 The Empty Homes Officer in Aberdeen City has worked with owners to bring 580 empty properties back into use. Empty Homes Officers provide advice with bespoke practical support such as legislative requirements for becoming a landlord, VAT (Value Added Tax) relief letters for financial support, matchmaker schemes (sell & rent) to help bring properties back into use and where appropriate, Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs) as a last resort enforcement tool for unlocking housing supply.

3.84 Aberdeenshire Council's empty homes work centres around providing information and advice to support bringing empty homes back into use. This includes providing letters for reduced rated VAT; to claim back VAT from HMRC; advice on merchants' discounts; and advice on selling, letting, or maintaining properties. Aberdeenshire Council also operate an online Matchmaker Scheme that is free for empty homeowners. The scheme allows owners to advertise their properties for sale at no cost. Since its launch in November 2022 to date, there have been 39 applications from sellers and 32 applications from interested buyers. The Empty Homes Service respond to enquiries, via the dedicated empty homes email address, from owners of empty properties to offer advice and assistance. 345 enquiries have been received since 2018 seeking advice on a range of topics including funding and finance; buying and selling; renting; reporting an empty property and general queries.

3.85 Furthermore, since 2018, Aberdeenshire Council and its RSL partners have worked to create 93 new properties for social rent. This has been through the purchase of 25 empty properties on the open market which have been converted to social rent. Empty buildings have also been converted as part of the new build programme by Aberdeenshire Council, delivering 40 social rent units, and RSLs have converted empty buildings into 28 social rent units.

Second Homes

3.86 Table 3.34 shows the number of second homes in Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, and Scotland. Second homes are taken into account when considering stock which is not being used effectively as a main home. Figures below show that since 2017, the number and proportion of second homes is decreasing in Aberdeen City. This can be linked to the economic slump in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire where the housing market was affected by a decrease in the house prices thus reducing the value of owning an additional home in the region.

Table 3.34: Number of second homes in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire between 2018-2022

Year	Aberdeen City	Aberdeenshire	Scotland
2018	884	1,223	24,983
2019	905	1,244	24,478
2020	848	1,193	24,471
2021	847	1,208	23,990
2022	737	1,214	24,287

Source: National Records for Scotland (2023)

3.87 In Aberdeenshire, the number of second homes has remained almost constant over the last five years. The Scottish average proportion of second homes as a percent of total dwellings is 0.9%, with Aberdeenshire's proportion at 1%. However, when looking at each administrative area the percentages vary, with Banff and Buchan and Marr being 2.01% and 2.45% respectively.

3.88 Banff and Buchan has many small coastal villages, and this is perhaps one reason that would explain the high percentage of second homes, as most are in areas associated with tourism. Similarly, Marr includes the Royal Deeside towns of Ballater and Braemar and this area has a higher-than-average percentage of second homes due to being a popular tourist destination. In Banff and Buchan, the turnover of social rented stock within the small coastal villages is typically healthy enough to accommodate the majority of those households on the waiting list, whereas in the smaller villages within the Marr area, the availability of social rented stock is limited. This does affect these smaller villages, as there are also very few private rentals that come on the market. Marr is predominantly a rural area; local intelligence suggests that many people work locally in Braemar and Ballater and do not want to travel

further. Traditionally the main industries in this area are hospitality, accommodation, and retail due to the high number of visitors to this area each year, but this work is typically seasonal and low paid. Therefore, expensive private rented properties, even if available, would not be affordable to most. Following the changes to working practices largely as a result of the pandemic, it may be that hybrid working and/or working from home is changing the employment profile of people living in the Marr area and beyond.

Key Issues:

- Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire have a high volume of long-term empty homes which is strongly linked to the downturn in the oil market and subsequently property market over the last 5 years, migration of workers from these industries and most recently effects from Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic.
- There are limitations with enforcement powers that can be used particularly in cases where owners refuse to engage with the service to bring their property back into use.

Stock Management - In-Situ Solutions

3.89 There are various options available to local authorities to help manage housing stock more effectively and house those in most need.

Transfers

3.90 Table 3.35 below shows the number of transfers annually for both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.

3.91 Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire have policies that allow tenants to transfer from one council tenancy to another. If a tenant's housing need has changed, they may request a transfer within the housing providers existing stock to allow for a new home that better meets the tenants needs. Transfers support tenancy sustainment and prevent overcrowding or under occupancy. There are also cases where the housing service may offer a transfer to a tenant which does not fit neatly within the allocation policy. These are classed as "management transfers" or "discretionary transfers" and such transfers may include cases of anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse, downsizing and matrimonial breakdown. Transfers are an effective way of managing stock by providing more appropriate accommodation to tenants within existing stock with the resulting vacancy being available to let to someone on the waiting list. These include management transfers which can assist tenants to move for various reasons which are not covered in the general allocation policy including those experiencing anti-social behaviour from neighbours.

Table 3.35: Number of lets to existing tenants (transfers)

Year	Aberdeen City		Aberdeenshire	
	Number of lets	% of total lets	Number of lets	% of total lets
2017/18	426	23.5%	164	17%
2018/19	491	23.9%	218	18%
2019/20	525	26.7%	277	21%
2020/21	494	29.9%	217	18%
2021/22	570	29.3%	289	21%

Source: Aberdeen City Council & Aberdeenshire Council Housing Management Databases, Tenancy details (2022)

Buy Backs

3.92 Another in-situ method of increasing the councils housing stock is through buy-back schemes. Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council purchase properties from the open market through their buy-back policies, these are usually properties which were originally sold under the Right to Buy (RTB) legislation. Purchases occur where there is an identified need for a particular property type in that location, where there is funding available, and where the property represents value for money. Properties where the purchase will enable the Council to take complete or majority ownership of the block (making communal repairs easier to complete) or where a property has been adapted for people with particular needs e.g., wheelchair users, are of particular interest.

3.93 Tables 3.36 and 3.37 below shows the number of properties by size and type purchased in the last three years through the councils' buy-back schemes.

Table 3.36: Aberdeen City Council - Buy Backs 2019-2022

	Flat				Flat Total	House			House Total	Total
Year	**1 bed**	**2 bed**	**3 bed**	**4 bed**		**1 bed**	**2 bed**	**3 bed**		
2019/20	9	17	1	0	**27**	4	2	1	**7**	**33 + 1MTR**
2020/21	19	39	1	0	**65**	2	5	5	**12**	**77**
2021/22	55	31	14	0	**100**	7	10	5	**22**	**121+1MTR**
Total	**110**	**83**	**18**	**1**	**192**	**13**	**18**	**13**	**41**	**233**

Source: Aberdeen City Council - Asset Management Team (2022)

Table 3.37: Aberdeenshire Council - Buy Backs 2019-2022

	Flat				Flat Total	House			House Total	Total
Year	**1 bed**	**1 bed (bedsit)**	**2 bed**	**3 bed**		**1 bed**	**2 bed**	**3 bed**		
19/20	8	0	0	1	**9**	0	0	0	**0**	**9**
20/21	4	1	4	1	**10**	2	1	2	**5**	**15**
21/22	4	0	1	1	**6**	3	1	3	**7**	**13**
Total	**16**	**1**	**5**	**3**	**25**	**5**	**2**	**5**	**12**	**37**

Source: Aberdeenshire Council Affordable Housing Team, Purchases details (2022)

3.94 For Aberdeenshire, all 37 of the properties acquired through the Buy Back scheme have been let. 21 properties have been mainstream properties since they were first let, 14 properties were originally used for temporary accommodation and have since been converted to mainstream accommodation (providing a permanent tenancy to a homeless applicant in the same accommodation), and 2 are still being used for temporary accommodation.

Mutual Exchange

3.95 Mutual exchanges allow local authorities to make best use of housing stock. Table 3.38 below shows the number of mutual exchanges in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire from 2017 to 2022. A mutual exchange is where a tenant of one council swaps houses with another tenant of the same council or a tenant of RSL; Housing Cooperative; or another council. By mutually exchanging homes, applicants may be able to find the home that best suits their family's needs either in the locality or in other towns and Cities in Scotland, without having to wait on the housing lists.

Table 3.38: Number of mutual exchanges in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire 2017-2022

	Aberdeen City	**Aberdeenshire**
2017/18	180	99
2018/19	141	75
2019/20	121	72
2020/21	78	48
2021/22	84	91

Source: Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council, Housing Management Databases, Tenancy details (2022)

Downsizing

3.96 Aberdeen City Council operates an incentive scheme aimed to assist its tenants who are under occupying their current home to move to smaller, more suitable accommodation. Applications will be accepted from tenants who are under-occupying their current property and where a high demand exists for that property. The scheme aims to free-up larger family properties which are increasingly in demand by those on the housing lists.

3.97 The Council offers a grant of £1,000 to help with removals and new floor coverings. The general qualifying criteria are that the householder must be an Aberdeen City Council tenant living in a property larger than their needs, designated as high-demand and wish to move to a smaller council property. There must be a sufficiently high demand for the qualifying tenant's property.

Table 3.39: Number of properties by size that were re-allocated following downsizing.

Another	Properties returned to re-allocate			Total
	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 + Bed	
2017/18	17	12	3	32
2018/19	43	26	5	74
2019/20	12	16	2	30
2020/21	4	15	0	19
2021/22	2	16	3	21

Source: Aberdeen City Council - Housing Management Databases - (2022)

Table 3.39 above shows the total number of tenants who downsized, and the number and size of family homes released and available to re-allocate.

3.98 The downsizing scheme continues to have some limited success in Aberdeen City in helping to recover and re-let larger properties, although the numbers are relatively small compared to the demand. In 2023, 17 grants were approved for payment so a small number again. Overall this initiative has succeeded in its aim which was to help many applicants to downsize to more appropriate accommodation and free up much needed family homes. Another challenge around this initiative is the availability on 1 bedroom properties, given the demand from homeless applicants.

3.99 Aberdeenshire Council does not currently operate a downsizing scheme or grant incentive scheme. Previously a downsizing grant was available on a first-come first-served basis but the grant funding for the scheme was limited and has since lapsed. It did not have a significant impact in encouraging applicants to consider downsizing, although challenges around the availability of smaller accommodation for applicants to downsize to may have impacted this.

Incentives/Resettlement Assistance

3.100 Aberdeen City Council has for several years provided incentives to applicants who are unable to take up offers of accommodation for various reasons, this could be due in part to a lack of funds, having a disability or old age. These incentives include extra decoration and floor coverings, help with removals and a furniture leasing scheme. The Furniture Leasing Scheme (FLS) is available to all tenants of Aberdeen City Council and is intended to help

households equip their tenancies with essential household items such as beds, cookers, sofas and washing machines. Tenants can choose the items they require from a list of white goods, floor coverings and furnishings up to a maximum of £750 for individuals and £1,100 for families. A service charge will be levied at £1.55 (per week) per £100 of goods, and the service charge is eligible for Housing Benefit and Universal Credit Housing Costs. The underlying principle recognises that the provision of incentives will contribute to the sustainability of otherwise vulnerable tenancies, thus reducing the likelihood of recurring periods of homelessness. The incentives provided are very heavily utilised and make a significant difference in tenancy sustainability. The individuals who make use of the FLS or low demand initiatives would be unlikely to adequately furnish their homes via any other means and therefore use of these funds allows the individual to achieve a basic level of comfort in their home from the earliest opportunity.

3.101 Aberdeenshire Council's resettlement assistance is directed towards homeless applicants as part of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) and to those supported within the Housing First scheme. There is dedicated staffing embedded within finance to fast-track Community Care Grants (CCGs) made by homeless applicants. Access to flexible homeless prevention funding is provided as part of the RRTP and can be used to facilitate take-up of accommodation e.g., van hire, provision of furniture etc. Clients supported within the Housing First scheme can access CCGs, and there may also be additional assistance to purchase essential household items etc. An evaluation of the success of these various forms of assistance in the take-up and sustainment of local authority tenancies is planned for 2024-25.

Choice-Based Lettings

3.102 An effective way for housing providers to manage its stock is through allocation polices and Choice-Based Lettings (CBL).

3.103 In January 2021, Aberdeen City Council approved the implementation of CBL as a new way of letting council homes. Allocation of social housing is becoming increasingly choice led with the growing adoption of CBL by social landlords across Scotland. CBL was implemented in Aberdeen in June 2023, so there is not currently sufficient data on which to comment on its success but this will be monitored and evaluated as part of its implementation.

3.104 In August 2021, Aberdeenshire Council implemented CBL as the method to allocate properties. It was agreed this approach allows the applicant more choice in where they live which in turn, leads to higher tenancy sustainment rates.

3.105 A weekly advert is published displaying the properties which are close to or ready to let. Information on each property can include pictures and virtual tours along with rent, council tax and energy performance information. This

allows the applicants to make an informed decision on the properties they wish to register an interest in. On closure of the advert, the Housing Options team assess the waiting list and make allocations in line with the Allocation Policy. This is always based on housing need.

3.106 Besides being a more person-centred approach for those looking for housing, CBL also sees advantages for landlords which include a reduction on refusals, which in turn should assist with a reduction in rent loss. In 2020/21 (the year before the introduction of CBL) 37% of offers were refused, in 2021/22 (CBL was introduced mid-year) 35% of offers were refused, and in 2022/23 32% of offers were refused. This downwards trend indicates that CBL is helping to reduce the percentage of offers refused.

Converting Temporary Accommodation to Permanent Accommodation

3.107 Both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils will, in certain circumstances, provide a permanent tenancy for a homeless applicant in temporary accommodation by converting it to a secure tenure if it helps resolve the homelessness case quickly and supports the aims of tenancy sustainment. Consideration is given as to whether the property meets the long term needs of the homeless person, e.g., the location of the property in relation to their support network, education, area of choice etc. If the applicants are doing well in their temporary tenancy, express an interest in staying in the property and would be a challenge to rehouse elsewhere, they could be considered as an option for converting. The applicant also benefits from receiving a property that has flooring, carpets, white goods and in some cases furnishings. Certain types of properties e.g. adapted properties or properties required for those with specific needs would not usually be considered for converting.

3.108 Aberdeenshire Council has adopted converting temporary accommodation as an integral part of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP), converting 56 temporary accommodation properties in 2021-22 and a further 229 since the beginning of the RRTP. There is a commitment to continue putting RRTP funding towards converting temporary properties at a level of around 30 properties a year. Converting temporary accommodation has also been used as a tool to re-evaluate stock of temporary accommodation to ensure stock of the right properties in the right areas.

Adaptations

3.109 Many individuals find that their current home cannot safely meet their needs; for example, an injury or the ageing process may leave an individual unable to ascend stairs, use their bathroom safely or negotiate their front step. While looking for alternative accommodation may be an option for some people, the most common solution is to install an adaptation to their home, allowing them to continue living independently and with dignity. This is a demand led service

provided across all tenures, further discussion is set out in the Chapter 5, paras 5.39 – 5.47 - Specialist Housing Provision.

Matchmake to Rent Scheme

3.110 Aberdeen City has a Matchmake to Rent scheme which aims to introduce long-term empty homeowners who are looking to rent their empty property to potential tenants from Aberdeen City Council's housing waiting lists.

3.111 The scheme is free for owners who are registered landlords to provide their property details to Aberdeen City Council to list. This increases the amount of exposure the property receives by highlighting it to visitors of the Council's "find a home" and "empty homes" website pages.

3.112 This approach has shown that owners/landlords in the private rented sector are willing to rent to households in receipt of Housing Benefit and Universal Credit Housing Costs (up to the Local Housing Allowance) and who are currently working with the Housing Options Team.

3.113 The scheme is a holistic tool used to promote the use of the private rented sector, where appropriate, and reduce demand on social housing. Its success contributes to shortening the homelessness journey time for customers; reduces the need to provide temporary accommodation and provides more choices and increases access to all types of properties thereby removing limitations of choice for customers. The scheme has been a success as it now forms a standard part of the housing advice provided to those who contact Aberdeen City Council about their housing options. Since the scheme was developed in 2019/20, over 230 properties have been registered to the Matchmake to Rent scheme, with over 112 empty homes coming back into use.

3.114 Aberdeenshire Council has developed a similar scheme to enable private landlords to advertise vacant properties via a page on the website. The first property was advertised on the website at the end of March 2023. 6 properties have been advertised on behalf of private landlords during 2023 with 5 of them being let within a month of being advertised. Monitoring of the scheme will continue to evaluate its effectiveness.

Future Housing Provision

3.115 Both Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council have developed Strategic Housing Investment Plans (SHIPs) for 2022/23 - 2026/27 which were submitted to the Scottish Government in November 2021. These identify opportunities for the following levels of new affordable housing supply, detailed in table 3.40 below:

Table 3.40: Projected affordable housing completions 2022/23-2026/27

	Numbers by Local Authority		Numbers by Housing Market Area	
	Aberdeen City	**Aberdeenshire**	**AHMA**	**RHMA**
2022/23	1,173	266	1,264	175
2023/24	1,463	497	1,798	162
2024/25	529	428	782	175
2025/26	676	330	841	165
2026/27	305	399	547	157
Total	**4,146**	**1,920**	**5,232**	**834**
	6,066		**6,066**	

Source: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council Affordable Housing teams (2022)

3.116 Table 3.40 above shows potential affordable housing development in both local authorities. It is worth noting that these projections are likely to vary and will be subject to the build out rate of the development industry and availability of Scottish Government grant.

3.117 Table 3.41 below shows there were 2,395 affordable completions over the 5-year period for Aberdeen City and 1,021 for Aberdeenshire which is a total of 3,416 homes. It is difficult to project accurately the number of completions over the lifetime of the SHIP: the further into the future the projections are, the less robust the data will be. This is because many variables impact upon the delivery of units, and we rely on information provided by RSLs and other partners including the development industry.

Table 3.41: Affordable completions 2017 - 2022

	Aberdeen City	Aberdeenshire
2017/18	368	170
2018/19	356	200
2019/20	401	281
2020/21	461	161
2021/22	692	209
Total	**2,395**	**1,021**

Source: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council Affordable Housing teams (2022)

3.118 The local housing market in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire is experiencing challenges around pace of construction on site; supply chain; availability of contractors/sub-contractors; availability of both corporate and individual finance; and a drop in oil and gas revenues. It is acknowledged that we are in uncharted territory with market volatility being experienced in the construction sector at present: increasing energy prices; labour shortages, construction boom; material shortages, the war in Ukraine, economic uncertainty, inflation; significant material prices increase, risk allocation; an element of opportunism; legislative change in fuel duty has resulted in substantial tender price increases and contractor claims, coupled with contractors unwilling to tender or hold prices for any length of time. Over the last year, there has been a 23% average increase in construction material costs with some components e.g., steel rising 25% in a month. Tender returns have increased in the region of 10%- 40% over the past year with some projects in excess of that figure. This is particularly significant in relation to contributions from the private development industry and their build-out rate, which are intrinsically linked to the performance of the economy and the local housing market.

3.119 Completions also depend on availability of grant funding. Over the last five years, additional funding beyond the resource planning assumptions were made available to Aberdeen City, so projects have been able to progress quicker than anticipated. The downturn in market sales also resulted in developers looking to deliver more affordable properties, and increased grant funding has allowed the council to take up the increased supply.

3.120 Aberdeenshire Council and its affordable housing partners only have a small number of landbank sites available to develop for affordable housing. A considerable proportion, around 66% of current and future programs will be as a consequence of the Affordable Housing Policy whereby “new housing development must contain 25% affordable housing” (Section 75). Current

market trends are being closely monitored in terms of their potential impact on the deliverability and viability of affordable housing developments, particularly as timing and alignment with Scottish Government funding will be fundamental to the deliverability of the program.

Key Issues:

- The SHIP identifies projected affordable housing completions, however it is difficult to project accurately the number of completions over the lifetime of the SHIP.
- The local housing market in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire is experiencing challenges around pace of construction on site. In the past 12 months, there has been a 23% average cost increase in construction materials.

Key Issues for Local Housing Strategy and Local Development Plans

Topic	Key Issues identified in the HNDA
Housing quality	1. There are high levels of disrepair in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire housing stock. This has improved significantly for the social housing stock in meeting SHQS but remains an issue for other sectors. In terms of improving SHQS compliance in the social housing sector, the main driver is likely to be the need for compliance with EESSH.
Housing stock pressures	1. There is significant pressure on social housing stock. On 31 March 2022, there were 4,750 applicants in Aberdeen City (3,321 with a housing need) and 4,880 in Aberdeenshire (4,344 with a housing need) on the waiting list. 2. 70% of Aberdeen City applications with a housing need require a one-bedroom property, and 12% require a two-bedroom property. 38% of Aberdeen City properties are bedsit or one-bedroom, and 45% of properties are two-bedroom. 3. This suggests that in the future there will be a shortage of one-bedroom properties, as there is a significant disparity between the demand levels and the stock available. 4. It seems likely there will be a surplus of two-bedroom properties available, due to the number of applications being far below the actual stock level. 5. Aberdeen City Council is currently experiencing levels of low demand for two-bedroom tenement flats and multi storey blocks. 6. 53% of Aberdeenshire applications with a housing need require a one-bedroom property and 21% require a two-bedroom property. 40% of Aberdeenshire properties are one-bedroom and 40% are two-bedroom. 7. Garioch is the most pressured area within Aberdeenshire, accounting for over 25% of all applications with a housing need. Inverurie is the most pressured settlement in Aberdeenshire. These trends indicate there is likely to be a shortage of one-bedroom properties available. 8. Overcrowding in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire is below the Scottish average of 2.39% at 1.59% and 1.35% respectively, based on figures from the CHMA. It would be advisable to review the 2022 Census data on overcrowding (taken from Occupancy rating data) when published to determine if this is the case.

9. Under occupation is highest in Aberdeenshire at 45%, compared with the Scottish average of 32%. Aberdeen City has a lower level of under occupation than the national average at 22%.

10. Aberdeen City Council has a high level of void properties; currently there are 1,575 which represents 7% of the whole stock. This has been steadily increasing over the past 3-4 years, with the subsequent increase in void rent loss currently 4.64%.

11. Void properties can in sufficient numbers, cause blight in certain neighbourhoods, attract vandalism and anti-social behaviour and can also put off potential applicants from choosing these areas.

12. Aberdeen City Council have experienced high levels of refusals of offers over recent years, which currently stands at more than 60% and this will add to the void period. Given refusing an offer will generally lead to an application being deferred for 12 months it is important that applicants have as much information about their properties as possible. It is hoped that the introduction of Choice Based Lettings will help in reducing the number of refusals.

13. Levels of overcrowded and concealed households in both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire are showing as lower than the Scottish average based on CHMA 2016-18 figures. The 2011 Census however showed higher than average levels of concealed households for both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire and overcrowding in Aberdeen City was significantly above average. It will therefore be important to review the 2022 Census figures when they are published.

14. Aberdeen City tenancy terminations as a percentage of self-contained lettable stock was 11.4% in 2021/22, well above the Scottish average of 7.76%, and over a 35% increase on 2020/21.

15. Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire both have a higher turnover rate than the average for Scottish local authorities (7.67%) – 8.68% and 10.5% respectively.

16. 7.66% of Aberdeen City total stock and 4.72% of Aberdeenshire total stock was void on 31st March 2022.

17. Void rent loss in 2021/22 for Aberdeen City is 3.66%, and for Aberdeenshire it is 2.80%, both above the national average of 1.4%.

18. 65% of all offers made by Aberdeen City are refused.

	19. There is likely to be overlap between Council waiting lists and applicants on These Homes – many applicants who are on the waiting list for Aberdeen City or Aberdeenshire will also have an application on These Homes. 20. The number of applications received each year for RSLs on These Homes further shows the significant pressure on social housing stock.
Size, type, tenure, and location of future social housing supply	1. Up to 6,066 affordable units are planned to be delivered from 2022/23 to 2026/27. These projections are subject to market conditions and the build out rates of developers. 2. The Aberdeen Housing Market Area will see up to 5,232 units (86%) of the planned affordable supply and the Rural Housing Market Area will see 834 units (14%) supplied over the next five years. 3. New housing supply needs to be smaller and more specialist to meet changing demographics. 4. The SHIP identifies projected affordable housing completions, however it is difficult to project accurately the number of completions over the lifetime of the SHIP. 5. The local housing market in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire is experiencing challenges around pace of construction on site. In the past 12 months, there has been a 23% average cost increase in construction materials.

Sustaining communities	1. Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire have a high volume of long-term empty homes which is strongly linked to the downturn in the oil market and subsequently property market over the last 5 years, migration of workers from these industries and most recently effects from Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic. 2. There are limitations with enforcement powers that can be used particularly in cases where owners refuse to engage with the service to bring their property back into use. 3. Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire have both seen an above average increase in the number of dwellings over the last 15 years. 4. Over the same period Aberdeenshire has also seen an above average increase in the number of households. 5. Aberdeen City has a high percentage of multi-storey flats and dwellings with 1-3 rooms, and a low percentage of detached dwellings and dwellings with 4-6 rooms. 6. Conversely Aberdeenshire has a low percentage of flats and terraced dwellings and dwellings with 1-3 rooms, and a high percentage of semi-detached and detached dwellings and dwellings with 7 or more rooms. 7. Aberdeen City has seen an above average increase in the proportion of private-rented dwellings over the last 20 years. 8. Aberdeenshire has not seen the same trend of steady long-term increase in the proportion of private rented dwellings, with the proportion fluctuating over the period but remaining relatively stable and at a lower level.
Current Housing Stock Trends	1. The number of applicants on Aberdeenshire's waiting lists over the last 5 years was stable until a sharp drop in 2021/22, which coincides with the move to a new system for online housing applications to facilitate Choice-Based Lettings. 2. The number of new applications received in-year to both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire has remained relatively stable over the same

	5-year period. This suggests that the level of applications being received is unlikely to change significantly in the coming years. 3. Aberdeen City has seen a year-on-year reduction in the number of applicants on its waiting lists each year for the last 5 years, reducing from 6,631 on 31st March 2018 to 4,750 on 31st March 2022. 4. The number of applicants on Aberdeenshire's waiting lists over the last 5 years was stable until a sharp drop in 2021/22, which coincides with the move to a new system for online. 5. Aberdeen City Council is currently experiencing levels of low demand for two-bedroom tenement flats and multi-storey blocks.

Chapter 4: Estimating Future Housing Need and Demand

Core Output 4: Estimating Future Housing Need and Demand
Estimate a range of additional future housing units:
· Broken down into the number of households who are likely to afford owner occupation, private rent, below market rent, social rent.
· Estimates reported for each five-year period of a 20-year projection and the cumulative total at the end of the 20 projections (these are output automatically from the Tool.)
· The geography chosen should fit with those required for the LHS and Development Plan.
· Assumptions and choices made about scenarios (demographic, existing need, house price, income, and affordability) used in the Tool must be based on evidence and clearly explained in the HNDA.

Source: HNDA: A Practitioner's Guide (2020)

Introduction

4.1 This chapter uses information gathered in Chapter 2: Key Housing Market Drivers to produce an estimate of the future number of additional housing units required to meet housing need and demand using several different scenarios.

4.2 The estimates presented below were produced using the Excel-based HNDA Toolkit (Version 4.0), produced by the Scottish Government's Centre for Housing Market Analysis.

4.3 The scale of the need and demand for new housing overall is largely driven by the scale of population and particularly household growth in the area. This in turn is dependent on a range of factors, including the current population and household structure as well as rates of economic growth, migration, and incomes.

4.4 National Registers of Scotland prepare a range of population and household projections for local authority areas. These are trend-based in the way they apportion Scottish levels of growth to smaller geographies and are therefore 'projections' of what could happen under a specific set of assumptions rather than forecasts of what is likely to happen. The projections use three different levels of migration, known as 'low migration,' principal' and 'high migration' variants. The 2018-based projections are the most up-to-date currently available within the model itself.

4.5 The HNDA model uses the household projections chosen to determine the scale of growth overall, while the tenure split between need and demand is driven by the relationship between house prices, rent levels (and expected changes over time) and incomes (and how these change over time, in both level and distribution). The backlog of housing need also has an impact over the early years of the projected period, although this is a relatively minor component of the total need and demand over the period to 2042.

4.6 The HNDA is an evidence-base from which different policy responses can be made. Two of the main policy responses are the setting of "housing supply

targets" and the split between market and affordable housing tenures. However, these decisions are not made within the HNDA itself but through the LHS. In order to facilitate this (and the required consultation and discussion), the HNDA uses a number of scenarios which are based on a range of assumptions for variables such as household growth, incomes and changes in house price and rental costs. Not all of these scenarios will be equally likely but are internally consistent.

4.7 The Housing Market Partnership analysed the evidence presented in Chapter 2. As a result, four scenarios were modelled, including the default scenario of the model. The four scenarios are therefore:

- **Scenario 1 Tool Default**
- **Scenario 2 Principal Growth**
- **Scenario 3 High Migration**
- **Scenario 4 High Migration Plus**

4.8 The scenarios selected make use of the default position and three different household projections: the 2018-based principal and high migration variant projections as well as a high migration plus scenario. The HNDA guidance allows for an assessment of existing need out with the HNDA Tool. Any deviation from the default scenarios must be evidenced and detailed in the HNDA.

4.9 A high migration plus scenario was deemed necessary due to concerns that Scenarios 1-3 may not provide an accurate reflection of the additional housing units required in both areas. This scenario shares similar assumptions and variables with Scenario 3; however, a household growth adjustment is made between 2023-28. The specifications of this scenario are explored further in the Scenario 4 section later in the chapter.

4.10 The above scenarios will be used within the tool to determine the additional housing units required for the Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire local authority areas, respectively. The tool also includes the capability to determine the units required for 'housing market areas' (HMAs) within Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. According to Scottish Planning Policy[32], HMAs are defined as a "*geographical area where the demand for housing is relatively self-contained*." The HNDA identifies two HMAs within Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire: the Aberdeen Housing Market Area (AHMA) and the Rural Housing Market Area (RHMA). It is important to consider the way in which housing need and demand operates within and across local authority boundaries. Understanding the spatial characteristics of the housing market and the need profile may be a more effective way of targeting resources to meet need and demand which does not necessarily fit neatly within local authority boundaries. In addition, some types of households are characterised by their ability and/or desire to move between areas including Gypsy/

[32] Scottish Planning Policy, 2014, para 111

Travellers, young adults, and people who can work from home and it can be helpful to take a more regional perspective when considering how best to meet the needs of these groups.

4.11 Tables 4.1 and 4.2 below details the tool settings that have been used in Scenario 1-4 and indicates via shading the settings in which both councils have shifted from the tool default. The reasoning behind selecting these options is explained in further detail before each scenario.

Table 4.1: HNDA Tool Settings, Scenario 1-4, Aberdeen City and Aberdeen HMA

Tool Steps	Tool Settings	Scenario 1 Tool Default	Scenario 2 Principal Growth	Scenario 3 High Migration	Scenario 4 High Migration+
Household Projections	Household Projection	2018 Principal Growth	2018 Principal Growth	2018 High Migration	2018 High Migration
	Household Growth Adjustment	No	No	No	City - 0.4% Aberdeen HMA – 0.3%
Existing Need	HoTOC Method	City – 479 Aberdeen HMA - 660	No	No	No
	LA Generated Existing Need Figure	No	City – 811 Aberdeen HMA - 989	City – 811 Aberdeen HMA - 989	City – 811 Aberdeen HMA - 989
	Years to Clear Existing Need	5	10	10	10
	Affordability Model	No	No	No	No
Income, Growth and Distribution	Income Data	Small Area Income Est	Small Area Income Est	Small Area Income Est	Small Area Income Est
	Growth in Median Income Scenario	2.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%
	Change in Income Distribution	No Change	No Change	No Change	No Change
Prices and Affordability	House Price Scenario	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%
	Income Percentile	25%	25%	25%	25%
	Income Ratio	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9
Split Need Into Tenure	Proportion of Market Who Buy	60%	60%	60%	60%
	Upper Income-to-Rent Threshold	25%	25%	25%	25%
	Lower Income-to-Rent Threshold	35%	35%	35%	35%
	Rent Growth Scenario	1.6%	2.3%	2.3%	2.3%

Source: HNDA Tool (2020), Aberdeen City Council Housing Management Database - Waiting List and Temporary Accommodation figures, Refugee Project Manager – Refugee, Asylum seeker and Resettlement Data (2023)

Table 4.2: HNDA Tool Settings, Scenario 1-4, Aberdeenshire and Rural HMA

Tool Steps	Tool Settings	Scenario 1 Tool Default	Scenario 2 Principal Growth	Scenario 3 High Migration	Scenario 4 High Migration+
Household Projections	Household Projection	2018 Principal Growth	2018 Principal Growth	2018 High Migration	2018 High Migration
	Household Growth Adjustment	No	No	No	0.2%
Existing Need	HoTOC Method	Shire – 401 Rural HMA - 220	No	No	No
	LA Generated Existing Need Figure	No	Shire – 425 Rural HMA - 247	Shire – 425 Rural HMA - 247	Shire – 425 Rural HMA - 247
	Years to Clear Existing Need	5	10	10	10
	Affordability Model	No	No	No	No
Income, Growth and Distribution	Income Data	Small Area Income Est	Small Area Income Est	Small Area Income Est	Small Area Income Est
	Growth in Median Income Scenario	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
	Change in Income Distribution	No Change	No Change	No Change	No Change
Prices and Affordability	House Price Scenario	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%
	Income Percentile	25%	25%	25%	25%
	Income Ratio	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9
Split Need Into Tenure	Proportion of Market Who Buy	60%	60%	60%	60%
	Upper Income-to-Rent Threshold	25%	25%	25%	25%
	Lower Income-to-Rent Threshold	35%	35%	35%	35%
	Rent Growth Scenario	1.6%	2.3%	2.3%	2.3%

Source: HNDA Tool (2020), Aberdeenshire Council waiting list, temporary accommodation and refugee data (2023)

Existing Housing Need

4.12 The tool has a built-in method of calculating existing need which includes homeless households in temporary accommodation and households that are both overcrowded and concealed, known as the HoTOC count. The temporary accommodation element of the HoTOC count is based on HL1 homelessness statistics published by the Scottish Government as of 31 March 2020, while the overcrowded and concealed element is based on the 2016-18 Scottish Household Survey (SHS) and the 2011 Census. The resulting figure is an estimate of the number of households requiring a new-build home to meet their housing need.

4.13 It is noted that the methodology for assessing overcrowded and concealed households has changed since HNDA 2 was completed in 2017. Overcrowded and concealed households were assessed separately in 2017, although the Scottish Government recommended caution to avoid double-

counting between these categories. The 2020 HNDA Tool is based on a methodology (HoTOC) that counts households that are *both* overcrowded *and* concealed, providing a more refined figure than that assessed in HNDA 2017 (the overcrowded and concealed households figure in HNDA 2 was 820 across Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, with 560 in the Aberdeen HMA and 260 in the Rural HMA). The HoTOC figures from the 2020 tool show 479 for Aberdeen City and 401 for Aberdeenshire. In terms of Housing Market Areas, this is 660 for the Aberdeen HMA and 220 for the Rural HMA.

4.14 Further, feedback from stakeholders in the Engagement Group suggested that there should be some caution around the HoTOC figure in the tool as it may underestimate the extent of existing need.

4.15 In addition, another important element of calculating existing need is to consider the number of refugees, asylum seekers and those who have arrived into the UK through resettlement schemes with a housing need. Every local authority in the UK is now required to accommodate a proportion of asylum seekers and refugees through the dispersal policy introduced by the Home Office in 2022. While the motivations for those seeking refuge or asylum can vary, armed conflict is a common reason for fleeing their home country. In recent years, both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire have seen refugees and asylum seekers arriving from a range of destinations such as Afghanistan, Syria, and Ukraine. The current conflict in Ukraine is responsible for an unprecedented number of people entering the UK, and with the future of the war uncertain, it is likely that this will continue to impact existing need in the near future. Although levels are unlikely to reach the same heights as in the earlier days of the Ukraine conflict, both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire are still seeing regular arrivals.

4.16 This increase in people to the area would normally be reflected in the household projection element of the HNDA tool. However, because this tool uses projections from 2018, the majority of these people are not accounted for within the tool as they were not known about at the time the projections were produced. Both local authorities agree that it is important to reflect the additional housing need generated by these cohorts in this HNDA. The HNDA guidance does allow for existing need to be assessed by local authorities out with the tool. This assessment should, as a minimum, incorporate the elements included in the HoTOC figure and should exclude existing need which could be addressed through means other than building a new property.

4.17 Both local authorities made the decision to generate their own existing need figures based on the most up to date information available locally. This would allow for comparison with the HoTOC figures and could provide a more accurate reflection of existing need. This calculation has three components: concealed and overcrowded households, households living in temporary accommodation, and refugees, asylum seekers and those who have arrived through resettlement schemes.

Overcrowded and Concealed Households

4.18 The current waiting lists of both local authorities were analysed to form an alternative to the figure presented by the HNDA tool. The waiting list data was captured on 15 June 2023 for Aberdeenshire and 16 June 2023 for Aberdeen City; specifically details of all household members in overcrowded households (each household member's relationship to the main applicant and their current age). Relationship types were coded to determine if at least one concealed household existed within the applicant household (using guidance from a Scottish Government publication[33]). The age of each household member was used to determine if at least one involuntary sharer existed within the applicant household (any single adult aged 26 or over was determined to be an involuntary sharer, in-line with the cut-off for young adult support services provided by the Councils). The number of waiting list applications with overcrowded and concealed households (including involuntary sharers) was then counted. The results of this analysis are shown below, with the HoTOC figure included for comparison.

Table 4.3: Concealed and overcrowded households – waiting list analysis and HoTOC

	Waiting List Analysis	HoTOC
Aberdeen City	73	181
Aberdeenshire	115	114

Source: Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council Waiting Lists (June 2023)

4.19 For Aberdeenshire, the two data sources gave almost identical results but for Aberdeen City there was a considerable difference, with the waiting list indicating just 73 overcrowded and concealed households compared with 181 in the tool. The analysis was undertaken due to concern that the HoTOC figure was underestimating the number of overcrowded and concealed households in both areas. The results of the analysis indicated that this was not the case and both local authorities have therefore opted to use this element of HoTOC when estimating existing need.

4.20 Based on the data available at the time of writing, both authorities agree that the figures in the tool represent the most robust measure of overcrowded and concealed households.

Temporary Accommodation

4.21 Temporary accommodation figures were provided by each local authority as of March 2023 to give more up-to-date figures than are found in the tool, which is based on data from March 2020.

[33] Scottish Government, Estimating concealed family rates with overcrowding using Scottish survey data, 2020

Table 4.4: Number of households in temporary accommodation on 31 March 2023 and 31 March 2020

	March 2023	March 2020 (HoTOC)
Aberdeen City	415	298
Aberdeenshire	133	286

Source: Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council Temporary Accommodation Data (March 2023)

4.22 There is a significant difference between the 2020 and 2023 figures. For Aberdeen City, the 2023 figure is much higher than in 2020 and this reflects the current high levels of demand for temporary accommodation in Aberdeen City. The total number of temporary accommodation placements was 415, consisting of 294 in temporary flats, 105 in hotels and 16 in hostels. This trend is likely to continue due to the rise in homelessness applications in the city.

4.23 The opposite is true for Aberdeenshire where the 2023 figure of 133 is considerably lower than in 2020 when it was 286. This is due to the successful delivery of Aberdeenshire Council's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan since 2019 which aimed to minimise the amount of time people experiencing homelessness spend in temporary accommodation through a variety of measures including prioritisation of homeless prevention activity. As a result, there has been a consistent downward trend in the use of temporary accommodation in recent years. While external factors could result in increased demand for temporary accommodation again in the future, the figures for 2023 provide the most up to date position at present.

Refugees, Asylum Seekers, and Resettlement Schemes

4.24 In order to assess the number of refugees, asylum seekers and those who have arrived through resettlement schemes and who have a need for housing, the first step is to estimate the number of households already here who have a housing need, the numbers likely to arrive on an annual basis, and what proportion of people may want to settle long term in the area rather than returning home. While concrete projections in this area are scarce, a 2021 report from the United Nations Refugee Agency presented a survey which indicated that between a third and a half of refugee populations expressed a willingness to return to their countries of origin[34]. Based on this, both local authorities have agreed on an estimation of 50% of their refugee, asylum seeker and resettled populations who will return to their home country when viable with the remaining 50% settling longer term in this area. The figures for each local authority are set out in more detail below. This methodology is used to calculate the existing need in both areas.

4.25 In Aberdeen City, the Refugee Project Manager was consulted to provide the relevant figures and estimates. In terms of existing need, this includes households who have progressed through various resettlement schemes in the city, as well as national resettlement schemes such as ARAP and ACRS. While many refugees, asylum seekers and people to be resettled have been

[34] UNHCR, Global Trends Forced Displacement In 2021

placed in settled accommodation such as social housing or the private rented sector, there are still many who reside in unsettled accommodation and are likely to impact existing need. This includes households in sponsored accommodation (100), hotels (199), Home Office bridging accommodation (21) and asylum seekers (110). Based on the assumption that 50% of these households are likely to remain in the area, this results in 215 being included in the existing need total.

4.26 In Aberdeenshire, work was undertaken by the Housing Service in Spring 2023 to collect data on the current numbers of people arriving in the area under the various resettlement schemes, to estimate the likely annual totals in future years, and the proportion of these who will require housing solutions. It is estimated that around 500-600 households have already arrived in Aberdeenshire. While permanent housing has already been secured for many of these households, there remains a total of 356 who are housed in non-permanent accommodation, primarily asylum seekers currently housed in hotels (173), and people living with sponsors (183). Based on the assumption that 50% of these households are likely to remain in the area, this results in a total of 178 to be included within the existing need total.

Table 4.5: Estimate of existing need from Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Resettlement Schemes

	Aberdeen City	Aberdeenshire
Existing need from asylum seekers, refugees, and resettlement schemes	215	178

Source: Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council – Refugee, Asylum Seeker and Resettlement Data (June 2023)

Estimate of Existing Need

4.27 Table 4.6 below summarises the different components of the existing need calculation and provides an overall total for input to the HNDA tool.

Table 4.6: Local Authority Existing Need Totals

	Aberdeen City	Aberdeenshire
Homeless Temporary (March 2023)	415	133
Overcrowded and Concealed (HNDA Tool)	181	114
Asylum Seekers, Refugees, Resettlement Schemes (LA Estimates)	215	178
Existing need Total	**811**	**425**

Source: Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council, Housing Management Databases - Waiting List and Temporary Accommodation figures, Refugee Project Managers – Refugee, Asylum seeker and Resettlement Data (2023)

4.28 The existing need totals for both local authorities can be used to calculate an existing need figure for the Aberdeen HMA and the Rural HMA. In 2018, it was agreed by both councils in a Methodology Paper for the 2020 Strategic Development Plan that the split between the two HMAs would be 80/20% in

favour of the Aberdeen HMA[35] for the housing land requirement. This split was previously 75/25% which was based on the number of households in each HMA, however the decision was made in 2018 to increase the Aberdeen HMA percentage. There were several reasons for this change including the results of the HNDA 2017, low market demand for housing in the Rural HMA and LDP policy changes.

4.29 For the purposes of the HNDA, the Project Team agreed to use the 2018 percentages when estimating the existing need for both HMAs, as seen in Table 4.7 below.

Table 4.7: Housing Market Area Existing Need Totals

	Total Existing Need (100%)	**Aberdeen HMA (80%)**	**Rural HMA (20%)**
Existing need in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire	1,236	989	247

Source: Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council, Housing Management Databases - Waiting List and Temporary Accommodation figures, Refugee Project Managers – Refugee, Asylum seeker and Resettlement Data (2023)

(June 2023)

Key Issues:

- Due to concerns that HoTOC may underestimate existing need, both local authorities have generated their own existing need figure based on more up-to-date local data.

Scenario 1 - Default

4.30 This scenario is based on the default settings of the HNDA tool with all assumptions based on the economic outlook for Scotland in 2020. Table 4.8 below shows the variables and assumptions for Scenario 1.

[35] "Proposed Strategic Development Plan 2020" Aberdeen City and Shire, Strategic Development Planning Authority, August 2018

Table 4.8: HNDA Tool Settings, Scenario 1, Aberdeen City, Aberdeen HMA, Rural HMA, Aberdeenshire

Tool Steps	Tool Settings	Scenario 1 Tool Default
Household Projections	Household Projection	2018 Principal Growth
	Household Growth Adjustment	No
Existing Need	HoTOC Method	City – 479, Shire – 401 AHMA – 660, RHMA - 220
	LA Generated Existing Need Figure	No
	Years to Clear Existing Need	5
	Affordability Model	No
Income, Growth and Distribution	Income Data	Small Area Income Est
	Growth in Median Income Scenario	2.5%
	Change in Income Distribution	No Change
Prices and Affordability	House Price Scenario	1.6%
	Income Percentile	25%
	Income Ratio	3.9
Split Need Into Tenure	Proportion of Market Who Buy	60%
	Upper Income-to-Rent Threshold	25%
	Lower Income-to-Rent Threshold	35%
	Rent Growth Scenario	1.6%

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

4.31 Table 4.9 below shows the results of Scenario 1 using the default tool settings for Aberdeen City.

Table 4.9: Aberdeen City Scenario 1 (Default) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, Top Level Results

	2023-2027	2028-2032	2033-2037	2038-2042	20 Year Total	20 Year p.a.
Social Rent	163	85	83	49	1,900	95
Below Market	57	85	85	50	1,385	70
Private Rent	55	77	84	54	1,350	68
Owner Occupied	84	121	131	86	2,110	106
Total p.a.	**359**	**368**	**383**	**239**	**6,745**	**338**
Affordable p.a.	220	170	168	99	3,285	165
Market p.a.	139	198	215	140	3,460	174

Source: HNDA Tool (2020), CoreDefault Settings

4.32 Table 4.10 below shows the results of Scenario 1 using the default tool settings for the Aberdeen HMA.

Table 4.10: Aberdeen Housing Market Area Scenario 1 (Default) - Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, Constrained Results

	2023-2027	2028-2032	2033-2037	2038-2042	20 Year Total	20 Year p.a.
Social Rent	245	110	98	64	2,585	130
Below Market	109	117	106	71	2,015	101
Private Rent	142	148	147	105	2,710	136
Owner Occupied	160	176	174	125	3,175	159
Total p.a.	**656**	**551**	**525**	**365**	**10,485**	**526**
Affordable p.a.	354	227	204	135	4,600	231
Market p.a.	302	324	321	230	5,885	295

Source: HNDA Tool (2020), CoreDefault Settings

4.33 Table 4.11 below shows the results of Scenario 1 using the default tool settings for Aberdeenshire.

Table 4.11: Aberdeenshire Scenario 1 (Default) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, Top Level Results

	2023-2027	2028-2032	2033-2037	2038-2042	20 Year Total	20 Year p.a.
Social Rent	207	82	59	50	1,990	100
Below Market	122	86	65	55	1,640	82
Private Rent	187	128	104	94	2,565	129
Owner Occupied	151	111	91	86	2,195	110
Total p.a.	**667**	**407**	**319**	**285**	**8,390**	**420**
Affordable p.a.	329	168	124	105	3,630	182
Market p.a.	338	239	195	180	4,760	239

Source: HNDA Tool (2020), CoreDefault Settings

4.34 Table 4.12 below shows the results of Scenario 1 using the default tool settings for the Rural HMA.

Table 4.12: Rural Housing Market Area Scenario 1 (Default) - Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, Constrained Results

	2023-2027	2028-2032	2033-2037	2038-2042	20 Year Total	20 Year p.a.
Social Rent	117	45	33	28	1,115	56
Below Market	69	49	38	32	940	47
Private Rent	79	56	45	42	1,110	56
Owner Occupied	106	76	62	56	1,500	75
Total p.a.	**371**	**226**	**178**	**158**	**4,665**	**234**
Affordable p.a.	186	94	71	60	2,055	103
Market p.a.	185	132	107	98	2,610	131

4.35 The purpose of Scenario 1 was to illustrate the results using the default position of the tool for comparison with later scenarios in this chapter. This scenario is viewed as being unlikely to occur due to the variations in rental, income and population growth anticipated in both areas. Additionally, the default settings in the tool makes use of the HoTOC figure which both local authorities have decided against using in later scenarios, in favour of the

existing need figures that have been generated based on recent analysis and statistics.

4.36 Table 4.13 below displays the total additional housing units required using the default tool settings between 2023-2042.

Table 4.13: Scenario 1 (Default) – Total Additional Housing Units by Area (2023-2042)

Area	Scenario 1 (Default)
Aberdeen City	6,745
Aberdeenshire	8,390
Aberdeen HMA	10,485*
Rural HMA	4,665*
Total	**15,135**

Source: HNDA Tool (2020), *Total HMA figure slightly higher due to rounding in the tool

4.37 Table 4,14 below displays the total additional housing units required by tenure for the local authority areas of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.

Table 4.14: Scenario 1 – Total Additional Housing Units by Tenure City/Shire (2023-2042)

Area	Scenario 1 (Default)
Social Rent	3,890
Below Market	3,025
Private Rent	3,915
Owner Occupied	4,305
Total	**15,135**

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

4.38 Table 4.15 below shows the proportion of affordable housing compared to market housing for Scenario 1, as well as the proportion of additional housing units being distributed between Aberdeen City/Aberdeenshire, and Aberdeen HMA/Rural HMA.

Table 4.15: Scenario 1 (Default) – Proportion of Housing Units by Affordability and Area

	Affordable Housing (2023-2042)	AHMA/RHMA (2023-2042)	City/Shire (2023-2042)
Additional Housing Units	51%	69/31%	46/54%

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

Key Issues:

- Scenario 1 uses the default settings from the tool and is viewed by both local authorities as being an unlikely projection of the housing units required between 2023-2042.

Scenario 2-3 Rationale

4.39 The focus of Scenarios 2 and 3 is determining the annual housing requirement in the event of principal and high inward migration to Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. This is achieved by selecting the relevant NRS household projection variant in Step 1 of the tool. Step 1 has options for 'Low Migration', '2018 Principal' and 'High Migration'. A scenario based on the low migration variant was considered by the Project Teams and Housing Market Partnership but following investigation this was deemed to be an unrealistic prospect for both local authorities between the period of 2023-2042. Figure 2.12 in Chapter 2 suggests that the 2018 projections may present a pessimistic view of the number of households in both areas, therefore it was decided to focus on Principal Growth and High Migration projections.

4.40 The assumptions to be used for the remaining variables were determined through discussion between representatives from both Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council at the Housing Market Partnership meetings.

4.41 There is a table before each scenario which shows the variables and assumptions used in the tool runs for Scenarios 2 and 3 in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. The assumption for household projections will vary depending on the scenario. The run of Scenario 1 uses the HoTOC calculation provided in the tool, whereas Scenarios 2-4 use an existing need figure calculated by both local authorities using their own methodology.

4.42 In addition to the tool runs for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, the tool has also been run for each scenario for the Housing Market Areas (HMAs) that cover both local authority areas. This is broken down into the Aberdeen HMA and Rural HMA.

4.43 Both local authorities have agreed to run the tool with ten years to clear existing need, rather than the five suggested by the default setting. This decision was reached due to challenges faced in the construction industry at present, with increased costs and a shortage of materials and personnel and was agreed by the Housing Market Partnership. As seen in Figure 2.23 in Chapter 2, the build rate for new affordable homes were at steadily low levels for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire in the past decade. Therefore, 10 years was seen as a more realistic timescale to clear existing need.

4.44 Income growth is expected to grow nationally at a rate of 2.5% which is the default setting in the tool. As shown in section 2.8 of Chapter 2, the median annual household income in Aberdeen City has fallen below the median figure for Scotland which supports using a lower income growth setting than the tool default. This is likely a result of a decline in employment in the oil and gas sector, which has previously been a key element in the city's economic prosperity. This trend is likely to continue during the period of energy transition, and as a result the tool will be run with 1.5% income growth for Aberdeen City.

4.45 Evidence in Chapter 2 suggests that the rate of income growth in Aberdeenshire is more in line with the national trend. Section 2.8 shows that although the median income is much higher in Aberdeenshire, the rate of growth in recent years has been similar to Scotland as a whole, with a slight decline between 2020 and 2021 being the most recent change. As such, Aberdeenshire has used moderate real terms income growth (2.5%) which is the tool default.

4.46 Both areas are running the tool with no change in income distribution as well as the default position for house prices and affordability. Section 2.46 of Chapter 2 shows that the house prices in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire are now following a similar rate of growth to the national trend.

4.47 It is possible that there could be a reduction in income inequality due to the loss of high earning oil and gas jobs in the area. However, these jobs may be replaced by new energy transition roles with high salaries and in addition the tendency for below inflation increases in public sector salaries is preventing much uplift among lower income earners. It is probably too early to say whether a significant change is likely, so it was agreed to leave this measure as the default in the tool.

4.48 The local economic downturn negatively impacted house prices in the area between 2015 and 2020 but since then there has been signs of a readjustment and prices appear to be tracking the Scottish trend hence the use of the core growth option in the tool.

4.49 Rental costs in the private sector are increasing across both local authorities and data from CityLets suggests that there has been an increase of 10.4% in rental costs annually in the Aberdeen area from Q1 2022 to Q1 2023. Section 2.64 of Chapter 2 indicates that rent prices have sharply increased in Aberdeen City for most property types, with 2.69 indicating a similar trend for Aberdeenshire. As a result of this, ‘moderately high growth’ was chosen as the rent growth option in the tool for both areas.

4.50 For the results from each tool run for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, ‘top level’ results are used as there no ‘sub-areas’ to be accounted for. For the Aberdeen HMA and Rural HMA tool runs, the approach taken is to sum the sub-area results to arrive at a total for the region as a whole. The tool provides the option for this in the ‘summed’ lines of the results. Rather than looking at the region as a whole, the decision was made to look at the Aberdeen HMA and Rural HMA individually because it is the difference between the two HMAs that is of interest rather than the total for the region as a whole given that there is no longer a Strategic Development Plan.

4.51 With there being a difference in the Income Growth assumption between Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, there was debate as to which assumptions should be selected for the tool runs of Aberdeen HMA and Rural HMA. After consulting with CHMA, it was decided by the Project Team that the assumptions for these should be the same as Aberdeen City and

Aberdeenshire, respectively. The Rural HMA is contained within Aberdeenshire, so the assumptions used for this HMA will be the same as the local authority area. Although the Aberdeen HMA contains areas in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, it was decided to keep the same assumptions as Aberdeen City due to the HMA being predominantly in this area.

Key Issues:

- Both local authorities have agreed to run the tool with ten years to clear existing need as five years was seen as an unrealistic timescale.
- Aberdeen City has opted for 1.5% income growth whereas Aberdeenshire has opted for 2.5%, which is the tool default.
- Moderately high growth was chosen as the rent growth option for the tool in both areas.
- The remaining settings were kept to default due to evidence in Chapter 2 indicating these areas were broadly in line with the national trend or no local evidence being available to suggest otherwise.

Scenario 2 – Principal Growth

4.52 Scenario 2 aims to determine the annual housing requirement if both areas experience principal growth from inward migration. This is achieved by selecting the 'Principal Growth' NRS household projection variant in Step 1 of the tool. The assumptions for Scenario 2 are shown below in Table 4.16 for Aberdeen City.

Table 4.16: HNDA Tool Settings, Scenario 2, Aberdeen City and Aberdeen HMA

Tool Steps	Tool Settings	Scenario 2 Principal Growth
Household Projections	Household Projection	2018 Principal Growth
	Household Growth Adjustment	No
Existing Need	HoTOC Method	No
	LA Generated Existing Need Figure	City – 811 Aberdeen HMA - 989
	Years to Clear Existing Need	10
	Affordability Model	No
Income, Growth and Distribution	Income Data	Small Area Income Est
	Growth in Median Income Scenario	1.5%
	Change in Income Distribution	No Change
Prices and Affordability	House Price Scenario	1.6%
	Income Percentile	25%
	Income Ratio	3.9
Split Need Into Tenure	Proportion of Market Who Buy	60%
	Upper Income-to-Rent Threshold	25%
	Lower Income-to-Rent Threshold	35%
	Rent Growth Scenario	2.3%

Source: HNDA Tool (2020), Aberdeen City Council, Housing Management Database - Waiting List and Temporary Accommodation figures, Refugee Project Manager – Refugee, Asylum seeker and Resettlement Data (2023)

4.53 The results of the tool run for Scenario 2 using the existing need figure generated by Aberdeen City Council is displayed in Table 4.17 below.

Table 4.17: Aberdeen City Scenario 2 (Principal Growth) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, Top Level Results, LA Generated Existing Need Figure

	2023-2027	2028-2032	2033-2037	2038-2042	20 Year Total	20 Year p.a.
Social Rent	153	187	120	77	2,685	135
Below Market	60	86	86	56	1,440	72
Private Rent	49	62	60	32	1,015	51
Owner Occupied	82	115	118	73	1,940	97
Total p.a.	**344**	**450**	**384**	**238**	**7,080**	**355**
Affordable p.a.	213	273	206	133	4,125	207
Market p.a.	131	177	178	105	2,955	148

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

4.54 Table 4.18 below shows the results of Scenario 2 for the Aberdeen HMA.

Table 4.18: Aberdeen HMA Scenario 2 (Principal Growth) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, LA Existing Need Figure

	2023-2027	2028-2032	2033-2037	2038-2042	20 Year Total	20 Year p.a.
Social Rent	221	234	144	104	3,515	176
Below Market	112	120	111	79	2,110	106
Private Rent	132	133	116	75	2,280	114
Owner Occupied	157	162	155	107	2,905	146
Total p.a.	**622**	**649**	**526**	**365**	**10,810**	**542**
Affordable p.a.	333	354	255	183	5,625	282
Market p.a.	289	295	271	182	5,185	260

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

4.55 The assumptions and variables used in Scenario 2 for Aberdeenshire and the Rural HMA are shown in Table 4.19 below.

Table 4.19: HNDA Tool Settings, Scenario 2, Aberdeenshire and Rural HMA

Tool Steps	Tool Settings	Scenario 2 Principal Growth
Household Projections	Household Projection	2018 Principal Growth
	Household Growth Adjustment	No
Existing Need	HoTOC Method	No
	LA Generated Existing Need Figure	Shire – 425 Rural HMA - 247
	Years to Clear Existing Need	10
	Affordability Model	No
Income, Growth and Distribution	Income Data	Small Area Income Est
	Growth in Median Income Scenario	2.5%
	Change in Income Distribution	No Change
Prices and Affordability	House Price Scenario	1.6%
	Income Percentile	25%
	Income Ratio	3.9
Split Need Into Tenure	Proportion of Market Who Buy	60%
	Upper Income-to-Rent Threshold	25%
	Lower Income-to-Rent Threshold	35%
	Rent Growth Scenario	2.3%

Source: HNDA Tool (2020), Aberdeenshire Council, Housing Management Database - Waiting List and Temporary Accommodation figures, Refugee Project Manager – Refugee, Asylum seeker and Resettlement Data (2023)

4.56 The results of the tool run for Scenario 2 using the existing need figure generated by Aberdeenshire is displayed in Table 4.20 below.

Table 4.20: Aberdeenshire Scenario 2 (Principal Growth) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, Top Level Results, LA Generated Existing Need Figure

	2023-2027	2028-2032	2033-2037	2038-2042	20 Year Total	20 Year p.a.
Social Rent	172	132	70	60	2,170	109
Below Market	127	85	66	60	1,690	85
Private Rent	180	121	93	80	2,370	119
Owner Occupied	151	111	91	86	2,195	110
Total p.a.	**630**	**449**	**320**	**286**	**8,425**	**423**
Affordable p.a.	299	217	136	120	3,860	194
Market p.a.	331	232	184	166	4,565	229

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

4.57 Table 4.21 below shows the results of Scenario 2 for the Rural HMA.

Table 4.21: Rural HMA Scenario 2 (Principal Growth) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, LA Existing Need Figure

	2023-2027	2028-2032	2033-2037	2038-2042	20 Year Total	20 Year p.a.
Social Rent	100	77	40	33	1,250	63
Below Market	71	47	37	35	950	48
Private Rent	75	51	39	34	995	50
Owner Occupied	106	76	62	56	1,500	75
Total p.a.	**352**	**251**	**178**	**158**	**4,695**	**236**
Affordable p.a.	171	124	77	68	2,200	111
Market p.a.	181	127	101	90	2,495	125

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

4.58 The total additional housing units required per area can be found in Table 4.22 below. This scenario produced similar results to the default settings in the tool, with both scenarios utilising the same population projections. However, the settings for rental growth and income both differed in Scenario 2 which resulted in slight increases to the total, as seen in Table 4.22 below.

Table 4.22: Scenarios 1-2 – Total Additional Housing Units by Area (2023-2042)

Area	Scenario 1 (Default)	Scenario 2 (Principal Growth)
Aberdeen City	6,745	7,080
Aberdeenshire	8,390	8,425
Aberdeen HMA	10,485	10,810
Rural HMA	4,665	4,695
Total	**15,135**	**15,505**

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

4.59 Scenario 2 represents an increase in total additional housing units of 355 between 2023-2042. Table 4.23 below displays the total additional housing units by tenure for the local authority areas of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.

Table 4.23: Scenarios 1-2 – Total Additional Housing Units by Tenure City/Shire (2023-2042)

Area	Scenario 1 (Default)	Scenario 2 (Principal Growth)
Social Rent	3,890	4,855
Below Market	3,025	3,130
Private Rent	3,915	3,385
Owner Occupied	4,305	4,135
Total	**15,135**	**15,505**

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

4.60 Scenario 2 results in a significant increase to the provision of social rented housing units due to the existing need figure being distributed to this sector in the tool settings. Below market units have increased slightly, whereas private

rented and owner-occupied properties have both seen slight decreases when compared to Scenario 1.

Table 4.24: Scenario 2 (Principal Growth) - Proportion of Housing Units by Affordability and Area

	Affordable Housing (2023-2042)	AHMA/RHMA (2023-2042)	City/Shire (2023-2042)
Additional Housing Units	51%	70/30%	46/54%

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

4.61 Table 4.24 above shows the proportion of affordable housing compared to market housing for Scenario 2, as well as the proportion of additional housing units being distributed between Aberdeen City/Aberdeenshire, and Aberdeen HMA/Rural HMA. These proportions are similar to the results of Scenario 1, with the only difference being a slight increase in the proportion of properties in the RHMA.

Key Issues:

- Scenario 2 resulted in only a slight increase in total additional units compared to Scenario 1 as it was also using the '2018 Principal Growth' projections.

Scenario 3 – High Migration

4.62 The tool runs for Scenario 3 will determine the annual housing requirement in the event of high migration to both areas. This is achieved by selecting the 'High Migration' NRS household projection variant in Step 1 of the tool. The assumptions for Scenario 3 are shown below in Table 4.25 for Aberdeen City and the Aberdeen HMA.

Table 4.25: HNDA Tool Settings, Scenario 3, Aberdeen City and Aberdeen HMA

Tool Steps	Tool Settings	Scenario 3 High Migration
Household Projections	Household Projection	2018 High Migration
	Household Growth Adjustment	No
Existing Need	HoTOC Method	No
	LA Generated Existing Need Figure	City – 811 Aberdeen HMA - 989
	Years to Clear Existing Need	10
	Affordability Model	No
Income, Growth and Distribution	Income Data	Small Area Income Est
	Growth in Median Income Scenario	1.5%
	Change in Income Distribution	No Change
Prices and Affordability	House Price Scenario	1.6%
	Income Percentile	25%
	Income Ratio	3.9
Split Need Into Tenure	Proportion of Market Who Buy	60%
	Upper Income-to-Rent Threshold	25%
	Lower Income-to-Rent Threshold	35%
	Rent Growth Scenario	2.3%

Source: HNDA Tool (2020), Aberdeen City Council, Housing Management Database - Waiting List and Temporary Accommodation figures, Refugee Project Manager – Refugee, Asylum seeker and Resettlement Data (2023)

4.63 The results of the tool run using the existing need figure generated by Aberdeen City Council is displayed in Table 4.26 below.

Table 4.26: Aberdeen City Scenario 3 (High Migration) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, Top Level Results, LA Generated Existing Need Figure

	2023-2027	2028-2032	2033-2037	2038-2042	20 Year Total	20 Year p.a.
Social Rent	201	239	177	135	3,760	188
Below Market	100	129	126	97	2,260	113
Private Rent	81	93	88	55	1,585	80
Owner Occupied	137	172	173	127	3,045	153
Total p.a.	**519**	**633**	**564**	**414**	**10,650**	**534**
Affordable p.a.	301	368	303	232	6,020	301
Market p.a.	218	265	261	182	4,630	233

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

4.64 Table 4.27 below shows the results of Scenario 3 for the Aberdeen HMA.

Table 4.27: Aberdeen HMA Scenario 3 (High Migration) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, LA Existing Need

	2023-2027	2028-2032	2033-2037	2038-2042	20 Year Total	20 Year p.a.
Social Rent	269	289	207	170	4,675	234
Below Market	156	168	160	128	3,060	153
Private Rent	183	187	166	122	3,290	165
Owner Occupied	218	227	222	175	4,210	211
Total p.a.	**826**	**871**	**755**	**595**	**15,235**	**763**
Affordable p.a.	425	457	367	298	7,735	387
Market p.a.	401	414	388	297	7,500	376

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

4.65 The assumptions and variables used in Scenario 3 for Aberdeenshire and the Rural HMA are shown in Table 4.28 below.

Table 4.28: HNDA Tool Settings, Scenario 3, Aberdeenshire and Rural HMA

Tool Steps	Tool Settings	Scenario 3 High Migration
Household Projections	Household Projection	2018 High Migration
	Household Growth Adjustment	No
Existing Need	HoTOC Method	No
	LA Generated Existing Need Figure	Shire – 425 Rural HMA - 247
	Years to Clear Existing Need	10
	Affordability Model	No
Income, Growth and Distribution	Income Data	Small Area Income Est
	Growth in Median Income Scenario	2.5%
	Change in Income Distribution	No Change
Prices and Affordability	House Price Scenario	1.6%
	Income Percentile	25%
	Income Ratio	3.9
Split Need Into Tenure	Proportion of Market Who Buy	60%
	Upper Income-to-Rent Threshold	25%
	Lower Income-to-Rent Threshold	35%
	Rent Growth Scenario	2.3%

Source: HNDA Tool (2020), Aberdeenshire Council, Housing Management Database - Waiting List and Temporary Accommodation figures, Refugee Project Manager – Refugee, Asylum seeker and Resettlement Data (2023)

4.66 The results of the tool run using the existing need figure generated by Aberdeenshire Council is displayed in Table 4.29 below.

Table 4.29: Aberdeenshire Scenario 3 (High Migration) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, Top Level Results, LA Existing Need Figure

	2023-2027	2028-2032	2033-2037	2038-2042	20 Year Total	20 Year p.a.
Social Rent	185	151	93	86	2,575	129
Below Market	141	104	88	86	2,095	105
Private Rent	199	148	124	114	2,925	147
Owner Occupied	167	135	122	123	2,735	137
Total p.a.	**692**	**538**	**427**	**411**	**10,330**	**517**
Affordable p.a.	326	255	181	174	4,680	235
Market p.a.	366	283	246	237	5,660	284

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

4.67 Table 4.30 below shows the results of Scenario 3 for the Rural HMA.

Table 4.30: Rural HMA Scenario 3 (High Migration) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, LA Existing Need

	2023-2027	2028-2032	2033-2037	2038-2042	20 Year Total	20 Year p.a.
Social Rent	108	88	54	48	1,490	75
Below Market	78	58	49	50	1,175	59
Private Rent	83	62	52	49	1,230	62
Owner Occupied	117	92	82	81	1,860	93
Total p.a.	**386**	**300**	**237**	**228**	**5,755**	**289**
Affordable p.a.	186	146	103	98	2,665	134
Market p.a.	200	154	134	130	3,090	155

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

4.68 Table 4.31 below shows that Scenario 3 has resulted in a significant increase in the total number of housing units required compared to Scenario 2, with 5,485 more units.

Table 4.31: Scenarios 1-3 – Total Additional Housing Units by Area (2023-2042)

Area	Scenario 1 (Default)	Scenario 2 (Principal Growth)	Scenario 3 (High Migration)
Aberdeen City	6,745	7,080	10,650
Aberdeenshire	8,390	8,425	10,340
Aberdeen HMA	10,485	10,810	15,235
Rural HMA	4,665	4,695	5,755
Total	**15,135**	**15,505**	**20,980**

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

4.69 All tenures also experienced notable increases in provision, as shown in Table 4.32 below. Social rent and owner occupied experienced the most significant increase with 1,500 and 1,645, respectively.

Table 4.32: Scenarios 1-3 – Total Additional Housing Units by Tenure City/Shire (2023-2042)

Area	Scenario 1 (Default)	Scenario 2 (Principal Growth)	Scenario 3 (High Migration)
Social Rent	3,890	4,855	6,335
Below Market	3,025	3,130	4,355
Private Rent	3,915	3,385	4,510
Owner Occupied	4,305	4,135	5,780
Total	**15,135**	**15,505**	**20,980**

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

4.70 In terms of affordable housing, Table 4.33 below shows that the proportion of units in this sector remained similar to Scenarios 1 and 2. In Scenario 3, however, Aberdeen City and Aberdeen HMA represented a higher proportion of the market compared to previous scenarios.

Table 4.33: Scenario 3 (High Migration) - Proportion of Housing Units by Affordability and Area

	Affordable Housing (2023-2042)	AHMA/RHMA (2023-2042)	City/Shire (2023-2042)
Additional Housing Units	51%	73/27%	51/49%

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

Key Issues:

- Scenario 3 produced a significant increase in total additional units compared to the results of Scenario 2.
- However, the methodology for this scenario does not incorporate future need from groups that have emerged since the 2018 projections, such as those arriving as a result of the conflict in Ukraine.
- As such, both local authorities have opted to model a fourth scenario to produce an alternative to Scenario 3.

Scenario 4 – High Migration Plus

4.71 Following the outcomes of Scenarios 1-3, both Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council agreed on the design of a fourth scenario, titled 'High Migration Plus'. This scenario is based on the high migration projections used in Scenario 3 but expands on the methodology used with the aim of providing a more accurate projection of the additional housing units required in the short term.

4.72 This scenario utilises the 'household growth adjustment' function in Step 1 of the tool to increase the annual household growth between 2023-2028. This percentage growth is based on estimated future need in relation to the number of refugees, asylum seekers and people arriving through the resettled schemes as set out in Table 4.34. It was decided to apply a growth adjustment in the first five years only, due to the uncertainty regarding the long-term impact on housing need that these groups will have in both areas.

4.73 Although the NRS projections take into account refugees and asylum seekers, these projections are from 2018 and will only account for those that were arriving at this time such as Syrian and Afghan refugee groups. Members of these groups have continued to arrive since this time, as well as new groups with housing need such as those displaced by the ongoing conflict in Ukraine.

4.74 Table 4.34 below shows the methodology and number of estimated annual arrivals from refugee, asylum seeker and resettlement groups for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. The methodology used is based on a report produced by Aberdeenshire in 2023 for their housing management team. Some aspects of the methodology are based on political commitments, such as the UKRS/ARAP numbers for Aberdeenshire. The projections for UASYP were provided by each local authority based on the number of properties required by this group in each area.

4.75 For asylum seekers, research by Aberdeen City Council's Refugee Project Manager had indicated that in cities such as Glasgow, 70% of asylum seekers chose to remain in the city. Aberdeen City Council chose to adopt a similar percentage of their asylum seekers to be likely to remain. Aberdeenshire Council opted for a lower estimate of 25% to reflect the fact that that refugees and asylum seekers often tend to prefer to locate in cities where they can more easily access community support networks and a wider range of employment opportunities. Some may choose to relocate from Aberdeenshire to Aberdeen City while others may go to the Central Belt or cities in England.

4.76 The 20% of Ukrainians likely to remain in the area was an estimate made based on the information available at the time of the report. It is important to note that much of this methodology is based on estimates and there is a high degree of uncertainty as to what the true number of annual arrivals from these groups will be. The intention of Scenario 4 is not to provide an exact number of housing units required, but to provide an alternative scenario than Scenario 3 (High Migration) which does not consider arrivals from these groups beyond 2018.

Table 4.34: Estimate of annual future need p.a. from Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Resettlement Schemes

	Aberdeen City	Aberdeenshire	Total p.a.
Estimated 20% of Ukrainian households to remain	124	100	224
Households from UKRS/ARAP schemes	15	30	45
UASYP households	24	51	75
% of asylum seekers likely to remain – 70% for City, 25% for Shire	291	50	341
Household arrivals p.a. likely to remain in area long-term	**454**	**231**	**685**

Source: Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council, Future Need Estimate Methodology Agreed by Project Team (2023)

4.77 Using this methodology, an estimate of annual future need can be reached to use in the tool as part of the household growth adjustment.

4.78 Using the 80/20% split that was used previously to estimate existing need for Aberdeen HMA and Rural HMA, an estimate for future need figures for these areas can also be produced as shown in Table 4.35 below.

Table 4.35: Estimate of future need p.a. from Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Resettlement Schemes

	Aberdeen HMA (80%)	Rural HMA (20%)	Total p.a.
Household arrivals p.a. likely to remain in area long-term	548	137	685

Source: Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council, Future Need Estimate Methodology Agreed by Project Team (2023)

4.79 The future need figure can be used with the household projections to calculate the household growth adjustment to be used in the tool run. The high migration household projections found in the HNDA tool are detailed in Table 4.36 below between 2023-2028.

Table 4.36: HNDA Tool High Migration household projections 2023-2028 – Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire

	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Aberdeen City	109,940	110,351	110,774	111,235	111,692	112,131
Aberdeenshire	115,037	115,853	116,560	117,166	117,733	118,285
Aberdeen HMA	161,061	161,835	162,572	163,302	164,011	164,696
Rural HMA	63,916	64,369	64,762	65,099	65,414	65,720

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

4.80 If the estimated future arrivals per year is taken as a percentage of the household projections, a percentage household growth adjustment can be made based on this as seen in Table 4.37 below. For example, the future need figure of 454 for Aberdeen City is 0.4% of 109,940, which is the household projection for 2023 in this area. By inputting 0.4% into the household growth adjustment setting in the tool, this factors in the future need figure when calculating the results.

Table 4.37: HNDA Tool (Scenario 4) household growth adjustment from Refugees, Asylum Seekers, and Resettlement Schemes 2023-2028

	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Aberdeen City	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%
Aberdeenshire	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
Aberdeen HMA	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
Rural HMA	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

4.81 The percentages used in the tool settings are rounded so the total results for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire may be marginally different to Aberdeen HMA and Rural HMA.

4.82 In Step 2 of the tool, when inputting the existing need calculation there is the option to apply the 'affordability model' to the results which distributes existing need across all tenures, rather than just to the social rented sector. In Scenario 4, both local authorities considered using this option due to the possibility of refugees and asylum seekers pursuing housing options in other tenures in the near future. However, it was determined that allocating the need to social rent would be a more accurate prediction of the housing need required by these groups, particularly during the first five years.

4.83 The assumptions for Scenario 4 are shown below in Table 4.38 for Aberdeen City.

Table 4.38: HNDA Tool Settings, Scenario 4, Aberdeen City and Aberdeen HMA

Tool Steps	Tool Settings	Scenario 4 High Migration+
Household Projections	Household Projection	2018 High Migration
	Household Growth Adjustment	City - 0.4% Aberdeen HMA - 0.3%
Existing Need	HoTOC Method	No
	LA Generated Existing Need Figure	City - 811 Aberdeen HMA - 989
	Years to Clear Existing Need	10
	Affordability Model	No
Income, Growth and Distribution	Income Data	Small Area Income Est
	Growth in Median Income Scenario	1.5%
	Change in Income Distribution	No Change
Prices and Affordability	House Price Scenario	1.6%
	Income Percentile	25%
	Income Ratio	3.9
Split Need Into Tenure	Proportion of Market Who Buy	60%
	Upper Income-to-Rent Threshold	25%
	Lower Income-to-Rent Threshold	35%
	Rent Growth Scenario	2.3%

Source: HNDA Tool (2020), Aberdeen City Council, Housing Management Database - Waiting List and Temporary Accommodation figures, Refugee Project Manager – Refugee, Asylum seeker and Resettlement Data (2023)

4.84 The results of the Scenario 4 for Aberdeen City Council are displayed in Table 4.39 below.

Table 4.39: Aberdeen City Scenario 4 (High Migration Plus) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, Top Level Results, LA Generated Existing Need Figure

	2023-2027	2028-2032	2033-2037	2038-2042	20 Year Total	20 Year p.a.
Social Rent	325	239	177	135	4,380	219
Below Market	203	129	126	97	2,775	139
Private Rent	165	93	88	55	2,005	101
Owner Occupied	277	172	173	127	3,745	188
Total p.a.	**970**	**633**	**565**	**413**	**12,905**	**646**
Affordable p.a.	528	368	303	232	7,155	358
Market p.a.	442	265	262	182	5,750	289

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

4.85 Table 4.40 below shows the results of Scenario 4 for the Aberdeen HMA.

Table 4.40: Aberdeen HMA Scenario 4 (High Migration Plus) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, LA Existing Need

	2023-2027	2028-2032	2033-2037	2038-2042	20 Year Total	20 Year p.a.
Social Rent	400	289	207	170	5,330	267
Below Market	276	168	160	128	3,660	183
Private Rent	325	187	166	122	4,000	200
Owner Occupied	386	227	222	175	5,050	253
Total p.a.	**1,387**	**871**	**755**	**595**	**18,040**	**903**
Affordable p.a.	676	457	367	298	8,990	450
Market p.a.	711	414	388	297	9,050	453

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

4.86 The assumptions and variables used in Scenario 4 for Aberdeenshire and the Rural HMA are shown in Table 4.41 below.

Table 4.41: HNDA Tool Settings, Scenario 4, Aberdeenshire and Rural HMA

Tool Steps	Tool Settings	Scenario 4 High Migration+
Household Projections	Household Projection	2018 High Migration
	Household Growth Adjustment	0.2%
Existing Need	HoTOC Method	No
	LA Generated Existing Need Figure	Shire – 425 Rural HMA - 247
	Years to Clear Existing Need	10
	Affordability Model	No
Income, Growth and Distribution	Income Data	Small Area Income Est
	Growth in Median Income Scenario	2.5%
	Change in Income Distribution	No Change
Prices and Affordability	House Price Scenario	1.6%
	Income Percentile	25%
	Income Ratio	3.9
Split Need Into Tenure	Proportion of Market Who Buy	60%
	Upper Income-to-Rent Threshold	25%
	Lower Income-to-Rent Threshold	35%
	Rent Growth Scenario	2.3%

Source: HNDA Tool (2020), Aberdeenshire Council, Housing Management Database - Waiting List and Temporary Accommodation figures, Refugee Project Manager – Refugee, Asylum seeker and Resettlement Data (2023)

4.87 Table 4.42 below shows the results of Scenario 4 for Aberdeenshire.

Table 4.42: Aberdeenshire Scenario 4 (High Migration Plus) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, Top Level Results, LA Generated Existing Need Figure

	2023-2027	2028-2032	2033-2037	2038-2042	20 Year Total	20 Year p.a.
Social Rent	237	151	93	86	2,835	142
Below Market	192	104	88	86	2,350	118
Private Rent	271	148	124	114	3,285	164
Owner Occupied	228	135	122	123	3,040	152
Total p..	**928**	**538**	**427**	**409**	**11,510**	**576**
Affordable p.a.	429	255	181	172	5,185	260
Market p.a.	499	283	246	237	6,325	316

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

4.88 Table 4.43 shows the results of Scenario 4 for the Rural HMA.

Table 4.43: Rural HMA Scenario 4 (High Migration Plus) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, LA Existing Need

	2023-2027	2028-2032	2033-2037	2038-2042	20 Year Total	20 Year p.a.
Social Rent	138	88	54	48	1,640	82
Below Market	106	58	49	50	1,315	66
Private Rent	113	62	52	49	1,380	69
Owner Occupied	160	92	82	81	2,075	104
Total p.a.	**517**	**300**	**237**	**227**	**6,410**	**321**
Affordable p.a.	244	146	103	98	2,955	148
Market p.a.	273	154	134	130	3,455	173

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

4.89 Table 4.44 below shows the total additional housing units by area for Scenarios 1-4. The methodology used in Scenario 4 has resulted in an additional 3,425 units in total compared to Scenario 3 due to the household growth adjustment being applied for 2023-2028.

Table 4.44: Scenarios 1-4 – Total Additional Housing Units by Area (2023-2042)

Area	Scenario 1 (Default)	Scenario 2 (Principal Growth)	Scenario 3 (High Migration)	Scenario 4 (High Migration Plus)
Aberdeen City	6,745	7,080	10,650	12,905
Aberdeenshire	8,390	8,425	10,340	11,510
Aberdeen HMA	10,485	10,810	15,235	18,040*
Rural HMA	4,665	4,695	5,755	6,410*
Total	**15,135**	**15,505**	**20,980**	**24,415**

Source: HNDA Tool (2020) **HMA total slightly higher than City/Aberdeenshire results due to rounding when applying household growth adjustment percentage

4.90 Table 4.45 below shows the total additional housing units by tenure for Scenarios 1-4 in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. Similar to Scenario 3, the owner occupied sector experienced the most significant increase with 1,005 units, however this is a smaller increase than between Scenario 2 and 3.

Table 4.45: Scenarios 1-4 – Total Additional Housing Units by Tenure City/Aberdeenshire (2023-2042)

Area	Scenario 1 (Default)	Scenario 2 (Principal Growth)	Scenario 3 (High Migration)	Scenario 4 (High Migration Plus)
Social Rent	3,890	4,855	6,335	7,215
Below Market	3,025	3,130	4,355	5,125
Private Rent	3,915	3,385	4,510	5,290
Owner Occupied	4,305	4,135	5,780	6,785
Total	**15,135**	**15,505**	**20,980**	**24,415**

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

4.91 Table 4.46 below shows the proportion of housing units by affordability and area for Scenario 4. The proportion of affordable housing has remained the same as Scenario 3, however there were slight increases in the proportion of units in Aberdeen City and the AHMA.

Table 4.46: Scenario 4 (High Migration Plus) - Proportion of Housing Units by Affordability and Area

	Affordable Housing (2023-2042)	AHMA/RHMA (2023-2042)	City/Shire (2023-2042)
Additional Housing Units	51%	74/26%	53/47%

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

4.92 Table 4.47 below shows the estimate of average additional annual housing units for Scenarios 1-4 in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. Scenario 4 results in an additional 170 average additional housing units per annum compared to Scenario 3.

Table 4.47: Estimate of average additional annual housing units p.a. across Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire by tenure (2023-2042)

	Scenario 1 (Default)	Scenario 2 (Principal Growth)	Scenario 3 (High Migration)	Scenario 4 (High Migration Plus)
Social Rent	195	244	317	361
Below Market Rent	152	157	218	257
Private Rent	197	170	227	265
Owner Occupied	216	207	290	340
Total	**760**	**778**	**1,054**	**1,223**

Source: HNDA Tool (2020)

Review and Monitoring

4.93 The Housing Market Partnership, comprised of staff from Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council, considered the range of scenarios modelled using the HNDA tool and have agreed to review these in the coming years, particularly Scenario 4 due to the current uncertainty regarding refugees, asylum seekers and resettlement group arrivals in both areas.

4.94 The Local Housing Strategy will act as a vehicle for monitoring Scenario 4 in the near future, and a mid-term review of the HNDA will be carried out when data is available that allows for a more accurate prediction of annual future need.

Key Issues:

- There is a substantial increase in the number of units required in Scenario 4 when compared to Scenarios 1-2, as well as several thousand more than Scenario 3.
- While there is a lack of local and national evidence to accurately predict future need from refugee, asylum seeker and resettlement groups, Scenario 4 presents an alternative to Scenarios 1-3 that factors in the potential short-term impact of these groups on housing need.
- The results of Chapter 4, in particular Scenario 4, will be monitored in the LHS and a mid-term review of the HNDA will be carried out when more data is available in this area.

Key Issues for Local Housing Strategy and Local Development Plans

Topic	Key Issues Identified in the HNDA
Estimating housing need and demand, 2023-2042 by households in the following tenures: • Social Rent • Below Market Rent • PRS • Owner-Occupied	1. The Project Team considered four scenarios using the HNDA tool; Default, Principal Growth, High Migration and High Migration Plus. 2. Rather than using HoTOC, an existing need figure was generated by both local authorities, with 811 for Aberdeen City and 425 for Aberdeenshire. 3. Results from the HNDA tool are presented for each scenario for Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Aberdeen HMA and Rural HMA. 4. The 2018 NRS projections were seen to be relatively outdated, and may underestimate future growth, so a High Migration Plus scenario was modelled for consideration. 5. Scenario 4 aims to provide an alternative estimate of housing need which incorporates additional elements of potential future need from refugees and asylum seekers. 6. The scenarios will be reviewed in the near future as more data becomes available regarding these groups and their impact on housing need in both areas.

Chapter 5: Specialist Provision (Core Output 3)

Core Output 3: Specialist Provision
Identifies the contribution that specialist provision plays in enabling people to live well, with dignity and independently for as long as possible. Identifies any gap(s)/shortfall(s) in that provision and the future level and type of provision required. Considers evidence regarding property needs, care and support needs and locational/land needs, and undertakes consultation with all appropriate stakeholders who represent the views of those who this chapter may impact upon and reports findings of such consultation and gives due consideration to the provisions of the Equalities Act (2010).

Source: HNDA: A Practitioner's Guide (2020)

Introduction

5.1 The contribution that specialist provision plays in enabling people to live well, with dignity and independence for as long as possible is well documented. People may have similar needs, despite their individual illness, health condition or equality characteristic; and therefore, in line with HNDA Guidance (2020), this chapter will focus on understanding and, as far as possible, quantifying, the implications for accommodation and support provision.

5.2 Specialist Provision refers to three broad areas and six types of housing or housing-related provision, as outlined in the table 5.1 below:

Table 5.1: Types of specialist provision

Category of Housing Need	Type of Housing Provision
Property Needs	1. Accessible and adapted housing 2. Wheelchair housing 3. Non-permanent housing e.g., for students, migrant workers, asylum seekers, refugees
Care and Support Needs	4. Supported provision e.g., care homes, sheltered housing, hostels and refuges 5. Care/support services for independent living
Location or Land Needs	6. Site provision e.g., sites/pitches for Gypsy/Travellers and sites for Travelling Showpeople, city centre locations for student accommodation

Source: HNDA, A Practitioner's Guide (2020)

5.3 To evidence the housing needs above, the following key groups will be considered:

- Older people
- Disabled people[36]
- People with a mental health condition
- People with a learning disability
- People experiencing homelessness

[36] Includes people with a physical disability, acquired brain injury, substance misuse issues, and other long-term illnesses.

- People fleeing/at risk of domestic abuse
- People requiring non-permanent accommodation e.g., people experiencing homelessness, students, migrant workers, asylum seekers, refugees, care leavers, ex-offenders
- Armed forces communities
- Minority ethnic people (include Gypsy/Travellers)
- Travelling Showpeople.

Data Limitations

5.4 Collecting comparative data from the two local authority areas and Health and Social Care partnerships in order to interpret and reach meaningful comparisons has proved challenging. The approach taken throughout this chapter has been to draw upon national data sources and link with local intelligence and research data where available.

5.5 Comparative quantitative data may not always be available due to differences in data collection methods used by the two local authorities.

National Legislative and Policy Context

5.6 Links to the national legislative and policy context are outlined in each sub-section. However, there are policies and legislation which hold relevance across several sub-sections and will be listed here rather than in each sub-section. These include:

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,.
- Equality Act 2010
- Housing to 2040
- Scottish Building Standards
- Relevant Adjustments to Common Parts (Disabled Persons) (Scotland) Regulations
- The Independent Review of Adult Social Care
- Age, Home and Community: The Next Phase
- Scotland's National Dementia Strategy 2017-2020
- Mental Health Strategy for Scotland 2017-2027
- Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan
- Ending Homelessness Together: Annual Report 2022.

Local Policy Context

5.7 The following local policies hold relevance to multiple sub-sections and will be listed here rather than in each sub-section.

- Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, Local Housing Strategy, 2018-23
- In Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, the Housing Contribution statement is embedded within Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership's Strategic Plans (2022 to 2025) and Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership's Strategic Plan (2020 to 2025).

- Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Strategic Housing Investment Plans.
- Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Local Development Plans.
- Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans 2019 – 2024.

Demographic profile

5.8 Chapter 2 outlines the demographic profile for both areas. Table 2.2 and 2.3 shows the population age structure and percentage change in age groups between 2011 and 2021. It continues to highlight an ageing population in both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.

Households

5.9 Table 5.2 shows projections for the age breakdown by household. This shows the percentage increase in young person households (16–59) is projected to fall between 2018 and 2048.

5.10 When compared to the overall Scotland figure, Aberdeen has a higher percentage of young person households, whilst Aberdeenshire is consistently below the figure for this age group.

5.11 The projected increase in the 75+ age group is most evident in Aberdeenshire, rising from 15% to 26% and from 12% to 17% in Aberdeen City.

Table 5.2: Projected percentage change for age breakdown by household, 2018 - 2048

Area	2018			2028			2048		
	16-59	60-74	75+	16-59	60-74	75+	16-59	60-74	75+
Scotland	64%	22%	14%	59%	23%	18%	57%	20%	23%
Aberdeen City	70%	18%	12%	67%	19%	14%	66%	17%	17%
Aberdeenshire	61%	24%	15%	56%	24%	20%	52%	22%	26%
Strategic Development Plan Area									
Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire	66%	21%	13%	60%	22%	17%	59%	20%	22%

Source: Household Projections | National Records of Scotland (nrscotland.gov.uk)

Health

5.12 The Healthy Life Expectancy in Scotland 2019 - 2021[37] publication reported healthy life expectancy (HLE) has decreased in Scotland for both males and females (60.4 and 61.1 years respectively) since 2009 – 2011.

5.13 Data for 2019 – 2021 shows that in Aberdeen City the average HLE is 60.2 years for males and 61.4 years for females whereas in Aberdeenshire the average is 67.2 years and 67.3 years respectively.

[37] The National Records of Scotland publication Healthy Life Expectancy in Scotland 2019 – 2021.

5.14 The 2011 Census showed the proportion of the population in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire with one or more long-term health conditions are similar at 26.5% and 26.9% respectively. The Scottish Surveys Core Questions 2018 reported the percentage of people living with a limiting long-term condition was estimated to be 18.2% in Aberdeen City and 21.9% in Aberdeenshire.

5.15 The Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership's Strategic Plan indicates there has been a 25% increase in people living with long-term conditions.

5.16 Aberdeenshire's Health and Social Care Strategic Plan indicates that 27% of adults have a life-limiting long-term condition. The ageing population in both areas will likely result in further increases to these figures.

5.17 Current estimates suggest that between 0.7% and 2% of the population are projected to experience symptoms associated with 'long-Covid'. These figures equate to between 1,592 and 4,548 people in Aberdeen City and 1,838 and 5,253 in Aberdeenshire.

5.18 Table 5.3 provides a snapshot of the number of hospital related delays where the main reason relates to people who require rehousing and/or adaptations.

Table 5.3: Housing related hospital delayed discharge cases –31 March annually.

Housing related hospital delays (on 31 March annually)					
Aberdeen	**2017/18**	**2018/19**	**2019/20**	**2020/21**	**2021/22**
No of people	4	23	10	13	25
No of bed days lost	527	503	433	99	465
Aberdeenshire	**2017/18**	**2018/19**	**2019/20**	**2020/21**	**2021/22**
No of people	41	29	26	32	19
No of bed days lost	1660	696	964	594	257

Source: NHS Grampian, Health Intelligence Team

Property Needs

5.19 Providing housing suitable for older people is a key challenge given the demographic pressures faced in both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. Older people are more likely to either live alone, or in a household where all occupants are aged 65 or older.

Accessible and Adapted Housing

5.20 The provision of accessible and adapted housing for older people, people with long-term health issues and people with disabilities plays a key part in enhancing their health and wellbeing. This section is closely related to 5.3, 'Wheelchair Housing.'

Definition	
Accessible	Accessible housing is designed to enable people to live safely and independently. It includes features that may meet a wide range of needs. These can include but are not limited to accessible entrances to and from the property, adequate circulation space and accessible bathrooms and kitchens, wider door frames and can be easily adapted to meet changing needs. This type of housing is often described as 'ambulant disabled.'
Adapted	An adapted property may not have been purpose built but is one that has been altered/adapted to meet the needs of the occupant. This can include but is not limited to the installation of ramped access, level access shower, lowered kitchen units, installation of stair lifts widening of doors, etc. The responsibility for adaptations is a delegated function that is the responsibility of the Health and Social Care Partnership in both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.

National Policies

5.21 The key driver for national policy in this area is to promote equality and enable people to live independently by ensuring that their accommodation is accessible and/or through the provision of adaptations. National policy is moving towards a tenure neutral approach consistent across all social and private housing stock.

5.22 Key national policies and strategies that influence this area include the following:

- Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014.
- Scottish Government Equipment and Adaptation Guidance, 2009.
- Adapting for Change: Final Report of the Adaptations Working Group, 2012; Evaluation 2017; Learning Points 2017.
- Fairer Scotland Action Plan, 2016.

Local Policies and Strategies

5.23 In addition to policies already mentioned these local policies and strategies support the delivery of accessible and adapted homes.

- Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Scheme of Assistance.

Property Needs

5.24 Low level appliances, stair rails, barrier free, sheltered housing, housing with care.

Suitable for

5.25 This type of housing is suitable for people with limited mobility and/or dexterity, or those with a need for low level care. This can include older people, people with dementia, people with a physical disability, sensory impairment, learning disability and/or autism, mental health issues, acquired brain injury, substance misuse issues and those with bariatric conditions.

Evidence

5.26 Older people and those with a long-term health problem or disability may experience difficulties that limit their day-to-day activities This can be compounded by their living conditions. Table 5.4 shows this relates to 16% in Aberdeen City and 15.5% in Aberdeenshire, both slightly lower than the Scotland figure of 19.7%.

Table 5.4: Long-term health problems or disability

	Total Population	Limited a lot		Limited a little	
	Number	Number	%	Number	%
Aberdeen City	222,793	15,663	7.0	19,956	9.0
Aberdeenshire	252,973	16,038	6.3	23,294	9.2
Scotland	**5,295,403**	**505,863**	**9.6**	**534,508**	**10.1**

Source: Census (2011), National Records for Scotland

5.27 Table 5.5 shows the percentage of households reporting a long-term physical or mental health condition, indicating the two areas remain broadly in line with the Scottish figure.

Table 5.5: All household members with a long-term physical or mental health condition by year

	2017	2018	2019
Aberdeen City	20%	21%	23%
Aberdeenshire	21%	22%	21%
Scotland	**22%**	**23%**	**24%**

Source: The Scottish Health Survey (2019)

5.28 The Scottish Health Survey 2019 reported the percentage of people with limited activities by tenure where the household has someone with a long-term condition, see Table 5.6.

Table 5.6: Limiting activities by tenure: Household has someone with long-term condition by tenure.

	Owner Occupier	Private Rent	Social Rent
Aberdeen City	33%	26%	63%
Aberdeenshire	34%	n/a[38]	65%
Scotland	**37%**	**29%**	**59%**

Source: The Scottish Health Survey (2019)

5.29 Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire share similar proportions of people with a long-term condition. Both areas are slightly lower than the percentage for

[38] This information is not available for Aberdeenshire.

Scotland for owner-occupier and private rented. However, a higher proportion live in the social rented sector compared to Scotland. This may indicate that both areas require additional stock of adapted/accessible social accommodation.

Key issues:

- The data shows there is a significant number of people living with a long-term condition who may require accessible and adapted properties. This is more prevalent for those living in the social rented sector. There are no significant variances between Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.

5.30 In Aberdeen, the council's new build homes will be built to their 'gold standard,' incorporating accessibility and dementia friendly design. A minimum 15% are being delivered as fully wheelchair accessible.

5.31 In Aberdeenshire, the design and specification for the new build programme embraces 'Passivhaus' principles with 15% of the properties suitable for particular needs clients and 10% fully wheelchair accessible.

Demand

5.32 In Aberdeen City, applications for accessible housing are assessed by the Housing Needs Assessment Team (HNAT), who award priority based on medical and social need. Table 5.7 provides a snapshot of the number of people on Aberdeen City Council's housing waiting list on 31st March annually.

Table 5.7: Number of people awaiting accessible housing in Aberdeen City on 31st March.

House type required	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Wheelchair	39	45	59	59	52
Level Access	74	81	79	109	104
Ground Floor	944	1,084	1,202	1,260	1,296
First floor[39]	183	170	171	186	192
Extra Bedroom	53	71	80	86	113

Source: Aberdeen City Council waiting list information (iWorld system) (2022)

5.33 Demand for wheelchair accessible properties increased between 2018 – 2020 then remained stable with approximately 50 applicants waiting. The demand for other types of accessible housing is also increasing, suggesting the need for more level access properties in the future. There has been a 47% rise in the number of applications where an extra bedroom recommendation has been made for medical or social housing need.

5.34 Comparable data is not available for Aberdeenshire over the same five-year period. However, a snapshot of current applications for wheelchair accessible

[39] First floor recommendation can often refer to houses where the installation of a stair lift can enhance accessibility of properties.

properties indicated 148 applicants with and a further 830 applicants requiring ground floor properties[40].

Key issues:

- The demand for accessible and/or adapted properties continues to increase. In Aberdeen there has been a 47% rise in the number of applications where additional space requirements due to illness or disability is required. Aberdeenshire has over 900 people waiting for wheelchair/ground floor accessible accommodation.

Accessible and Adapted Stock

5.35 Table 5.8 below shows the local authority stock that is suitable for people with particular needs.

Table 5.8: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council Particular Needs Stock.

	Very Sheltered Housing	Sheltered Housing	Ambulant Disabled	Wheelchair accessible	Other – specially adapted	Total
Aberdeen City	110	1,879	830	428	1,902[41]	5,039
Aberdeenshire	73	1.435	710	49	0	2,264
Total	**183**	**3,311**	**1,540**	**477**	**1,902**	**8,883**

Source: Scottish Government, Housing Statistics Annual S1B Returns [42](2021/22)

- In addition, Aberdeenshire Council reported that of 1,291 sheltered housing units, 9 are adapted for wheelchair use.
- Aberdeen City Council also report that 2,681 properties are fitted with a community alarm/telecare.

5.36 The Scottish House Condition Survey (SHCS) 2019 shows the percentage of dwellings with adaptations based on a sample survey of households. This showed approximately 14% of properties in Aberdeen City and 15% in Aberdeenshire were adapted, slightly lower than the estimate for Scotland which is 21%.

Table 5.9: Adapted stock by area

	Household Estimates (rounded)	Adaptations in Place as % of Housing Stock	Cases Surveyed	Estimated No. of Adapted Homes (rounded)
Aberdeen City	108,000	14%	248	15,000
Aberdeenshire	111,000	15%	245	16,000
Scotland	**2,457,000**	**21%**	**8,963**	**516,000**

Source: Scottish House Conditions Survey (2017-19) *Totals affected by rounding.

5.37 Table 5.10 below shows the estimate of adapted stock by tenure. In Aberdeen City, 10% and 11% in Aberdeenshire of owner-occupied properties are

[40] Snapshot of data taken March 2023.
[41] This figure includes former sheltered housing properties that have a hard-wired telecare system installed and operate as amenity housing.
[42] The S1B does not record this information for Registered Social Landlord stock.

adapted. This is lower than the Scotland figure of 17%. Both areas also had a lower proportion of adapted social housing compared to Scotland, with 27% and 25% respectively compared to 33%.

Table 5.10: Characteristics, tenure, and household attributes for adapted stock.

Local Authority	% Adapted	Characteristics		Tenure			Household type		
		House	Flat	Owner Occupier	Social Housing	Private Rented	Older	Family	Other
Aberdeen City	14%	12%	15%	10%	27%	*[43]	24%	6%	11%
Aberdeenshire	15%	13%	*[44]	11%	25%	24%	24%	12%	10%
Scotland	21%	17%	22%	17%	33%	15%	30%	12%	19%

Source: Scottish House Condition Survey Results (2017- 2019)

5.38 The SHCS also provided an indication of the number of households that report the need for adaptations for disabled occupants. In Aberdeen City, 4% required adaptation(s) from 4,000 households based on a sample of 244 cases. In Aberdeenshire, the figure equates to 3% of 3,000 households based on a sample of 243 cases. Both areas are therefore in line with the national figure of 3%.

Key issues:

- The overall proportion of adapted stock in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire is lower than the national figure. In both areas, social housing is the tenure with the highest proportion of adapted stock, although marginally so in Aberdeenshire as the private sector has a considerably higher proportion of adapted stock when compared to Scotland.
- Aside from this, the figures relating to characteristics, tenure and household attributes tend to fall below the national figure in both areas.

Adaptations

5.39 Adaptations play an important role in ensuring that people have housing that best suits their needs and allows them to maintain their independence and improve their health and wellbeing outcomes.

5.40 The responsibility for private and council house adaptations is delegated to the Integration Joint Boards. The Scottish Government manage Stage 3 adaptations funding for Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) properties.

5.41 The level of adaptation to the home can vary from minor to major. The definitions used throughout this document are shown in Table 5.11.

[43] This data is not reported for Aberdeen City.
[44] This data is not reported for Aberdeenshire.

Table 5.11: Definition used to describe minor and major adaptations.

Minor Adaptation	Major Adaptation
A minor adaption is one which is relatively inexpensive and may be fitted relatively easily and quickly, such as grab-rails.	Addresses complex needs and involves expensive, permanent structural changes to a person's home, such as widening doors for wheelchair access, provision of shower facilities, ground floor toilet or installation of a through floor lift.

Source: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council

5.42 Adaptations are a demand led service based on an assessment of needs undertaken by a qualified Occupational Therapist (OT).

5.43 Table 5.12 below shows the number of adaptations carried out in the social rented sector between 2017/18 and 2021/22. In both areas, the number of adaptations carried out fell significantly in 2020/21 reflecting the impact of delays caused by restrictions imposed due to the pandemic.

Table 5.12: Number of major and minor adaptations in social rented properties carried out between 2019 – 2022.

Landlord	Minor				
	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Aberdeen City	501	379	356	234	506
City RSLs	108	161	102	61	104
City Total	**609**	**540**	**458**	**295**	**610**
Aberdeenshire	727	639	574	442	726
Landlord	**Major**				
	2017/18	**2018/19**	**2019/20**	**2020/21**	**2021/22**
Aberdeen City	149	65	54	35	113
City RSLs	53	45	54	28	43
City Total	**202**	**110**	**108**	**63**	**156**
Aberdeenshire	141	97	146	50	121

Source: Aberdeen City Joint Delivery Action Plan (2021/22) and Aberdeenshire Council Information Team

5.44 Private sector adaptations are funded in accordance with the relevant Scheme of Assistance. Table 5.13 below shows the number of grants approved between 2017/18 and 2021/22.

Table 5.13: Scheme of Assistance – Disabled Adaptations, number of grants approved 2017/18 – 2021/22

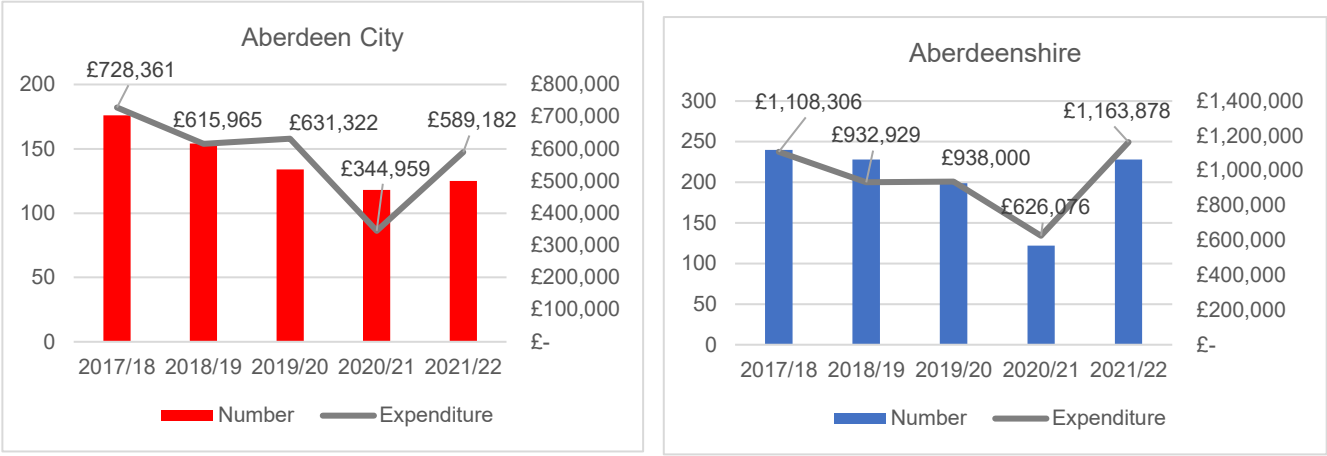
	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Aberdeen City	176	154	134	118	125
Aberdeenshire	240	228	199	122	228

Source: Housing statistics: Scheme of Assistance - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

5.45 Figure 5.1 below shows the number of private sector housing grant applications and associated expenditure over the period. In both areas there was a significant decrease in spending in 2020/21 which is likely to have been the result of the pandemic. Whilst the number of approvals during this time

remained similar in Aberdeen City, expenditure dropped by around 55% as work was unable to continue. In Aberdeenshire, the level of approvals and expenditure was also affected. Data for 2021/22 suggests that activity levels are beginning to return to pre-pandemic levels.

Figure 5.1: Number of applications for private sector grant in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire between 2017 – 2022 and associated funding levels.



Source: Housing statistics: Scheme of Assistance - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

5.46 Table 5.14 below shows the number of minor and major adaptations carried out in Aberdeen City where the owners or private tenants were supported by Aberdeen Care and Repair. This consists of 107 minor and 32 major adaptations that had been approved by OT services and supported by grant funding and a further 38 minor and 30 major adaptations funded by the owners/tenants themselves.

Table 5.14: Private Sector Adaptations supported by Care and Repair 2021/22 Aberdeen City

	Minor adaptations		Major adaptations	
	Grant funded[45]	**Self-funded[46]**	**Grant funded**	**Self-funded**
Aberdeen City	107	38	32	30

Source: Aberdeen Care and Repair (2022)

5.47 Care and Repair in Aberdeenshire is operated in-house by the Council's Private Sector Housing Team. Data from the team is reported within Table 5.14 above.

Key issues:

- The demand for adaptations continues to increase. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in a reduction in the number of adaptations in 2020/21. Demand is expected to reach pre-Covid levels in 2022/23.

[45] Adaptation that are funded through Scheme of Assistance where Care and Repair provide assistance included in Table 5.14.
[46] Adaptations where Care and Repair support individuals and no grant funding is provided.

Future Needs & Provision Required

5.48 Both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire have a higher proportion of people with long-term health conditions living in social housing than the national average, according to the Scottish Health Survey 2019. Despite this, according to the Scottish House Condition Survey both areas have a lower proportion of social adapted stock than Scotland and experience a similar trend across other tenures. Demand for social accessible/adapted stock has increased in Aberdeen City since 2018 and both areas experience high demand for ground-floor properties. Both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire will continue to commit to ensuring the identification of future needs and provision required through the process of the development of the Local Housing Strategy.

5.49 Both areas have new-build programmes and targets related to wheelchair and accessible/adapted properties designed to tackle this shortfall, and the number of adaptations being carried out is rising again following a drop during the pandemic. Both areas are continuing to progress towards a tenure-neutral approach.

Bariatric Conditions

5.50 The Scottish Health Survey monitors 'adult overweight and obesity' levels. The report published in 2021[47] indicated 59% of people in Aberdeen City were overweight including 23% who were considered obese. This compares with 70% reported as overweight including 33% considered obese in Aberdeenshire. In both areas, 4% were classified as 'morbidly obese'. This represents a significant proportion of the population whose health and accommodation needs may be impacted by their weight.

5.51 Bariatric conditions can result in a loss of mobility and the need for additional space standards and robust fittings to enable people to live independently.

5.52 A recent survey of OT clients identified 10 individuals living in Aberdeen City and 26 in Aberdeenshire City who are experiencing challenges in their current environment.

5.53 Two new build 'bariatric standard' properties were delivered as part of the Aberdeen City Council house new-build programme with additional space standards, robust fittings, and accessibility features. An evaluation reported improved standards of independence with a reduced requirement for care and support as a result of the design.

5.54 Aberdeenshire Council has undertaken a survey and identified an increased population with bariatric needs. There are no current plans for specialist accommodation, but this will now be considered within future plans.

[47] Scottish Health Survey data for 2016 - 2019.

Key issues:

- The design of bariatric style accommodation can make a significant impact on a person's wellbeing and ability to lead a full life. The impact on delayed hospital discharge can be significant if appropriate accommodation cannot be found.
- Adaptation of existing properties can prove costly so the need for purpose-built accommodation needs to be evidenced by continuing to monitor demand.
- Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire have determined an additional 10 and 26 units respectively are required for people living with bariatric conditions.

Wheelchair Housing

5.55 This section looks specifically at the need for wheelchair accessible properties, as not all housing designed or adapted to meet the Housing for Varying Need Standard may be suitable. Please also see Section 5.2, 'Accessible and Adapted Housing.'

Definition	
Wheelchair	Housing for Varying Needs (HfVN) guidance states that wheelchair accessible housing "is for people who use a wheelchair most or all of the time." The home will be level access throughout, have space for a wheelchair to circulate and access all rooms, a kitchen and bathroom that suits the occupant's particular needs and fittings and services that are within reach and easy to use.

National Policies

5.56 In addition to those mentioned previously, policy and research of specific relevance to wheelchair accessibility are as follows:

- National Health and Wellbeing Outcome 2: People, including those with disabilities or long-term conditions, or who are frail, are able to live, as far as reasonably practicable, independently and at home or in a homely setting in their community.
- A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People: delivery plan, 2016-2021; progress report 2021.
- Lifetime Homes Standards are ordinary homes designed to incorporate 16 Design Criteria that can be universally applied to new homes at minimal cost.
- Scottish Government MHDGN 2019/02: Guidance for Setting of Local Housing Strategy targets to support the delivery of more wheelchair accessible housing.
- Scottish Government MHDGN 2022/01: Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) Guidance to support the delivery of wheelchair accessible housing.
- Housing for Varying Needs Design Guide, 1998.
- Still Minding the Step? A new estimation of wheelchair users in Scotland, Horizon Housing, 2018.

Local Policies and Strategies

5.57 National guidance indicates that local authorities are required to set a realistic target within their Local Housing Strategy for the delivery of wheelchair accessible housing across all tenures and to report on these annually.

5.58 Table 5.15 below show the wheelchair accessible housing targets set by Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council.

Table 5.15: Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) accessible and wheelchair targets for Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council.

Aberdeen City	The Strategic Housing Investment Plan has a requirement that a minimum of 15% of all affordable housing should be provided as wheelchair accessible. Wheelchair accessible homes means homes suitable for wheelchair users to live in and should as a minimum comply with the design criteria indicated as a 'basic' requirement for wheelchair users, as outlined in Housing for Varying Needs and should include the design criteria indicated as 'desirable' (column 'D' in 'Summary of Design Criteria') wherever possible.
Aberdeenshire	As part of the target of 15% of all new affordable homes to be developed as particular needs housing, 10% is required to be wheelchair accessible. 10% of all new housing developments in the private sector on developments of 20 or more units to be wheelchair accessible is encouraged.

Source: Strategic Housing Investment Plan

Property Needs

5.59 To ensure that properties meet the needs of wheelchair users, features should include low level appliances, wider door openings, barrier free bathroom/shower access, outside space with wider entrance and suitable surfaces and stair rails.

Suitable for

5.60 Wheelchair users and their families, including families with disabled children and young adults, disabled parents with dependent children, adults who acquire a disability, either suddenly or due to an accident or illness or through degenerative illness or increased frailty among older people.

Evidence

5.61 The needs of wheelchair users may vary and can include people who use a wheelchair all the time, indoors only or outdoors only.

5.62 Table 5.16 below shows the number of local authority wheelchair adapted homes in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire.

Table 5.16: Council Owned Wheelchair Housing, 2021/22.

	All Self-Contained Council Housing	Wheelchair Housing	% of Self-Contained Council Housing
Aberdeen City	22,402	428	1.9%
Aberdeenshire	13,803	49	0.4%
Scotland	**600,044**	**6,284**	**1%**

Source: Scottish Housing Regulator, local authority stock as of 31 March 2022.

5.63 Aberdeen City currently have almost double the proportion of wheelchair housing within their stock compared to the figures for Scotland as a whole,

however this is still only 1.9% of their entire stock. In comparison, Aberdeenshire currently has a much lower proportion of wheelchair housing.

Table 5.17: Registered Social Landlord Wheelchair Adapted Housing, 2022.

	Total Properties	Wheelchair Adapted	% Adapted Stock
Blackwood	*	42	*
Castlehill	2,124	23	1.1%
Grampian	*	*	*
Hanover	378	4	1.1%
Hillcrest	616	0	0%
Langstane	2,368	24	1%
LAR	146	7	4.8%
Osprey	*	*	*
Places for People	134	2	1.5%
Sanctuary	*	*	*
Total	**5,766**	**102**	**1.8%**

Source: Registered Social Landlords, Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire *data not provided/available.

5.64 Table 5.17 above shows that most RSLs operating in both areas provide a similar proportion of wheelchair housing to the national figure, with some variations. LAR, list 4.8% of their stock as wheelchair adapted, but as their overall stock numbers are relatively low this only translates to seven properties. Hillcrest currently has no wheelchair adapted stock, but some will be delivered in their new build programme. Grampian and Sanctuary were unable to provide information.

Private Sector

5.65 Data is not currently published on the number of fully wheelchair accessible properties in the private sector. Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council are considering how this gap in understanding can be addressed. The *'Still Minding the Step'* report by Horizon Housing suggests that there is little evidence of private developers taking steps to meet the demand of wheelchair users in their housing provision. The report also highlights that the Scottish Government does not collect or publish data in this area, so obtaining an accurate estimate of the number of wheelchair accessible properties in the private sector is difficult.

Key issues:

- Wheelchair accessible targets are set within the SHIP. Aberdeen City has a target in relation to affordable housing and is developing a private sector target. Aberdeenshire has a cross-tenure target.
- It has not been possible to determine an accurate measure of demand or provision, particularly for the private sector. A national dataset would assist in developing future targets.

Gaps/Shortfalls in Provision

5.66 An indication of need for wheelchair accessible housing can be obtained through a council house waiting list held by each local authority. Aberdeen City has 52 applicants requiring wheelchair accessible properties and Aberdeenshire have 148 applicants waiting for wheelchair accessible properties[48].

5.67 Horizon Housing's report '*Still minding the step?' A new estimation of the housing needs of wheelchair users*, 2018 identified a "massive shortfall" and suggests a methodology to estimate unmet need.

5.68 The report analyses data from the Scottish Household Survey, 2015 which indicates that there were around 87,340 households with a wheelchair user in Scotland (3.6% of all households). To achieve a more robust estimate it considered the 'Mind the Step' calculation using the most recent accurate dataset; the English Housing Survey (EHS). These percentages were applied to the number of Scottish households and the calculations provided an estimate of the unmet housing need for wheelchair users in Scotland to be 17,226, (19.1% of all wheelchair user households). It also estimates that the number of wheelchair users will rise to around 80% by 2024.

5.69 The EHS calculation in 2017/18, estimated that:

- 0.6% of all English households includes a person who uses a wheelchair all the time.
- 0.3% of all English households includes a person who uses a wheelchair indoors only.
- 2.6% of all English households includes a person who uses a wheelchair outdoors only.

5.70 To provide an estimate of the number of wheelchair user households in the local area, the EHS proportions were applied to the National Records for Scotland (NRS) projections of all households in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire for 2018, 107,586 and 111,156, respectively. These calculations are outlined in Table 5.18 below and the results are rounded for display purposes.

[48] Data given on 31 March 2022.

Table 5.18: Estimate of wheelchair user households in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire based on 2018 household projections.

Steps	Calculation	Aberdeen City	Aberdeenshire
Calculate the number of households using a wheelchair all the time	Assume EHS 2017/18 ratio, 0.6% of all Aberdeenshire households	646 households	667 households
Calculate the number of indoor only user households	Assume EHS 2017/18 ratio, 0.3% of all Aberdeenshire households	323 households	333 households
Calculate the number of outdoor only user households	Assume EHS 2017/18 ratio, 2.6% of all Aberdeenshire households	2,797 households	2,890 households
Estimated total of wheelchair user households		**3,766**	**3,890**

Source: Adapted from Horizon Housing Still Minding the Step? A new estimation of the housing needs of wheelchair users in Scotland.

5.71 This estimates that there are 3,766 wheelchair user households in Aberdeen City and 3,890 in Aberdeenshire.

5.72 The Horizon report also provided estimates of unmet housing need across the whole of Scotland. Table 5.19 shows the outcome of applying this methodology to provide an estimate of unmet need in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.

Table 5.19: Estimate of unmet housing need among wheelchair user households in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, based on 2018 household projections.

Household Type	Estimated Households, 2018, as per table 5.18	Calculation	Households with Unmet Need
Number of households using a wheelchair all the time	Aberdeen City - 646 Aberdeenshire - 667	Assume 19% (all of those in EHS requiring adaptations and accommodation unsuitable)	Aberdeen City - 123 Aberdeenshire - 127
Number of indoor only user households	Aberdeen City - 323 Aberdeenshire - 333	Assume 25.6% (all of those in SHS requiring adaptations and accommodation unsuitable)	Aberdeen City - 83 Aberdeenshire - 85
Number of outdoor only user households	Aberdeen City – 2,797 Aberdeenshire – 2,890	Assume 19% (all of those in EHS requiring adaptations and accommodation unsuitable)	Aberdeen City - 531 Aberdeenshire - 549
Estimated unmet housing need among wheelchair user households in 2018			**Aberdeen City - 737 Aberdeenshire - 761**

Source: Adapted from Horizon Housing Still Minding the Step? A new estimation of the housing needs of wheelchair users in Scotland.

5.73 The results show there was an estimated 737 wheelchair households with an unmet housing need in Aberdeen City and 761 in Aberdeenshire.

5.74 Table 5.20 below uses the estimates for the number of wheelchair user households to project the need for wheelchair accessible housing, assuming 25.6% of this estimate as per Horizon Housing's methodology. The percentage for both areas is in line with the percentage for Scotland.

Table 5.20: Estimation of the number of households requiring wheelchair housing.

	Household nos.	Wheelchair user household nos.	Households requiring wheelchair housing nos.	All households requiring wheelchair housing %
Aberdeen City	107,586	3,766	964	0.9%
Aberdeenshire	111,156	3,890	996	0.9%
Scotland	**2,447,275**	**89,182**	**23,819**	**1.0%**

Source: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council

Key issues:

- Using the methodology of the 'Still Minding the Step?' report, it is estimated that there are 3,766 and 3,890 wheelchair households in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire respectively, and this is projected to increase alongside household growth and an ageing population.
- It is estimated that 737 wheelchair households in Aberdeen City have an unmet housing need, with this figure being slightly higher in Aberdeenshire at 767. These figures will likely increase alongside the total number of wheelchair households.
- The estimation of the number of all households requiring wheelchair accommodation is 0.9% in both areas, which is broadly in line with the percentage for Scotland as a whole.

5.75 Aberdeen City aims to meet the needs of those on the housing waiting list for wheelchair accessible housing through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme.

5.76 Based on the current 15% target there is the potential to provide 424 specialist provision properties through the SHIP. This includes a commitment for 234 wheelchair accessible properties and 34 specialist provision properties for people who require supported accommodation.

5.77 Aberdeen City Council has five new build developments in progress that will deliver at least 15% of homes that are fully wheelchair accessible. Table 5.21 below shows the composition of the proposed sites and highlights that the target will be met or exceeded with 24% of properties being wheelchair accessible.

Table 5.21: Aberdeen City Council new build programme, wheelchair accessible properties, 2022.

		Flats		Cottage Flats		Houses		Wheelchair Accessible	
Site Total		1 bed	3 bed	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	Total	%
Total	952	92	32	10	38	25	34	231	24

Source: Aberdeen City Council Strategic Housing Investment Plan (2023 – 2028)

5.78 Table 5.22 below shows the new build programme of several RSLs operating with Aberdeen City. Based on these projections, the majority of the RSLs will fall below the agreed target of 15%, with only Hillcrest coming close to this target currently.

Table 5.22: Registered Social Landlords in Aberdeen, new build programme, wheelchair accessible properties, 2022

	Total Units	Wheelchair Accessible	% Wheelchair Accessible
Grampian Housing	150	0	0%
Hillcrest Homes	259	30	11.6%
Osprey Housing	17	0	0%
Places for People Scotland	528	6	1.1%
Sanctuary Scotland	268	3	1.1%
Total	**1,222**	**39**	**3.2%**

Source: Aberdeen City Council Strategic Housing Investment Plan (2023 – 2028)

5.79 Aberdeenshire has a target of 15% of all new affordable homes to be developed as particular needs housing, and 10% of this number is required to be wheelchair accessible. Table 5.23 shows the breakdown of housing built for particular needs and wheelchair accessible units since the introduction of the targets in Aberdeenshire in 2019.

Table 5.23: Number of affordable housing units built for particular needs in Aberdeenshire.

	All Affordable Units	Particular Needs		Wheelchair	
		Number of Units	%	Number of Units	%
2020/2021	161	43	27	10	6
2021/2022	209	69	33	22	11

Source: Aberdeenshire Council Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2023-2028

5.80 Table 5.24 shows new build housing for particular needs clients and wheelchair accessible housing by housing tenure in Aberdeenshire. A detailed breakdown by administration area is available in the SHIP (2023-2028).

Table 5.24: New build housing for particular needs in Aberdeenshire

2023/2028	Total number of units	Particular Needs (includes wheelchair accessible properties)	Wheelchair Accessible	% Particular Needs (includes wheelchair accessible properties)	% Wheelchair Accessible
Council - Social Rent	692	231	156	33%	23%
RSL - Social Rent	1,217	394	173	32%	14%
RSL - Mid Market Rent	250	48	2	19%	1%
RSL Low Cost Shared Equity	59	4	0	7%	0%
Aberdeenshire Low-Cost Shared Equity	177	0	0	0%	0%
Total	**2,395**	**677**	**331**		
%		28%	49%	**wheelchair accessible as % of particular needs**	
%			14%	**wheelchair accessible as % of total number of units**	

Source: Aberdeenshire Council Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2023-2028

Future Need and Provision Required.

5.81 The estimates of unmet need identified using the methodology described above indicate an ongoing requirement for additional wheelchair accessible units. This information will be considered when setting supply targets for accessible housing to ensure the needs of wheelchair user households are considered at design stage. Additionally, the need for wheelchair housing is likely to increase with the ageing population and wheelchair targets will require to be reviewed reflecting this and ensuring demand can be met. Both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire will consider this as part of the Local Housing Strategy development process.

5.82 Both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council support the Scottish Government's approach as set out in the National Planning Framework 4 'NPF4 position statement' to work with planners and private developers to increase the delivery of all-tenure wheelchair accessible housing targets. However, challenges remain around the recording and monitoring of this data.

Further engagement is required to ensure that there is a robust policy and database in place to implement and monitor this effectively.

Non-permanent and transitional housing

5.83 Non-permanent and transitional housing plays a crucial role in meeting an array of housing needs for transient populations and those in crisis requiring temporary housing.

Definitions	
Temporary accommodation	In the context of homelessness, temporary accommodation is any accommodation used between the point that an applicant makes a homelessness application and the point at which the local authority discharges its homelessness duty. The forms of temporary accommodation include local authority and Registered Social Landlord dwellings; hostels; bed & breakfast accommodation; refuges; bridging hotels and private sector leased accommodation.
Student accommodation	This accommodation is specifically designed for students at a college, university, or teaching school. Student housing can be varied but includes university-provided halls of residence; private purpose-built student accommodation; and shared properties in the private rented sector, often in the form of licensed Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). It is important to note that not all private rented student accommodation will be non-permanent housing.
Intermediate care housing	Housing provided in partnership with Health & Social Care Partnerships to provide accommodation and care services to those who are awaiting appropriate care package, an offer of suitable housing, awaiting completion of adaptations in their own home, needing respite care, to provide ongoing care or rehabilitation where other facility is no longer appropriate, or to enable a period of assessment for an individual's level of care and support needs in permanent housing.

National Policies

5.84 Key national and local policies in relation to non-permanent and transitional housing include:

- Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.
- Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003.
- The Homeless Persons (Provision of Non-permanent Accommodation) (Scotland) Regulations 2010.
- The Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Order 2014
- Code of Guidance on Homelessness (2019).
- Ending Homelessness Together: annual report 2021.
- Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation Statutory Guidance for Scottish Local Authorities.
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2006.
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

- Youth Homelessness Prevention Pathway.
- Equally Safe: Scotland's strategy to eradicate violence against women.
- Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018.
- UK Refugee Resettlement: Policy Guidance.
- Afghanistan Resettlement and Immigration Policy Statement (publishing.service.gov.uk).
- A Scottish Housing Guide for People Leaving the Armed Forces & ex-Service Personnel (www.gov.scot).
- Scottish Quality Standards – Housing Advice, Information and Support for people in and leaving Prison (SHORE).
- Domestic Abuse, Housing and Homelessness in Scotland: An Evidence Review.
- Refuges for Women, Children and Young People in Scotland.
- Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC).
- Domestic Abuse (Protection) Act 2021.

5.85 **Local Policies and Strategies**

- Aberdeen City Council, Domestic Abuse Council Housing Policy 2021.
- Aberdeenshire Council, Domestic Abuse Council Housing Guidance 2022.

Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP)

5.86 Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council have each developed a five-year Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP), working with local partners to successfully rehouse people experiencing homelessness. RRTPs link into Local Housing Strategies and Strategic Housing Investment Plans and provide an opportunity to review how permanent and settled housing options are provided.

5.87 In both areas there is a focus on the provision of settled, mainstream housing as quickly as possible. Where temporary accommodation is needed, the optimum type provided is mainstream, furnished and within the community. Time spent in any form of temporary accommodation is kept to a minimum, with as few transitions as possible. The first response for people with complex needs and multiple disadvantages is Housing First.

5.88 The overarching aims include reducing homeless demand, reducing the homeless journey, closing the gap between supply and demand, and reducing the use of temporary accommodation.

Property Needs

5.89 Property needs include single person accommodation, multiple occupation, good quality temporary accommodation. Other considerations are shown in Table 5.25 below:

Table 5.25: Type of need: Temporary and Permanent Accommodation.

Type of Need	Temporary and Permanent Accommodation
Land needs	• Close to University and College campus sites • Close to city centre sites
Location	• Close to local services • Close to family and support needs • Close to education – school, college, or university • On a bus route
Physical	• Safe and secure • Access to individual cooking and washing facilities • Able to have pets • Single person accommodation • Multiple occupation properties
Access and Support	• Affordable accommodation • Housing support • Housing options • Choice of accommodation and area • Benefit advice • Income maximisation • Information on financial and digital inclusion • Assisting to reduce fuel poverty • Access to employment advice

Source: Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council

Suitable for

5.90 Non-permanent housing in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire must be suitable for various groups, including students; migrant workers; asylum seekers and refugees; households experiencing homelessness; people fleeing or at risk of domestic abuse; care leavers; ex-offenders and those from the armed forces communities.

Care and Support Needs

5.91 People accessing this type of accommodation may have care and support needs that require a range of inputs including key workers, community psychiatric nurse, psychiatrist, substance misuse/addictions worker, social care staff, third sector partners, women's refuge staff, criminal justice teams or youth workers.

Evidence

5.92 People may require short-term or temporary accommodation for a range of different reasons. The sections below set out the background and data for each of the groups mentioned above.

Homelessness

5.93 In considering the needs of those experiencing homelessness, short-term temporary accommodation needs to be distinguished from long-term settled accommodation.

5.94 Aberdeen City Council currently manages over 350 temporary furnished flats around the city for people experiencing homelessness, including an accommodation unit that has 20 self-contained bedsits and shared facilities.

5.95 Aberdeenshire Council has 167 temporary furnished properties (as of September 2022), the majority of these are fully furnished. There are also 19 two bed properties used for shared temporary accommodation including exclusive use of bedroom and shared use of kitchen, living room and bathroom. There are two accommodation units, in Peterhead and Inverurie, that provide 20 ensuite rooms with access to communal facilities.

Homeless presentations

5.96 Table 5.26 below shows the number of homeless applications made between 2017/18 and 2021/22. The number of live homelessness cases is shown in Table 5.27

Table 5.26: Homeless applications 2017/18 - 2021/22.

Area	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Change 2017/18 to 2021/22 (%)
Aberdeen City	1,709	1,627	1,487	1,463	1,405	-17.7%
Aberdeenshire	1,085	1,157	1,229	897	895	-17.5%
Scotland	**35,559**	**36,778**	**37,060**	**34,286**	**35,230**	**-0.9%**

Source: Scottish Government (2022) Homelessness applications by local authority

5.97 In Scotland, the number of homeless applications reduced by 0.9% between 2017/18 and 2021/22. Over the same period Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire saw a reduction of 17.7% and 17.5% respectively. There was a significant reduction in Aberdeenshire and Scotland in 2020/22.

5.98 Table 5.27 below shows that in line with the reduction in applications, cases fell from 663 in 2017/18 to 364 in 2021/22, a 45.1% reduction in Aberdeen City, and similarly from 591 to 287, a 51.4% reduction in Aberdeenshire over the same period. In comparison, the number of live cases across Scotland increased by 21% over this time, rising from 21,633 to 26,166.

Table 5.27: Live homelessness cases 2017/18 - 2021/22.

Area	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Change 2017/18 to 2021/22 (%)
Aberdeen City	663	610	459	418	364	-45.1%
Aberdeenshire	591	514	470	299	287	-51.4%
Scotland	**21,633**	**21,571**	**22,906**	**24,834**	**26,166**	**21%**

Source: Scottish Government (2022) Number of live homelessness cases

5.99 The reduction in live homeless applications and homeless cases can be attributed to the prevention activity that takes place. The focus for Aberdeen City Council has been early intervention and ensuring appropriate support is available to everyone in temporary accommodation. The Housing and Support Officer role was created in March 2022 to further assist in providing this support.

5.100 Aberdeenshire Council has concentrated on reducing the homeless backlog as a key element of the RRTP. The focus has been on switching temporary accommodation to permanent accommodation where suitable and addressing housing needs of those who have had homeless priority the longest.

5.101 Evidence suggests people experiencing homelessness in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire are more likely to be single, male, and disproportionately more likely to experience poor mental and/or physical health. In estimating the housing needs, the complex interdependencies that may contribute to their housing situation need to be considered.

Table 5.28: Aberdeen City Council - breakdown of gender of single people presenting as homeless from 2017/18 – 2021/22.

		2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Total Applications		1709	1627	1487	1463	1405
Single Person	Male	890	793	709	673	639
	Female	396	404	343	356	363
	All	1286	1197	1052	1029	1002
% Single Person		75%	74%	71%	70%	71%

Source: Aberdeen City Council, Homelessness Service (2022)

5.102 Table 5.28 above shows the high proportion of single male applications received. Similarly, in Aberdeenshire, 67% of open homeless cases in Aberdeenshire in June 2022 were single adult households with no children.

5.103 Additionally, Table 5.29 below shows that in 2020/21 nearly 60% of homeless presentations in Aberdeen City were from males, with presentations predominately being from those aged 26-59 years. Females make up a higher proportion of presentations from those aged 25 years and under.

Table 5.29: Aberdeen City Council - breakdown of age and gender of people presenting as homeless in 2020/21.

Age	Female	%	Male	%	Total	Total (%)
16-17	50	65.8%	26	34.2%	76	5.2%
18-25	205	47.8%	224	52.2%	429	29.3%
26-59	325	35.6%	588	64.4%	913	62.4%
60+	18	39.1%	25	60.9%	46	3.1%
Total	**598**	**40.8%**	**866**	**59.2%**	**1464**	**100%**

Source: Aberdeen City Council, Homelessness Service (2022)

5.104 In Aberdeenshire, there was a more even split between male and female homeless presentations across the age groups as seen in Table 5.30 below.

Table 5.30: Aberdeenshire Council - breakdown of age and gender of people presenting as homeless in 2020/21.

Age	Female	%	Male	%	Total	Total (%)
16-17	20	46.5%	23	53.5%	43	4.8%
18-25	128	52.0%	118	48.0%	246	27.4%
26-59	259	45.8%	307	54.2%	566	63.0%
60+	19	43.2%	25	56.8%	44	4.9%
Total	**426**	**47.4%**	**473**	**52.6%**	**899**	**100.0%**

Source: Aberdeenshire Council, Homelessness Service (2022)

5.105 Table 5.31 below indicates the average number of days homeless applicants spent in temporary accommodation between 2017/18 and 2021/22. Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire follow a similar pattern in reducing figures to almost 100 days, which is roughly half the national figure. A small increase in Aberdeen City in 2020/21 could relate to emergency housing that was required during the pandemic. In Scotland, the number of days has continued to increase.

Table 5.31: Average total time (days) spent in temporary accommodation 2018-2022.

Area	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Change 2018 – 2022 (%)
Aberdeen City	144	138	131	140	101	-29.8%
Aberdeenshire	172	154	147	133	105	-38.9%
Scotland	**175**	**183**	**187**	**204**	**207**	**18.3%**

Source: Scottish Government (2022) Average total time (days) spent in temporary accommodation for cases that closed, by local authority

5.106 Table 5.32 shows the number of placements by type of accommodation in 2020/21 and 2021/22. The highest proportion placements in both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire were in local authority accommodation, with 67.3% and 59.3% respectively in 2020/21 and 76% and 60% in 2021/22. These figures are high compared with the national picture of 32.7% in 2020/21 and 33% in 2021/22.

5.107 Local authority owned hostels accounted for 20.3% of placements in Aberdeen City in 2020/21 this decreased to 18% in 2021/22. Whereas in Aberdeenshire, this accounted for 27.1% of placements in 2020/21 increasing to 34% in 2021/22.

5.108 The increase in Aberdeenshire can be attributed to a review of hostel use carried out by the local authority. Hostels are often used as an initial placement for a short period of time (less than 7 days), before people move on to self-contained, shared temporary or permanent accommodation. Data for both areas is higher than the national average (14.3% in 2020/21, 14% in 2021/22).

5.109 Placements in bed and breakfast accommodation was significantly lower in Aberdeen (12% in 2020/21 and 5% in 2021/22) and Aberdeenshire (7% in 2020/21 and 1% in 2021/22) compared with national figures (24% in 2020/21 and 22% in 2021/22).

Table 5.32: Temporary Accommodation Placements 2020/21 and 2021/22.

Type	Aberdeen City		%	Aberdeenshire		%	Scotland		%
	2020/21	2021/22	Change	2020/21	2021/22	Change	2020/21	2021/22	Change
LA	730	830	13.7%	635	475	-25.2%	11,670	12,905	10.6%
RSL	0	0	0	20	15	-25%	2,890	3,095	7.1%
Hostel – LA owned	220	200	-9.1%	290	265	-8.6%	5,110	5,435	6.4%
Hostel – RSL	0	0	0	0	5		1,455	1,265	-13.1%
Hostel – Other	0	0	0	35	20	-42.9%	1,905	2,385	25.2%
B&B	130	55	-57.7%	75	5	-93.3%	8,710	8,680	-0.3%
Women's Refuge	0	0	0	0	0	0	255	240	-5.9%
Private Sector Lease	5	0	-100%	0	0	0	1,320	1,445	9.5%
Other placed by local authority	0	0	0	20	5	-75%	2,345	3,890	65.9%
Total	**1,085**	**1,085**	**0%**	**1,070**	**790**	**-26.2%**	**35, 660**	**39,340**	**10.3%**

Source: Scottish Government (2022), Number of Placements by type of accommodation by local authority and type of accommodation by local authority 2021/22

5.110 Data for 2021/22 shows there has been a further decline in the use of bed and breakfast accommodation. In Aberdeen City there were 55 placements and 5 in Aberdeenshire, a decrease of 57.7% in Aberdeen City and 93.3% in Aberdeenshire. This sharp decrease in Aberdeenshire is a direct result of the RRTP and unsuitable temporary accommodation order. In Aberdeen City, there has been a significant reduction in the average homeless journey time in recent years which has resulted in less demand for temporary accommodation.

Table 5.33: Households in temporary accommodation 2018-2022.

Area	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Change 2018-2022 (%)
Aberdeen City	436	394	298	283	264	-39.4%
Aberdeenshire	393	373	286	184	122	-69%
Scotland	**10,933**	**10,989**	**11,665**	**13,359**	**13,945**	**27.5%**

Source: Scottish Government (2022) Households in temporary accommodation as of 31 March, by local authority

5.111 Data below from the Aberdeen City Joint Delivery Action Plan shows performance in relation to the strategic outcomes identified in the Aberdeen City Local Housing Strategy 2018 – 2023 during the reporting period 2018/19 to 2021/22 (baseline figures in brackets):

- The percentage of homeless assessments completed in 21 days has reduced from 99.4% in 2018/19 to 94%. (97%)
- The average homeless journey time in days has reduced from 175 days in 2018 to 105 days in 2021. (168 days)
- The average time in days between support referral and support assessment was not reported in year one but has improved, with a reduction from 39.2 days in 2019/2049 to 13.9 days in 2021/22. (38.3 days)
- Repeat homelessness applications (within 12 months) has reduced from 80 (6.1%) in 2018/19 to 44 (3.6%) in 2020/21. (5.08%)
- The percentage of homeless tenancies sustained for more than one year has remained relatively stable over the period and was 86.8% in 2021/22. (92.7%)

5.112 Data from Aberdeenshire Council shows:

- The percentage of homeless assessment decisions made within 28 days[50] reduced from 87% in 2019/20 to 80% in 2021/22 but is currently at 91% for 2022. (YTD)
- The average overall homeless journey time reported to the Scottish Government was 95 days in 2022, reduced from 157 days in 2018.
- Repeat homelessness applications (within 12 months) has reduced from 45 (5.5%) in 2018/19 to 25 (3.3%) in 2020/21.
- The percentage of homeless tenancies sustained for more than one year has remained stable. The figure was 86.8% in 2018 and has risen slightly to 87.4% in 2021/22.

[49] Data from 2018/19 is not available as the methodology for calculating this changed.
[50] Aberdeenshire Council monitor the % of decisions made within 28 days, rather than the 21 days used by Aberdeen City.

Key issues:

- Whilst nationally there has been an increase in homeless applications, there has been a decline in figures across the North-East. There has also been a corresponding reduction in live homelessness cases throughout the region.
- The number of people and length of time spent in temporary accommodation has decreased in both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.
- Those who may be at a higher risk of homelessness include young single males, prison leavers, care experienced young people and people experiencing domestic abuse. However, in Aberdeen, the number homeless presentations in 2020/21 of females in 16 -17 years old age group was almost double that compared with males in the same age group.

Future Provision

5.113 Aberdeen City Council is in the process of developing a Temporary Accommodation Strategy which aims to ensure that temporary accommodation provision can sufficiently meet the levels of demand in the city. The strategy will outline several strategic objectives to be progressed between 2023-2028 which will help to ease the pressure on temporary accommodation stock and ensure better outcomes for those experiencing homelessness. This will be achieved through a combination of measures, such as acquiring new stock, improving turnover rates of existing stock and utilising support services where possible.

5.114 In Aberdeenshire Council, reviews of temporary accommodation provision and the Unsuitable Accommodation Order will continue to meet ongoing demand. Aberdeenshire Council are satisfied that current demand can be met but future demand is more difficult to determine. For example, increased homeless presentations that might arise from Ukrainian host placements ending, changes to legislation including the introduction of Homeless Prevention duty, impact of suspension of local connection etc may cause an impact.

Housing First

5.115 In 2017/18 Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire were jointly named as one of five city pathfinders set up across Scotland to begin delivering Housing First to people experiencing homelessness with multiple and complex needs. The Aberdeen City and Shire Consortium, made up of Aberdeen Cyrenians, Aberdeen Foyer, Turning Point Scotland, Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council set a target to provide 120 housing first tenancies across both local authorities by 31 March 2021.

5.116 In year one, 31 tenancies were provided across the area, following by a further 56 in year two. The number of tenancies achieved over the two years

period was 27% short of the target. Of the 87 tenancies provided, 61 (70%) people secured a local authority tenancy, 19 (22%) a RSL tenancy and 7 people (8%) accessed private rented accommodation.

5.117 Of those individuals originally identified as part of the pathfinder, 59 were given permanent tenancies (69%). Since then, 41 individuals have remained in their tenancy and 18 have terminated.

5.118 Since 2017 in Aberdeenshire, 28 pathfinder tenancies were provided. In 2021, 31 pathfinder cases transferred to the Council's internal Housing First Service. Five individuals ended their support.

5.119 Between April 2021 to September 2021, 54 new Housing First tenancies were created in Aberdeenshire. The scheme is supporting 78 open live Housing First clients and has a further 34 clients in the step down and stood down phases. Sadly, there have been 4 deaths within the programme.

5.120 In the Aberdeenshire Council, Housing First, 2022 briefing report for clients supported via the Housing First Scheme, tenancy sustainment was recorded at 87%.

Key issues:

- Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire have each developed a five-year Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) working with local partners to successfully rehouse people experiencing homelessness.
- The Aberdeen City and Shire Consortium set a target to provide 120 Housing First tenancies across both local authorities by 31 March 2021. A total of 87 were created over the two years period from 2020, 33 (27%) short of the targeted total.
- In Aberdeen City, 69% are still supported in permanent tenancies, and 31% have had their tenancies terminated. In Aberdeenshire, tenancy sustainment was recorded at 87%.

Youth Homelessness

5.121 Table 5.34 below shows that youth homelessness has decreased in Scotland, as applications have reduced by 5.6% since 2017/18. There has been a significant decrease of 27% in homeless applications from young people in Aberdeen City and 29.7% in Aberdeenshire, which is much higher than the national figure.

Table 5.34: Youth homelessness applications 2018-2021.

Area	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22*	Change 2017/18 – 2021/22 (%)
Aberdeen City	523	457	431	462	382	-27%
Aberdeenshire	340	351	348	260	239	-29.7%
Scotland	**9,029**	**8,934**	**8,774**	**8,525**	**N/A**	**-5.6%**

Source: Scottish Government (2021) Youth Homelessness 2020-2021; 2021/22 data sourced from local authorities, no national figure available

5.122 Despite the reductions shown above, data from 2020/21[51] shows that youth homelessness continues to be an ongoing issue. Youth homelessness per 1,000 population sets the national average at 12.4. In Aberdeen City, the figure is higher at 14.3 per 1,000 population, whereas in Aberdeenshire, the figure is lower at 9.8 per 1,000 population.

5.123 Third sector organisations, such as Aberdeen Foyer, are commissioned to provide training, counselling, employment support and health improvement initiatives to young people at risk of homelessness. As well as providing support services, they provide 27 self-contained furnished accommodation available to let to people in Aberdeen City aged 16-25 who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

5.124 Future provision for youth homelessness should be considered within the wider supply of temporary of accommodation, however the trends indicate a potential increase in cases in the Northeast so both accommodation and support needs should be considered when allocating temporary accommodation.

5.125 A recent survey from the National Unions for Students (NUS)[52] indicated that 12% of students in Scotland had experienced homelessness prior to or during their studies, which may be contributing to the rise in youth homeless numbers in Aberdeen, given the proximity to the University of Aberdeen, Robert Gordon University and Northeast Scotland College.

Key issues:

- Youth homelessness applications decreased in Scotland by 5.6% between 2017/18 and 2020/21. Locally, there has been a significant decrease of 27% in Aberdeen City and 29.7% in Aberdeenshire from 2017/18 to 2021/22.
- A recent survey from NUS indicated that 12% of students in Scotland had experienced homelessness prior to or during their studies.

[51] Most recent data from the Scottish Government only reflects up to 20/21.
[52] Broke: How Scotland is failing its students.

Care Experienced Young People (CEYP)

5.126 Aberdeen City Council agreed a new protocol aimed at providing clear guidelines for preventing homelessness and achieving positive housing outcomes for care experienced young people (CEYP). in 2019/20. Improved joint working resulted in a 29% reduction in homeless applications among this group during 2019/20 and a further 31% reduction in 2020/21. Since the introduction of the protocol and the start of transitioning towards rapid rehousing, the number of applicants has halved; 20 applications were received in 2020/21 compared with 41 in 2018/19. HL-1 data includes all applicants identifying as CEYP irrespective of which local authority has/had a duty of care. A local marker identified applicants where the Aberdeen's Youth Team has/had a legal responsibility shows that only 10 people applied in 2020/21.

5.127 In Aberdeenshire, the Care Leavers Housing Protocol was reviewed in October 2019. It aims to develop housing and accommodation options for care leavers and care experienced young people. Aberdeenshire Youth Forum enables workers from Housing and the Throughcare and Aftercare Service to meet to consider referrals and identify appropriate accommodation and support. Placements that are at risk of breaking down are also discussed with the aim of preventing homelessness. The number of homeless applications from those who have been looked after in 2019/20 was 54 and in 2021/22 this was 26. This is 4.3% and 2.9% respectively of total applications.

Key issues:

- Similar to youth homelessness, future provision for CEYP should be considered within the wider supply of temporary and permanent accommodation and support options. The low number of applicants suggest that demand is currently being met within existing options.

Prison Leavers

5.128 Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council receive a small number of homeless applications from the Scottish Prison Service (SPS), including HMP Grampian located in Peterhead, Aberdeenshire. Table 5.35 below shows the number of homeless applicants from SPS establishments has reduced in both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire by 22.9% and 20% respectively, compared with a 5.9% reduction across Scotland as whole.

Table 5.35: Prison Service Homeless Applications.

Area	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22*	Change 2017/18 – 2021/22 (%)
Aberdeen City	70	95	80	60	54	-22.9%
Aberdeenshire	50	50	65	35	40	-20%
Scotland	**1,875**	**1,840**	**1,995**	**1,765**	**N/A**	**-5.9%**

Source: Scottish Government (2021) Prison Service Homelessness, 2020-2021; 2021/22 data sourced from local authorities so no national figure available

5.129 This significant reduction could be attributed to the work being undertaken by Housing Liaison Officers (HLOs) in both areas. Their work is closely tied to the delivery of Scottish Government SHORE Standards. To limit the number of homeless presentations in Aberdeen, the HLO aims to ensure, where possible, applicants in prison receive an offer of permanent accommodation and sign for the tenancy on the day of liberation to reduce the risk of homelessness and the need for temporary accommodation.

5.130 Following the prison discretion process, there were 50 live applications as of November 2022[53]. In Aberdeen City, homeless applications from prison service (See table 5.35), are more likely to from those in private rented sector or housing associations who do not have access to this rehousing route.

5.131 Aberdeenshire Council's HLO works closely with HMP Grampian, social work and housing colleagues to promote tenancy sustainment and complete homeless applications. Permanent or temporary accommodation and appropriate support are identified prior to release. Aberdeenshire Council do not operate a prison discretion path.

5.132 The low number of prison homeless applications and success in rehousing within permanent accommodation indicates that demand for this group is currently being met within the current provisions in both local authorities.

Key issues:

- A small number of homeless applications are received by Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council from HMP establishments. Both councils employ a HLO to work with partner services to support the housing process upon liberation and minimise the need for homeless applications.

- Prison Service homeless applications have reduced by 22.9% in Aberdeen City and 20% in Aberdeenshire. This is a much higher reduction than the national figure of 5.9%.

[53] This count only includes Aberdeen City Council tenants who have given up a tenancy.

Domestic Abuse

5.133 People fleeing domestic abuse or at risk of domestic violence require access to safe accommodation and appropriate support and advice.

5.134 Table 5.36 below highlights that there has been a decrease of 20.2% in domestic abuse homeless applications in Aberdeen City since 2017/18. There has been an increase in numbers in Aberdeenshire within the same period (19.5%).

Table 5.36: Domestic Abuse Homeless Applications.

Area	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Change 2017/18 – 2021/22 (%)
Aberdeen City	258	279	236	208	206	-20.2%
% of total homeless applicants	15.0%	17.1%	15.9%	14.2%	14.7%	
Aberdeenshire	138	159	180	168	165	19.5%
% of total homeless applicants	12.7%	13.7%	14.6%	18.7%	18.4%	

Source: Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council Information Teams (2022)

5.135 The percentage of homeless applications that relate to domestic abuse represents around 15% of all homeless applications in Aberdeen City, with little variation across the period. In Aberdeenshire, although the number of presentations is lower, the percentage of total homeless applications has increased from 12.7% in 2017/18 to 18.4% in 2021/22.

5.136 Aberdeen City Council developed a Housing and Domestic Abuse policy and provides support for tenants experiencing domestic abuse, including advice, housing options and the possibility for staying in their current home with additional safety measures. Aberdeen City Council has a 'cannot return home' procedure which, following a homeless presentation and pending the result of a homeless assessment, provides temporary accommodation and a new offer of permanent accommodation where applicable if a tenant cannot return home for fear of violence. Similar policies have been developed by Registered Social Landlords.

5.137 Aberdeenshire Council has developed Domestic Abuse Housing Guidance and a Housing Procedure aligned with the Make a Stand campaign by the Chartered Institute of Housing. This includes an emphasis on working in partnership to promote access to information, advice and support concerning housing options and choices.

5.138 Whilst statistically most homeless presentations relating to domestic abuse are made by females, see table 5.37, it is important to recognise that this affects range of relationships. Since 2017, roughly 25% of homeless

applications made to Aberdeen City Council due to a violent or abusive dispute within the household were made by males. Aberdeenshire maintains a lower figure, however there was a rise in applications from males in 2019/20.

Table 5.37: Homeless Applications made due to violent/abusive dispute within household – breakdown by gender.

		2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Aberdeen City Council	Female	191	203	181	160	154	94
	% Female	*74.03%*	*72.76%*	*76.69%*	*76.92%*	*74.76%*	*76.42%*
	Male	67	76	55	48	52	29
	% Male	*25.97%*	*27.24%*	*23.31%*	*23.08%*	*25.24%*	*23.58%*
	Total	**258**	**279**	**236**	**208**	**206**	**123**
Aberdeenshire Council	Female	114	125	132	139	138	125
	% Female	*82.61%*	*78.13%*	*73.33%*	*82.74%*	*83.13%*	*86.81%*
	Male	24	35	48	29	28	19
	% Male	*17.39%*	*21.88%*	*26.67%*	*17.26%*	*16.87%*	*13.19%*
	Total	**138**	**160**	**180**	**168**	**166**	**144**

Source: Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council Information Teams (2022

5.139 While demand for this group is currently being met by the current provisions in both local authorities, the increase in cases in Aberdeenshire may require further investigation and review to determine if current provision is adequate. The key aspect in future provision is ensuring that the accommodation is safe, and support is provided.

Key issues:

- 14% of all homeless applications in Scotland were made due to violent or abusive dispute within the household. This is broadly in line with applications for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire where the average is around 15%.
- While there has been a decrease of 20.2% in homeless applications due to domestic abuse in Aberdeen City since 2017/18, there has been an increase of 19.5% in Aberdeenshire.

Armed forces communities

5.140 Veterans are not a homogeneous group; they cover every demographic, and each their housing needs vary. Research undertaken by Argyll & Bute Council[54] found that across Scotland, most veterans face similar housing challenges to the rest of the population. On a national scale, most veterans are homeowners and around 1 in 5 live with family and friends or in the

[54] Argyll & Bute Council, Housing Need & Demand Assessment Technical Supporting Paper 09 – Core Output 5: Armed Forced and Veteran's needs (January 2021)

private rented sector, so only around 10% are estimated as requiring social housing. It was also estimated that the demand for wheelchair and accessible housing for this group will decrease, while a demand for housing support will grow based on the increase in mental and post-traumatic stress disorder conditions within the community. Localised research needs to be carried out in both areas to determine if the Northeast follows a similar pattern to the national picture.

5.141 Table 5.38 below indicates the number of former armed forces households that were assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness across the Northeast and Scotland from 2017/18 to 2021/22. Aberdeen appears to reflect the national picture, as there has been a slight decrease over this period. This group makes up a comparatively small percentage of assessed households; only 2% at 2021/22.

Table 5.38: Former armed forces status for households assessed as homeless.

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Aberdeen City	44	48	25	29	15
% as a proportion of all households assessed as homeless	*3.2%*	*3.7%*	*2%*	*2.4%*	*1.3%*
Aberdeenshire	30	30	25	15	20
% as a proportion of all households assessed as homeless	*3.3%*	*3.1%*	*2.3%*	*2%*	*2.6%*
Scotland	**742**	**828**	**808**	**685**	**639**
% as a proportion of all households assessed as homeless	***3%***	***3%***	***3%***	***2%***	***2%***

Source: Scottish Government (2022) Former armed forces status for households assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness; Aberdeen City Council Information Team (2022)

5.142 Across Scotland, the main reasons cited for homeless applications made by former members of the armed forces community are:

- Dispute within household/relationship breakdown: non-violent (24%)
- Not to do with applicant household (e.g., landlord selling property, fire, circumstances of other persons sharing previous property, harassment by others, etc) (27%); and
- Mental health reasons (21%).

5.143 Data collated by the Scottish Government indicates that there has been a decrease in the number of homeless applications received by Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council from members of the armed forces community, as seen in Table 5.39 below. Although the number presenting in each area is relatively small, there has been a reduction of 56.7% in Aberdeen City and 40% in Aberdeenshire between 2017/18 and 2021/22. These figures are substantially higher than the 11.4%[55] reduction in applications across Scotland from 2017/18 to 2020/21.

[55] Data published is not available for 2021/22.

Table 5.39: Homeless applications from former members of the armed forces by local authority.

Area	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22*	Change 2017/18 – 2021/22 (%)
Aberdeen City	60	55	30	30	26	-56.7%
Aberdeenshire	35	35	30	20	21	-40%
Scotland	**920**	**995**	**920**	**815**	**N/A**	**-11.4%**

Source: Scottish Government (2020) Armed Forced Homelessness, 2019-20; 2021/22 data sourced from local authorities Information Teams as national figure available

5.144 In Aberdeen City, housing applications from those who are planning to leave the armed forces will be given priority status and placed on the urgent list 56 days before they are due to leave. This only applies to new build schemes; applicants who wish to add other housing choices will be awarded points in accordance with the Allocation Policy. Aberdeenshire Council's Allocation Policy awards priority banding to reflect housing need and circumstances. A choice based letting system is used and properties are advertised, with the opportunity to view vacancies online.

5.145 The low number of homeless applications for armed forces personnel and success in promoting other housing options suggest that demand is currently being met within the current provisions in both local authorities.

Key issues:

- Localised research needs to be carried out in Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City to determine if the Northeast follows a similar pattern to the national picture.
- Only around 10% of armed forces personnel are estimated as requiring social housing across Scotland, others take advantage of other housing options.
- There has been a decrease in the number of homeless applications from armed forces personnel in Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and across Scotland. Of those who have presented as homeless, 27% cited reasons out with their control as the main cause, 21% cited mental health reasons and 24% cited a non-violent dispute or relationship breakdown.

No Recourse to Public Funds

5.146 No recourse to public funds applies to individuals and families who are subject to immigration control and, as a result of this, have no entitlement to certain welfare benefits, homelessness assistance and an allocation of social housing through the council register.

5.147 Under Section 22 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995, local authorities can provide accommodation and financial support to families with "children in

need" including families with no recourse to public funds, to avoid any situation which might result in that child:

i. Having their basic needs neglected or not met adequately in line with their age and stage of development.
ii. Being socially or emotionally segregated from their family or in any way.
iii. Being denied accommodation, financial support and care necessary for them to thrive and develop normally.

5.148 Section 12 and 13ZA of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 places a duty on local authorities to make arrangements for providing support and residential accommodation for persons aged 18 or over and without children who by reasons of age, illness, disability, or any other circumstances are in need of care and attention which is not otherwise available to them due to exclusion from mainstream social `security benefits, including families with no recourse to public funds.

Table 5.40: Number of households ineligible for homeless assistance.

Area	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Aberdeen City	41	35	37	39	47
Aberdeenshire	0	5	5	0	5

Source: Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council Information Teams (2022

5.149 Table 5.40 above shows there are a number of households with no recourse to public funds. The number of households in Aberdeen City varied between 35 and 47 households representing a 14.6% increase between 2017/18 and 2021/22. In Aberdeenshire, the numbers have fluctuated between 0 and 5 during the same period. This level of variance is expected due to urban/rural differences between the two local authority areas.

Key issues:

- Some people with no recourse to public funds can experience prolonged periods of financial insecurity and homelessness.
- There is a large contrast in the number of households ineligible for homeless assistance between Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils. Presentations in Aberdeenshire have fluctuated between 0 and 5 households since 2017/18. In Aberdeen, after dropping from initially from 41 to 35, then rising steadily to a high of 47, a 14.6% increase over the same period.
- In certain circumstances, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council can provide financial and accommodation support to those with no recourse to public funds.

Migrant workers

5.150 National insurance numbers (NiNo) can be used to indicate an inflow of migrant workers to a particular area; however, this data does not determine length of stay or number of workers at a particular time. Given the limited local data, it can be difficult to determine housing requirements for this group.

5.151 Migrant workers require the seasonal work visa to gain temporary employment in Scotland. UK immigration statistics ending 2021 indicate that 'Seasonal Workers' made up over half (55%) of all temporary work grants, and saw a significant increase, up from 7,211 in the previous year to 29,631 (+311%). Numbers of temporary work visas are also now substantially higher than 2019, indicating a potential demand for accommodation.

5.152 In 2020, there were 2,092 NiNo allocations in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire which is the lowest number in the 10-year period, but this figure is expected to rise following the pandemic. NiNo allocations are consistently higher in Aberdeen City than Aberdeenshire.

5.153 Scottish Government research highlights that migrant workers often find seasonal employment on farms and are viewed as a vital asset to the Scottish horticulture sector. Yet the study estimates that the number of non-agricultural seasonal migrant workers in the economy is 51,400.

5.154 In 2020, there were slightly more men than women employed in seasonal work (54% compared with 43%). There were no significant differences by sector/type of work in terms of the gender profile of the worker. Most workers were employed in the summer months from May to September, only 44% of firms provided accommodation to staff recruited on a seasonal basis.

5.155 There are varying contexts in which accommodation was provided to migrant workers. If accommodation can be provided within caravan parks, via private landlords in local areas who sublet properties to seasonal staff. Some hotels hire migrant workers during peak seasons and provide accommodation within the hotel as part of the contact of employment.

5.156 It can be difficult to determine future housing requirements for this group as the data is limited, however initial research suggests that the need is currently being met.

Key issues:

- UK immigration statistics indicate that 'seasonal workers' made up over half (55%) of all temporary work grants and saw a substantial increase of 311% from 2020. Only 44% of firms provided accommodation to their seasonal staff.
- NiNo allocations are consistently higher in Aberdeen City than in Aberdeenshire, however applications declined during the pandemic and are expected to rise again.

Refugees, Asylum Seekers[56] and Resettlement

5.157 The UK offered protection to 14,734 people (including dependants) in 2021, in the form of asylum, humanitarian protection, alternative forms of leave and resettlement. Resettlement accounted for 1,587 of those people (11%); this does not include the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme. The number of people offered protection was 49% higher than the previous year, and similar to levels seen from 2015 to 2018.

5.158 In Aberdeen City, resettlement schemes involve the placement of refugees and asylum seekers in non-permanent accommodation until settled housing can be provided. On arrival to Scotland, refugees can require intensive support around welfare, housing, culture, and language needs.

5.159 Both Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire have seen a growth in refugee and asylum-seeking populations over recent years, beginning with the resettlement of Syrian refugees in 2016/17. Many from this community have now gained "indefinite leave to remain" status and there are currently 9 Syrian refugee families that fall under the support remit of Aberdeen City Council's Resettlement Team. In Aberdeenshire, regular resettlement continued until 2020, so support is still ongoing to those expected to apply for "indefinite leave to remain" in 2025.

5.160 Between 2016 and 2022, Aberdeenshire Council resettled over 200 refugees via the Syrian Vulnerable Persons' Relocation Scheme and the Vulnerable Children's Relocation Scheme. The ambition of the Aberdeenshire New Scots' Integration Strategy is to enable refugees to integrate from day of arrivals, so RSL and low demand social housing is utilised to provide permanency.

5.161 There are now well-established New Scots communities in the Northeast. In Aberdeen City, these are in mixed tenure accommodations with around 30 displaced families are currently living the private rented sector. In

[56] A 'refugee' is a person who has fled their home, crossed an international border, and cannot return home because they fear their lives are in danger. An 'asylum-seeker' is a person who has fled their home and claims international protection, but whose status has not yet been determined.

Aberdeenshire, these communities are living primarily in private rented accommodation.

5.162 Aberdeen City hosts the largest population of asylum seekers in Scotland outside of Glasgow with approximately 100 asylum seekers[57]. Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire are official “dispersal zones” for asylum seekers, meaning local asylum seeking and refugee populations are likely to continue growing. The housing options for these displaced people vary based on guidance from the Home Office.

5.163 In Aberdeen there are three main groups of asylum seekers and refugees currently housed in hotels across the city[58]. These groups consist of:

- Approximately 140 Afghans, including family groups and individuals
- Approximately 750 Ukrainians, including family groups and individuals
- 99 men of different nationalities, namely: Iran (40), Iraq (13), Sudan (14), Eritrea (10), Afghanistan (2), Chad (1), Vietnam (1), Yemen (2), Somalia (2), Egypt (1), Syria (11), Palestine (2), Tunisia (1), Saudi Arabia (2)

5.164 Within the hotel accommodation, Afghan and Ukrainian families are being assisted by Aberdeen City Council as per COSLA wrap around support guidance, whereas accommodation for the final group is being provided by Mears Group. While hotel placements are intended to be temporary, some of these individuals have now spent more than a year living in hotels.

5.165 The main challenges facing this cohort is accessing settled accommodation within the preferred area of choice. The preferred area of choice is often located in major hubs and cities, typically in England, where there are larger populations within the settled community and a perception of better job opportunities, however there is also a shortage of large family properties.

Afghan Resettlement

5.166 There are currently around 140 Afghan citizens in hotel accommodation in Aberdeen City awaiting rehousing through the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) and Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) programmes. So far, two families have been resettled in private rented accommodation within Aberdeen City. There is a commitment to resettle additional families depending on their needs and availability of accommodation.

[57] Data taken from GREC Report, October 2022.
[58] Data taken from GREC Report, October 2022

5.167 In Aberdeenshire, five Afghan families have been resettled into RSL accommodation in north Aberdeenshire. A political commitment has been made to resettle up to 30 families per year from UKRS and ACRS schemes.

5.168 Data from the Home Office has indicated that of the 443 cases under the UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS) and Afghan Citizenship Resettlement Scheme Pathway 2 (ACRS2), two thirds of cases have a need for 4- or 5-bedroom accommodation. 64% of cases are family groups of between 3 and 6 people, and of these 65% have more significant needs including mobility, serious medical and psychological. A high proportion have a non-traditional family composition[59], requiring linked properties which are in close proximity to each other. 30% of UKRS and 25% of ACRS2 cases are linked in this way. More localised research is required to see if the Northeast follows the UK picture, as this would determine future need.

5.169 The Home Office retains responsibility for offers of accommodation. Move on support will be provided by local authorities to assist with accommodation needs.

Ukrainian Resettlement

5.170 According to data submitted to the Scottish Government in December 2022, there are currently 923 displaced people from Ukraine in hotel accommodation in Aberdeen City awaiting rehousing. Around 100 households have been rehoused in social housing stock across Aberdeen City Council and RSLs[60]. Initially, Aberdeen City Council put aside 65 properties to rehouse displaced Ukrainian households, these were allocated on a secure tenancy and are regarded as permanent accommodation.

5.171 The majority of displaced people from Ukraine are likely to be rehoused in Aberdeen City Council properties. 500 void properties are being refurbished and brought into use to provide temporary accommodation over the next 3 years.

5.172 To date in Aberdeen City, 289 people are living in local authority accommodation and 81 in RSL properties under the Scottish Super Sponsor and Family Visa Schemes. A further 222 people are living in hosted accommodation within local communities. 6 Ukrainian families have progressed through the homelessness process.

5.173 In Aberdeenshire, over 500 displaced Ukrainians have been resettled via Homes for Ukraine, Scottish Super Sponsor and Family Visa Schemes. Two Aberdeenshire Welcome Hub Hotels provide short term accommodation for new arrivals and data submitted to the Scottish Government in December 2022 highlights that Aberdeenshire had 34 displaced people from Ukraine in

[59] Non-traditional family composition includes families with adult members and multi-generational family groups.
[60] This does not include households rehoused with a family visa who may have not arrived on sponsorship.

hotel accommodation. Social housing is only used for hard to match or complex cases. Dedicated staff assist displaced Ukrainians with moving on options and accessing private sector accommodation to ensure progression and reduce the risk of homelessness.

5.174 Aberdeenshire saw one of the biggest volumes of individual sponsor offers in the UK, so hosting is the primary source of matching. As indicated in Table 5.41 below, most of the matches made in Aberdeen City have been through the Government backed Super Sponsor Scheme.

Table 5.41: Total number of completed matches where the Guests have arrived at their longer-term accommodation, by local authority and matching pathway.

Local Authority	Super Sponsor Scheme		Individual Sponsor Scheme	
	Total number of cases matched[61] where the guests have arrived at longer term accommodation	Total number of individuals matched where the guests have arrived at longer term accommodation (head count)	Total number of cases where guests are known to have arrived at longer term accommodation	Total number of guests who are known to have arrived at longer term accommodation (head count)
Aberdeen City Council	200	405	<5	<5
Aberdeenshire Council	95	195	75	180

Source: Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme in Scotland, gov.scot (2022). Data reported by ACC on 30/11/2022; data reported by Aberdeenshire Council on 02/12/2022

5.175 According to data from the Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), Scotland received 40,802 visa applications through the UK 'Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme' (which includes the Scottish Super Sponsor Scheme) by September 2022, with 35,122 visas issued. A total of 19,459 displaced people from Ukraine have arrived in Scotland on a visa sponsored either by an individual Scottish sponsor or the Scottish Government up to 27 September 2022. The latest demographics statistics show that the largest proportion of the Scottish Super Sponsor Scheme applications, visas issued, and arrivals were from female applicants. The highest proportion of applicants was in the 18-65 age group.

5.176 In September 2022, there were 3,309 rooms or cabins occupied by displaced people from Ukraine in Scotland. There were around 5,186 people occupying hotel rooms and 1,354 people on-board passenger ships berthed in Glasgow and Edinburgh. Welcome hubs across Scotland currently provide advice and access to temporary accommodation upon arrival in the country.

5.177 Within Aberdeen City, there are 404 Ukrainians in settled accommodation and around 750 in temporary hotel accommodation that have been supported by

[61] This includes matching through the national COSLA/Scottish Government matching service, Local Authority facilitated matching, and private or informal matches that the Local Authority is aware of

Aberdeen City Council's Resettlement Team. However, finding suitable accommodation for large family groups has been a particular challenge.

Future Needs and Provision Required

5.178 It is difficult to determine the future requirements of refugee and asylum seekers given the emergency nature of the situations that causes an influx of displaced people. However, numbers may increase as the Northeast is an official dispersal zone for asylum seekers. Increasing the supply of single-bed accommodation may help reduce some of pressure and assist with rehousing as the majority of asylum seekers tend to be single males. Both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire will continue to commit to ensuring the identification of future needs and provision required through the process of the development of the Local Housing Strategy and will ensure that local plans are adapted to meet any emerging requirements.

Key issues:

- Both Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire have seen a growth in refugee and asylum-seeking populations. Aberdeen City hosts the largest population of asylum seekers in Scotland outside of Glasgow and these populations are likely to grow.
- The main barriers identified for moving towards settled accommodation include availability in preferred locality, as many wish to be rehoused in the larger cities and hubs in England, accommodation size and affordability of accommodation.
- Around 100 households have been rehoused using low demand social housing stock across Aberdeen City, and over 500 displaced Ukrainians have been resettled in Aberdeenshire.
- There is a continuing growth in the demand for accommodation, particularly larger family accommodation to meet the needs of refugee families.

Student Accommodation

Student Numbers

5.179 Aberdeen is home to several universities and colleges. The two key higher education facilities are the University of Aberdeen and Robert Gordon University, which attract local, national, and international students to the area. Table 5.42 below shows a snapshot of student numbers recorded at the September intake over the past five years. The total number of students has increased by 23% over this period from 31,611 in 2017/18 to 38,897 in 2021/22.

Table 5.42: Number of Higher Education Students as at September Intake 2017 - 2021 (including undergraduate, taught post-graduate and PhD).

Year	University of Aberdeen			Robert Gordon University		
	Part-time	Full-time	Total	Part-time	Full-time	Total
2017/18	2,267	13,410	**15,677**	5,195	10,739	**15,934**
2018/19	2,909	14,177	**17,086**	5,032	10,846	**15,878**
2019/20	4,984	13,695	**18,679**	4,817	10,953	**15,770**
2020/21	7,290	12,829	**20,119**	5,204	11,851	**17,055**
2021/22	7,333	14,071	**21,404**	5,270	12,223	**17,493**

Source: University of Aberdeen, Robert Gordon University (2022)

5.180 Data from the University of Aberdeen revealed that a significant increase occurred in the number of students studying part-time. Part-time figures rose from 2,267 in the 2017/18 intake to 7,333 in 2021/22, with the largest increase occurring between 2020 and 2022. Full-time figures also increased during this time, with a rise of 4.9% between 2017/18 and 2021/22.

5.181 Robert Gordon University provided data on the number of full-time and part-time students across the same five-year period, and it highlights similar trends. The total number of students has risen from 15,934 in 2017/18 to 17,493 in 2021/22, which is an increase of 9.8%. There has been a 13.8% increase in full-time student numbers and 1.4% increase in the numbers studying part-time. In terms of future trends, Robert Gordon University expect undergraduate student numbers to remain stable then rise, while taught-postgraduate student numbers are expected to rise.

Table 5.43: NESCOL - number of students 2017 - 2021 (including higher and further education).

Year	Northeast Scotland College[62]		
	Part-time	Full-time	Total
2017/18	15,874	6,829	**22,703**
2018/19	19,676	6,684	**26,360**
2019/20	17,670	6,664	**24,334**
2020/21	12,728	6,692	**19,420**
2021/22	19,237	6,370	**25,607**

Source: NESCOL (2022).

5.182 Similar trends can be identified at Northeast Scotland College (NESCOL), which has campuses across Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, where the total number of students has increased by 12.8% between 2017/18 and 2021/22 across all campuses, see Table 5.43 above. There has been a significant increase in part-time students (21.2%) over the five-year period, whereas full-time figures have decreased by 6.7%. There was a drop in

[62] Most full-time NESCOL courses start in Aug/Sep, but a small number start later in the year – they have been included in this figure. Part-time enrolments start at different points through the year.

enrolment during 2019/20-2020/21, likely due to Covid-19 restrictions. Northeast Scotland College indicated that as many of their students live at home, they do not receive high volumes of accommodation queries or issues.

Accommodation Options

5.183 Aberdeen has a range of accommodation available for students moving to the area. The total number of bedspaces[63] available across Aberdeen City is 7,596, which includes accommodation provided by both universities and all the private purpose-built student accommodation providers.

5.184 Both universities provide accommodation within their halls of residence. The University of Aberdeen provides a higher volume of bedspaces (2,143) than RGU which only has 912. It is therefore more likely that RGU students will take advantage of private purpose-built student accommodation, of which there are a range of purpose-built accommodation options supplied by private providers in the city.

5.185 Although it is common to reside in halls of residence or purpose-built student accommodation in the first year of university, many students arrange subsequent housing in the private rented sector, often in conjunction with other students in properties registered as a House of Multiple Occupation (HMO). International students and postgraduate students are most likely to remain in purpose-built student accommodation throughout the course of their studies.

5.186 Informal consultation with property agents in Aberdeen has indicated that the increase in purpose-built student accommodation within the city has resulted in a lower demand from students for HMO properties. A report on purpose-built student accommodation and student housing from the Scottish Government in 2022 indicates that student numbers and accommodation demand are rising nationally. The increase in student numbers is clear to see in Aberdeen, and representatives from the University of Aberdeen and RGU have also indicated that there is increased demand for student accommodation in the area, although they expect to be able to fulfil the demand for purpose-built student accommodation.

[63] Rooms are provided for single or dual occupancy, so ‘bedspaces’ is more appropriate than bedrooms.

Costs

5.187 In 2022/23, the average weekly cost of staying in halls of residence was £124 per week at the University of Aberdeen and £136 per week at RGU.[64] This is slightly higher than the average cost of private purpose-built accommodation in Aberdeen, as seen in Table 5.44 below. During 2021/22, the average rent was £112 per week, although this amount varies between sites according to the facilities.

Table 5.44: Purpose-built student accommodation, average cost per week in 2021/22.

Type of accommodation	Cost per week
Shared room	£95
Ensuite room	£110
Studio	£159

Source: Campusboard (website accessed July 2022).

5.188 The average annual rent for purpose-built student accommodation in Scotland was £6,853 in 2021/22, a 34% increase over the last three years (£5,111 in 2018).

5.189 Student rent has increased at a faster rate in Scotland over the last three years than any other part of the UK. A recent study[65] carried out by housing charity Unipol, on behalf of the National Union of Students, indicates that for students receiving the minimum financial package, the average Scottish rent makes up 144% of the available loan. However, the study also states that Spring Gardens student accommodation in Aberdeen had the lowest rent costs for student accommodation in the UK for the period 2021/22.

5.190 Nationally, trends identified by the 2022 report from the Scottish Government, indicate that students were attracted to purpose-built accommodation for aspects of shared living, locations, the ease of accessing it relative to other housing tenures, and the all-inclusive nature of rent payments. However, qualitative data suggests that students often felt this type of tenure represented poor value for money in comparison to other housing tenures and reported concerns over increased housing costs and the rising cost of living. According to the Unipol study, increased expenses have meant that a quarter of students have been unable to pay their rent in full on one or more occasion.

Future Needs and Provision Required

5.191 Anecdotal evidence gathered during consultation with providers suggest that there is a growing trend for international students travelling with their families, which has resulted in the need for larger family accommodation close to the

[64] Accommodation is between £92 and £156 per week at the University of Aberdeen and between £98 and £166 at RGU dependant on facilities and amenities.
[65] Broke: How Scotland is failing its students.

University sites. This type of accommodation is not available through purpose-built accommodation so must be found within the private sector.

5.192 Occupancy rates of student accommodation could not be published as it is commercially sensitive data. However, based on figures provided from the institutions, the data from the past five years suggests a maintained level of vacant bedspaces which implies there is not currently a shortage of student accommodation in Aberdeen. Student provision will be monitored through the respective Local Housing Strategies.

Key issues:

- The total number of students in Aberdeen has increased by 23% from 31,611 in 2017/18 to 38,897 in 2021/22.
- The total number of bedspaces available across Aberdeen City is 7,596, including halls of residence and purpose-built student accommodation. This does not take into consideration properties available to rent in the private sector.
- There is increased demand for student accommodation in the area and nationally, although evidence suggests there is not currently a shortage of student accommodation in Aberdeen.
- A growing trend for international students travelling with their families has resulted in the need for larger family accommodation.
- The average annual rent for purpose-bult student accommodation has increased by 34% since 2018, however Aberdeen had the cheapest purpose-built accommodation site in the UK for 2021/22.
- Unipol reveals that for students receiving the minimum financial package, the average Scottish rent makes up 144% of the available loan.

Key Workers

5.193 Key Workers are employees who are considered to provide an essential service to members of the public, including doctors, nurses, teachers, and police officers but also extending to private sector businesses, and seasonal staff.

5.194 Difficulties in the recruitment and retention of key workers can be detrimental to local economic growth, and to service provision that is important to the wellbeing of the population.

5.195 The provision of mid-market rent (MMR) properties played a key role the provision of key worker accommodation.

5.196 In Aberdeen a number of key worker housing developments were developed:

- Aberdeen City Council introduced a special lettings initiative for key workers at Smithfield Court. This provided 54 units. Due to low demand the properties have now been returned to mainstream stock.
- Sanctuary Scotland – Craiginches, 124 mid-market rent properties for key workers of which around 44% were let to keyworkers[66].
- Grampian Housing Association - Foresterhill Court (Burnside Village), 58 mid-market rent for public sector key workers. The remaining 43 units, originally planned as MMR, were let as social rent due to a reassessment following the downturn in the market. Potential future development of MMR properties includes 7 units at Contlaw Road and some additional properties on 2nd phase of the development at Blackhall South, Inverurie.

5.197 Providers across all key worker site in Aberdeen reported they have experienced issues with turnover and demand in the past. The increased housing provision combined with the current downturn within the oil and gas sector, decreasing rents in the private sector and failing demand have begun to ease these difficulties somewhat. There is currently no evidence to support the need for additional provision for key workers. This situation will be kept under review.

Key issues:

- In Aberdeen providers reported high turnover and low demand in mid-market/key worker housing. In part this may be due to changes in the economic climate, lower rent costs and increase availability in private rented sector properties.
- There is no evidence to support the need for additional provision for key workers in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. The situation is monitored and reviewed through the SHIP and LHS.
- Aberdeenshire do not have specific accommodation for key workers.

Interim Care Housing

5.198 Interim care housing provides short-term temporary accommodation for adults whose discharge from hospital may be delayed as a result of a lack of suitable housing or due to their home being unsuitable. This creates system-wide challenges across health, housing, and social care.

5.199 The number of housing related hospital delays between 2017/18 – 2021/22 is shown in Table 5.3 [67] It shows that in March 2022, housing related delays

[66] This figure is based on current data and may be subject to change following tenancy changes.
[67] Introduction to Specialist Provision Chapter.

affected 25 people in Aberdeen, resulting in 465 bed days lost. In Aberdeenshire, 19 people were delayed resulting in 259 bed days lost.

5.200 Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership have developed a range of housing based interim properties.

Clashieknowe Interim housing and rehabilitation service	Provides 20 individual flats, including 6 wheelchair accessible properties. The properties include an integrated telecare system
Interim Housing	Two wheelchair accessible one-bed amenity cottages provide a step-down facility for people leaving hospital with low-level support needs who are awaiting adaptation to their property or rehousing.
Supported Hospital Discharge	22 supported hospital discharge properties are located in sheltered and very sheltered housing, making use of both council and third-sector stock.

Key issues:

- There is continued pressure on hospital related discharge which has resulted in a loss of hospital bed days in both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.
- Different approaches have been taken across the two authority areas. In Aberdeen, interim housing options have provided 22 bedspaces to improve system capacity and enable people to leave hospital to awaiting appropriate housing, adaptations, or care package.
- In Aberdeenshire there are no interim housing options available, however it is considered that this resource would be of significant benefit as currently clients awaiting housing options are often currently placed in care homes. Work is ongoing to identify opportunities to develop this model in Aberdeenshire.

Supported Housing Provision

5.201 Supported housing provision covers a broad range of housing with properties that are specifically built, designed, or adapted for particular needs client groups. In line with local and national policy, there has been an important shift away from larger scale and care home provision to housing in the community with appropriate support and care to meet individual needs.

Supported Housing Provision Targets	
Aberdeen City Council	The SHIP includes a 15% target for delivery of new build affordable wheelchair accessible properties. It currently does not specify a target for other types of particular needs design. Despite this, close working with partners enables the delivery of specialist housing projects.
Aberdeenshire Council	Working across partners to deliver affordable and appropriate new build housing and develop a minimum of 15% of affordable new build homes suitable for particular needs each year.

Source: Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plans (SHIPs) 2023-2028.

Suitable for:

5.202 This type of housing has specialist design and features that support the needs of:

- Older people.
- People with a physical disability.
- People with a mental health condition.
- People with a learning disability.
- People with complex care needs.
- People with other long-term limiting health conditions which might be affected. or exacerbated by their living conditions.

National Legislative and Policy Context

5.203 Key national policies in relation to this area include:

- All our Futures: Planning for a Scotland with an Ageing Population.
- The Same as You? A review of services for people with learning disabilities.
- Scottish Government Coming Home Report and Coming Home Implementation Report.
- Scottish Government Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans: Guidance for Local Authorities and Partners.

Local Policies and Strategies

5.204 In addition to policies already mentioned these local policies and strategies are relevant to this area:

- Making Connections; Aberdeenshire Dementia Strategy 2021-2030.

Definitions

Table 5.45: Definitions of supported provision and property needs.

Supported Accommodation for Older People	
Care Homes	Care home provision in Aberdeen City is delivered by private sector and voluntary organisations and Bon Accord Care[68] in local authority owned properties. In Aberdeenshire, providers include private sector, voluntary organisations, and the local authority. The sector meets a range of personal and nursing care needs. Residents can be either long stay, short stay or respite.
Amenity Housing	Amenity housing or medium dependency housing is designed to be suitable for older people or ambulant disabled. This type of housing is specially designed or adapted to provide accessible accommodation. Some properties may have an integrated telecare system that is linked to an alarm receiving centre.
Sheltered Housing	Sheltered housing allows older people or people with particular needs to live independently, with the right support, in a comfortable and secure environment. It also gives the opportunity for social contact and companionship through communal facilities. Sheltered housing is generally a self-contained, one bedroom flat in a main scheme or a one-bedroom linked property. Two-bedroom properties are available at some schemes. An alarm or telecare system is available. Support is provided onsite by support staff, sheltered housing officers or mobile service.
Very Sheltered Housing	Very sheltered housing provides a safe environment for people with higher level support needs to live independently. Tenants are usually aged 60 years or above and may have additional care needs or be vulnerable in their current accommodation. Younger applicants may be considered depending on their circumstances. Very sheltered housing has a dedicated team of care and support staff, available on-site 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
Retirement housing	Retirement housing has similar features to sheltered housing but is usually provided in the private sector. Levels of care and support may vary from site to site.

[68] Aberdeen City only provided through Local Authority Trading Company, Bon Accord Care (Arm's Length External Organisation wholly owned by Aberdeen City Council).

Supported Provision	
Extra Care Housing	Extra care housing provides a similar level of support to sheltered or very sheltered housing for adults with a range of disabilities. Each tenant is provided with agreed levels of care and support on site. Individuals have self-contained homes with access to communal facilities, and there is onsite accommodation for support staff.
Core and Cluster	Core and cluster housing is a model of supported living where tenants have self-contained flats and receive support, usually from visiting staff. The flats can be dispersed within housing schemes and may have on-site office facilities. The co-located individual tenancies help to reduce dependency and increase community participation without the stresses associated with communal living.
Group Home	A property where a small number of adults live alongside each other, usually in groups of four and under. Facilities such as a kitchen and living space will typically be communal. Care and/or support will likely be provided 24/7.
House of Multiple Occupation (HMO)	House of multiple occupation (HMO) are properties where there are at least three or more unrelated adults who live in a property where bathroom, living or kitchen spaces are shared. HMO's offer a suitable option for individuals with a preference for supported group living.
Supported Living Services	Supported living services for adults with learning disability or mental health problems have their own tenancy with appropriate care and support. This helps them to live as independently and safely as possible. Support can include assistance with activities such as personal care, managing bills and accessing social experiences.
Stand-alone Services	Stand-alone services in mainstream housing provision with visiting support or overnight support can enable people to live independently. The levels of support can vary depending on individual's needs.

Care and Support Needs

5.205 The care and support provided in supported accommodation is the key to the success of these models. The support can range from low level housing support to complex care for individuals who require support 24:7.

Care Homes

5.206 The most recent 'Care Home Census for Adults in Scotland' published in 2021 and details data from 2011 until 2021 for the following client groups:

- Care homes for adults (all).
- Care homes for older people (65 years and over).
- Care homes for learning disabilities, mental health problems and physical and sensory impairment.

5.207 The Census shows overall a 20% decrease in the number of care homes for adults across Scotland and a 5% decrease in the number of registered places.

5.208 Data for Aberdeen shows a reduction of 27%, from 77 to 56 and in Aberdeenshire has seen a 22% reduction from 85 to 66 over the same period. The number of registered places has however reduced by more than the national average for both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, 18% and 11% respectively.

5.209 The reduction in Aberdeen City can be attributed to a program of de-registration of small group home facilities for people with a learning disability/mental health problem.

5.210 Table 5.46 below shows the majority of residents in both areas are long-stay residents, mirroring the national picture. However, across Scotland the number of long-stay residents has reduced by 11% in the 10 ten-year period, but in Aberdeen City the reduction is 28% and 13% in Aberdeenshire. The number of short stay and respite residents has reduced by 12% in the same period in Aberdeen City and by 10% in Aberdeenshire.

Table 5.46: Number of Care Homes for Adults, Registered Places, Residents and Percentage Occupancy in Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, and Scotland as of 31 March 2021.

2021	Aberdeen City	Aberdeenshire	Scotland
Number of care homes for adults	56	66	1,069
Number of registered places	1,650	1,847	40,632
Number of residents	1,334	1,601	33,353
Number of long stay residents	1,246	1,545	31,882
Number of short-stay and respite residents	88	56	1,470
Percentage occupancy	81%	87%	82%

Source: Care home census for adults in Scotland 2011 – 2021 – Public health Scotland

5.211 Tables 5.47 and 5.48 below shows the breakdown across the local authority, voluntary/third sector and private sector for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.

Table 5.47: Number of care homes for adults, registered places, and residents by sector in Aberdeen City as of 31 March 2021.

Aberdeen City	Local Authority[69]	Voluntary Sector	Private Sector
Number of care homes	0	29	27
Registered Places	0	433	1,217
Residents	0	383	951

Source: Care home census for adults in Scotland 2011 – 2021 – Public health Scotland

Table 5.48: Number of care homes for adults, registered places, and residents by sector in Aberdeenshire as of 31 March 2021.

Aberdeenshire	Local Authority	Voluntary Sector	Private Sector
Number of care homes	11	23	32
Registered Places	327	235	1,285
Residents	242	209	1,150

Source: Care home census for adults in Scotland 2011 – 2021 – Public health Scotland

5.212 Private sector provision delivers the majority places in both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. Occupancy levels at the time of the Census in 2021 was 78% in Aberdeen City and 89% in Aberdeenshire.

[69] Provided through Bon Accord Care (ALEO).

5.213 Aberdeenshire's Market Position Statement 'Accommodation, Care and Support for Older People' 2017 predicted that although current care home provision was sufficient to meet demand, a 108% increase in demand for care home places was anticipated from 2017 to 2037.

Key issues:

- The largest provision of care homes across Scotland is for older people. On 31 March 2021, older people accounted for 91% of residents in all care homes for adults (30,502 out of 33,353). In Aberdeen City, older people accounted for 82% (1,092 out of 1,334) and in Aberdeenshire the figure is 91% (1,449 out of 1,601) and therefore a similar picture to the national percentage.

5.214 There are 90,000 people in Scotland living with dementia[70]. The risk of developing dementia increases with age. Those in the 80 plus age range are most likely to be diagnosed. Around 3% of people diagnosed in Scotland are under the age of 65[71], often referred to as, 'early onset' or 'young onset' dementia.

5.215 As of 2018 there were over 2,500 people living with dementia in Aberdeen City and over 3,000 in Aberdeenshire, however this is expected to increase in line with general population projections.

Key issues:

- In line with the ageing population, the numbers of people living with dementia is set to increase. Evidence suggests a significant proportion of care home residents are living with dementia. Work is required to develop dementia friendly environments and community connections for those living in residential care.
- The data suggests a decrease in places/residents over the last ten years. There is no current evidence to suggest an increased requirement for care home provision in Aberdeen City.

Housing for Older People

5.216 In Aberdeen there is a variety of different type of accommodation suitable to meet the needs of older and disabled people. Table 5.49 shows the number of

[70] National Dementia Strategy 2017 - 2020 published 2017.

[71] Alzheimer Scotland, Statistics: Understanding the prevalence of dementia in Scotland, https://www.alzscot.org/our-work/campaigning-for-change/scotlands-national-dementia-strategy/statistics.[71] & Alzheimer Scotland (2021) About Dementia https://www.alzscot.org/what-is-dementia/about-dementia)

units, percentage of stock in the different categories which are described below.

Table 5.49 Aberdeen City – specialist housing for older people.

Classification of Housing	Number of Units	% of total Stock	% stock per classification
Aberdeen City Council – amenity/amenityPlus (transition)	241	7.64%	100%
All amenity/amenity Plus	**241**	**7.64%**	**100%**
Aberdeen City Council – sheltered housing	1,873	59.37%	85.37%
Registered Social Landlord – sheltered housing*	321	10.17%	14.63%
All sheltered housing	**2,194**	**69.54%**	**100%**
Aberdeen City Council – very sheltered housing/extra care	110	3.49%	39.29%
Registered Social Landlord – very sheltered housing*	170	5.39%	60.71%
All very sheltered/extra care	**280**	**8.87%**	**100%**
Registered Social Landlord - enhanced housing management service	118	3.74%	100%
All enhanced housing management service	**118**	**3.74%**	**100%**
Private Sector – retirement housing (estimate)	322	10.21%	100%
All Private Sector	**322**	**10.21%**	**100%**
TOTAL	**3,155**	**100%**	**100%**

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2022), Housing Strategy Team collated data.

Amenity Housing

5.217 In Aberdeen, the Review of Housing for Varying Needs led to a number of former sheltered housing developments were redesignated as amenity/amenity Plus (with telecare). This category includes 241 properties and accounts for 7.6% of the housing for varying needs stock. A range of single person cottages and purpose-built units have been designed to meet amenity/medium dependency standard. The total number of 'medium dependency' units in Aberdeen is 1,470[72].

5.218 Aberdeenshire Council has no amenity/medium dependency properties.

Sheltered Housing and Very Sheltered Housing

5.219 The number of older people is increasing, the projected growth for the over 75 age group across Scotland is predicted to be approximately 80% between 2008 and 2033, this is variable across areas. In Aberdeen a 46% increase is

[72] Source, Scottish Government S1B return.

predicted and Aberdeenshire is projection is significantly higher at and 154%, which is reflective of the demographic profile in the area.

5.220 Sheltered housing in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire is provided by both local authority and RSLs. As of 31 March 2022, there was 1,989 sheltered housing and very sheltered housing places in Aberdeen City and 1,505 places in Aberdeenshire (see Table 5.50).

Table 5.50: Local Authority Transition, Sheltered and Very Sheltered Housing Stock.

	Sheltered	Very sheltered
Aberdeen City	1,879	110[73]
Aberdeenshire	1,432	73

Source: Scottish Government S1B return.

5.221 Table 5.51 shows the sheltered and very sheltered housing stock owned by RSLs. In Aberdeen, the care and housing support services are commissioned by Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership.

Table 5.51: Registered Social Landlord Private Retirement Home stock.

	Sheltered – RSL	Very sheltered - RSL
Aberdeen City[74]	422	170
Aberdeenshire	485	97

Source: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council, Housing Strategy Teams

5.222 In Aberdeen, a holistic assessment of the needs is undertaken for new applicants who require additional support. Needs are prioritised as high, medium, or low. In some circumstances, applicants are awarded urgent priority due to extreme social or medical needs.

5.223 A Special Letting Initiative was introduced for sheltered accommodation that was deemed hard to let. The criteria are reduced so applicants with low level need can apply.

5.224 Aberdeenshire has a banding system with applicants with support needs being placed according to their housing need. Assessment carried out using a matrix system.

5.225 For RSL-owned sheltered housing complexes, both councils operate a nominations agreement with landlords and allocate from their own lists.

[73] Includes Extra Care accommodation at Coronation Court. This provides a similar level to very sheltered properties where no age restriction applies.
[74] Includes sheltered and very sheltered stock owned by VSA, a voluntary organisation that is not registered as an RSL.

Table 5.52: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council waiting lists for sheltered housing and very sheltered housing as of September 2022.

	Aberdeen City	Aberdeenshire
Sheltered Housing	479	492
Very Sheltered Housing	33	48

Source: Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council waiting list information – September 2021.

5.226 Waiting lists for sheltered housing for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council as of September 2022 provide an indication of current need. However, the requirement for both sheltered housing and very sheltered housing is under review in both local authorities.

5.227 In Aberdeen, the Review of Housing for Varying Needs identified an over-provision of sheltered housing. Ten former sheltered housing developments were re-classified as amenity/amenity plus (with telecare). The total for 'sheltered' housing in Aberdeen, given in Table 5.52 above includes 58 sheltered housing tenants who live in 'transition' accommodation.

5.228 In Aberdeenshire currently there are approximately 1,150 units of accommodation, within 57 main sheltered housing complexes across Aberdeenshire that is classed as sheltered housing, along with 300 linked cottages.

5.229 It is acknowledged there are some sheltered housing schemes in locations in Aberdeenshire that are classed as low demand and, as part of the overall sheltered housing review, are being considered for alternative use. This closely links with care home provision across the area.

5.230 Table 5.53 below highlights the expected shortfall in both care home and very sheltered housing provision for older people expected by 2037 for Aberdeenshire. Commissioning priorities are to grow provision in the areas where the need is most severe.

Table 5.53: Expected shortfall in care home and very sheltered housing provision by 2037 in Aberdeenshire.

	Banff & Buchan	Buchan	Formartine	Garioch	Kincardine & Mearns	Marr
Care Homes	36	45	85	60	+75	+3
Very Sheltered Housing	33	67	37	54	74	46

Source: Aberdeenshire Council Market Position Statement: Accommodation, Care and Support and Area Capacity Plan (2017)/

Key issues:

- The change in population and increase of older people also brings changes in aspirations and demand for diversity and choice in housing and support. Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council are currently undertaking reviews of their sheltered and very sheltered housing provision. The outcome of these will determine future needs for this type of accommodation.

Housing with Care and Support Models

5.231 Both local authorities adopt various care and support models which are designed to meet the changing needs of individuals and provide positive outcomes for individuals.

Supported Living Services

5.232 Table 5.54 below highlights the number of people in receipt of supported living services and the total number of hours of support provided per week. This indicates that the figures are higher in Aberdeenshire than in Aberdeen City.

Table 5.54: Number of people in receipt of supported living services.

	No. of individuals	No. hours support per week
Aberdeen City	277	17,250
Aberdeenshire	364	24,749

Source: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council, September (2022). Provided by Commissioning and Procurement Services

5.233 In Aberdeen City, the number of group/care homes for all adults was 56 in 2021 and Aberdeenshire was 66. Although the number of care homes for older people is the largest provision with 29 in Aberdeen City and 42 in Aberdeenshire, there are also a number of care homes and registered places for other client groups. Table 5.55 below shows the breakdown for both areas and nationally.

Table 5.55: Number of care homes and registered places for older people, Clients with physical and sensory impairment, mental health problems and learning disabilities – Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, and Scotland as of 31 March 2021.

Aberdeen City	**Number of Homes**	**Registered Places**
Older People	29	1,356
Clients with physical and sensory impairment	3	74
Clients with mental health problems	8	83
Clients with learning disabilities	14	103
Other groups	2	34
Aberdeenshire	**Number of Homes**	**Registered Places**
Older People	42	1,683
Clients with physical and sensory impairment	0	0
Clients with mental health problems	2	44
Clients with learning disabilities	22	120
Other Groups	0	0
Scotland	**Number of Homes**	**Registered Places**
Older People	809	37,252
Clients with physical and sensory impairment	36	600
Clients with mental health problems	52	930
Clients with learning disabilities	157	1,542
Other Groups	15	308

Source Care home census for adults in Scotland 2011 – 2021 – Public health Scotland.

5.234 The estimated percentage occupancy rate for all adult care homes in Scotland was 82% in March 2021, a reduction of 6% from 88% in 2011. For the same period, the occupancy rate was reduced by 10% in Aberdeen City from 91% to 81% and by 2% from 89% to 87% in Aberdeenshire.

5.235 Occupancy rates broken down into individual client groups is shown at Table 5.56.

Table 5.56: Occupancy rates for client groups in care homes – Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire as of 31 March 2021.

Occupancy rates	**Aberdeen City**	**Aberdeenshire**
Older People	81%	86%
Clients with physical and sensory impairment	81%	N/A[75]
Clients with mental health problems	87%	100%
Clients with learning disabilities	76%	76%

Source: Care home census for adults in Scotland 2011 – 2021 – Public Health Scotland.

[75] Information is not reported for Aberdeenshire.

5.236 Adults with learning disabilities require a range of accommodation that can meet the varying needs of individuals. Market Position Statements from both councils express the intention to deliver suitable and sustainable models of accommodation and support to meet the needs of clients with learning disabilities and mental health clients.

Aberdeen City

5.237 The market position statement identified the profile of need for those with mental health and learning disabilities:

- Support delivered by a trained and supported staff team.
- Suitable built environments which support the individuals' care needs and promote their rights and dignity.
- Spacious accommodation to address physical health needs and equipment, with access to outdoor spaces and separate staff welfare areas.
- Own bedroom and ensuite accommodation as a minimum in both residential and supported living services.
- Access to local amenities and in ways which support people being involved in their local communities.

5.238 People with mental health or learning disabilities can often present with other co-morbidities such as autism, physical health, or communication needs.

5.239 Table 5.57 below provides data from Aberdeen City Council's 'Mental Health and Learning Disability Residential and Supported Living Accommodation, Market Position Statement 2021-2026' on the numbers of residential services and placements and the numbers of Supported living services and placements.

Table 5.57: Number of placements – Aberdeen City.

Aberdeen City	Residential Services	Number of Placements	Supported Living Services	Number of Placements
Number of placements	18	150	37	230

Source: Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership, Mental Health and Learning Disability Residential and Supported Living Accommodation, Market Position statement 2021-2026.

5.240 This data excludes in-house services (73 places), Camphill School, Cairnlea or Newton Dee services as they have a different accommodation basis.

5.241 Current accommodation models range significantly in size from 1 to 24 placements. The preferred model for residential services is 6 placements per service and 8 for supported living services.

5.242 Table 5.58 shows an estimate of current need based 'ideal' model shown above. This includes the number of people supported in the in-house settings.

Table 5.58: Estimate number of services based on preferred model.

Aberdeen City	Number of Placements	Residential Services (based on 6-person service)	Number of Placements (includes in-house)	Supported Living Services (based on 8-person service)
Service Need	150	25	303	38

Source: Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership, Mental Health and Learning Disability Residential and Supported Living Accommodation, Market Position statement 2021-2026.

5.243 This model would indicate that the number of supported living services is very similar to current service provision however an increase in the number of residential services. However, current policy to enable people to live as independently as possible in their own homes does not support an expansion of this model. Commission plans have seen a shift to a supported living model with several care homes de-registered and a shift to a housing with support/care at home model. Based on this the estimated need for the number of supported living services is expected to increase to 43.

5.244 Research carried out locally estimates the need for an additional 8 unit development on site every 2 years on a continued basis in Aberdeen to meet emerging need.

Aberdeenshire

5.245 Aberdeenshire has 19 registered care homes and 113 placements for learning disability clients, which includes 10 places within an older person's care home.

5.246 There are 87 supported living services within Aberdeenshire supporting 317 tenants. Provision ranges from dispersed singleton services and shared tenancies to a 24-unit extra care development and this figure also includes purpose-built project-based resources and repurposed HMO's.

Table 5.59: Number of placements – Aberdeenshire.

Aberdeenshire	Residential Services	Number of Placements	Supported Living Services	Number of Placements
Numbers of service users	19	113	87	317

Source: Aberdeenshire's Market Position Statement, Accommodation for Adults with Learning Disabilities 2020 – 2025.

5.247 Aberdeenshire's Market Position Statement, Accommodation for Adults with Learning Disabilities 2020 – 2025 indicates that there are currently 128 adults with learning disabilities waiting for accommodation. It is estimated that a further 130 accommodation places will be required by 2025 to meet the projected population increase.

5.248 Aberdeenshire intends to re-model the provision of care to provide better personalisation, outcomes, and value for money, by moving away from the current over-reliance on the residential care model and focus on more personalised services. Developments of extra-care facilities in Inverurie and Peterhead in the last five years reflect this change of direction.

5.249 There is insufficient capacity within existing supply to meet the needs of individuals prioritised on the accommodation waiting list for adults with learning disabilities in Aberdeenshire.

5.250 Aberdeenshire Council housing service carried out an exercise with Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership (AHSCP) to identify an evidence base of housing and support needs for clients with learning disabilities and mental health issues.

5.251 The evidence base gathered for 2022 and subsequently included in the SHIP for 2023- 2028 shows that there are 102 learning disability clients requiring accommodation and of this 93 require Extra Care Housing including 92, 1x bed properties and 1 x 2 bed property and indicates pressure points for housing for learning disability clients in Peterhead, Banff, Inverurie, Ellon and Stonehaven. The evidence base will be updated yearly. Extra care housing currently exists at Craigewan, Peterhead (11 units) and at St. James Place, Inverurie (24 units) however as the evidence base identified, currently there is insufficient accommodation for those that will require it. An Extra Care development of 24 units is currently underway in Ellon which will go some way to meeting identified need.

5.252 Aberdeenshire's Market Position Statement for adults with learning disabilities 2020 – 2025 provision for clients with learning disabilities concludes that a range of supported housing provision will be required including increasing the capacity for care home places. Working with the providers of older people's care and nursing homes, a requirement will be to ensure that adults with learning disabilities will have equal access when required. The development of specific areas in particular homes may be required to ensure staff have the knowledge to support and care for adults with learning disabilities.

5.253 The evidence base considered the needs of clients with mental health issues; 15 clients have been currently identified as requiring models of supported housing, such as extra care housing, 4 in a block or single units. Work is continuing with services to identify future housing and support needs of people with mental health issues.

5.254 A block of 8 flats at Moray Road, Fraserburgh were completely refurbished essentially providing new build accommodation for clients with mental health issues and learning disabilities. The properties are a mix of 1- and 2-bedroom flats with a security entry door system and all ground floor properties have a level access shower. A working partnership between Housing and Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership (AHSCP) collaborated to ensure the delivery of appropriate and affordable housing with support from a commissioned care service provider, providing levels of care and support tailored to individual needs.

Complex Care

5.255 The Scottish Government's Coming Home Implementation report sets out a clear objective to reduce the number of out of area residential placements and inappropriate hospital stays for people with learning disabilities and complex care needs who have intensive support needs.

5.256 In Aberdeen City there are currently 31 individuals with complex care needs requiring accommodation and in Aberdeenshire there are currently 28 people supported by Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership living out of area.

5.257 Aberdeenshire Council housing service is currently working with Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership (AHSCP) to identify the required model and numbers required for specialist housing for complex care clients. Accommodation Specifications are being prepared by AHSCP for discussion with housing colleagues.

5.258 The design of accommodation for this group requires spacious and robust properties that include a range of features to reduce the risk of harm to individuals and their support staff.

Data

5.259 The national Dynamic Support Register due to be introduced will be populated by local data and will record the number of complex care patients. Indicative local data is shown in Table 5.60 below.

Table 5.60: Number of placements – complex care – Aberdeen City.

Aberdeen City	Hospital Admissions	Delays in Hospital	Out of Area Placements to return to Area	Inappropriate placements (risk of breakdown)
Number of service users (2022)	4	3 (of the 4)	7	20 (number may change quickly)

Source: Aberdeen City Market Position Statement for Complex Care (2022).

5.260 As it currently stands a total of 30 people require complex care provision. Applying the optimum number of 8 units per site, currently 4 sites would be required to meet existing presenting need.

5.261 In relation to transitions of young people into adult service alone, there are between 6 and 12 referrals per year where young people are currently in out of area placements. This would typically indicate that a high proportion of the young people would be the criteria for complex care (which often prompts the out of area placement commencing).

5.262 Considering this it would not be overly ambitious to require an additional 1 site per year (8 units) on a continued basis to meet emerging need.

Future Provision and Needs

5.263 The evidence shows that both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire have a mix of care home provision from all sectors, including local authority, private and voluntary sectors for older people and people with particular needs.

5.264 In line with demographic projections, Aberdeenshire's Market Position Statement predicts that there will be a shortfall in capacity for older people's care home accommodation and the intention is to ensure opportunity for the third and private sector to develop additional provision in areas of under supply and additionally to adjust the geographical nature of care services and ensure provision matches demand.

5.265 Reviews are currently underway in both local authorities to determine future provision requirements for sheltered and very sheltered housing. Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council will continue to commit to ensure the future needs of supported provision are identified through the Local Housing Strategy and with partners in each respective Health and Social Care Partnerships.

Care and Support Services for Independent Living

5.266 The drive towards a shift in the balance of care has been evident for decades with a move away from care and support being provided in an institutional setting towards appropriate services delivered in a more homely, community-based setting.

Definition	
Social care support	A range of services that are provided to support people to live independently in their own homes, participate within their local community and maintain their dignity and human rights. This may include support with personal care. In Scotland, free personal and/or nursing care is available to all adults who meet the local authority's eligibility criteria.
Housing support	A range of low-level support services that provide help to people on a day-to-day basis. This can include assistance with budgeting and paying bills, planning meals and shopping, emotional support. These services can be provided at home, in temporary and/or supported accommodation.

National Policies

5.267 Key national policies and strategies that influence this area include the following:

- The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016,
- Scotland Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013,
- Care & Repair Scotland, Good Practice Guide,
- Scotland's National Performance Framework,
- National Telehealth and Telecare Delivery Plan for Scotland,
- Keys To Life – improving quality of life for people with learning disabilities,
- Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 and Community Care and Health (Scotland) Act 2002,
- Scottish Strategy for Autism,
- A Fairer Scotland for Older People – A Framework for Action 2019,
- A Fairer Scotland for Older People Framework Actions and Updated (June 2021),

Local Policies and Strategies

5.268 Key local policies and strategies that apply to this area include:

- Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership's Carers Strategy, 2018,
- Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership's Market Position. Statement 2021 – 2026,
- Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership's Complex Care Market Position Statement 2022 – 2027,

Property Needs – Care and Support Needs

5.269 This section considers the needs of individuals and households who require support. This may include the support from carers, care at home and housing support staff, social care and/or allied health professionals, technology eabled care, community alarm and Care and Repair services.

5.270 The levels of support can vary from low-level support that is designed to enable a person to manage their tenancy to 24-7 care and home and/or housing support that allows people with more complex care needs to live at home.

5.271 The provision of aids and adaptations plays an important role in keeping people safe at home. More information regarding aids and adaptations and Care and Repair services is reported above in Section 5.2, 'Accessible and Adapted Homes.'

Suitable for

5.272 People who are living at home but who required care and support to continue to live independently in their own homes.

5.273 The section mainly relates to older people; people with a physical disability, learning disability or mental health issues and people with other long-term limiting health conditions that may be affected by or exacerbated by their living conditions.

Evidence

5.274 People may require care and support services for a range of different reasons. The sections below set out the background and data for each of the groups mentioned above

Social Care Services

5.275 Demand for social care services is increasing as people live longer and live at home with more complex needs. The number of people aged 75 years and over in Aberdeen is expected to increase by 28.2% by 2033. In Aberdeenshire, the number of people of pensionable age is expected to increase significantly over the next 20 years (42.5%), with more than half of this group aged over 75.

5.276 The number of people living with a long-term condition is also rising. It is estimated that in Aberdeen approximately 66% of adults over the age of 65 will be living with multi-morbidity. In Aberdeenshire, an increase in the prevalence of long-term health conditions is forecast to increase with age and the ageing population. Whilst some factors contributing to ill health are responsive to intervention, it is anticipated that there will be more people living in Aberdeenshire who need increased levels of care.

5.277 Table 5.61 below shows the number of people supported by social care services across all age groups. This shows that the number of people support in Aberdeen has remained relatively stable at 10,585 in 2017/18 falling to 10,425 between 2018/19 and 2020/21. During the same period, data for Aberdeenshire shows a slight increase during 2018/19 and 2019/20 rising from 9,070 in 2017/18 to 12,784 in 2019/20 and returning to 9,430 in 2020/21.

Table 5.61: Number of people supported by social care services (all age groups).

	2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21	
	Number	**Rate per 1,000 population**	**Number**	**Rate per 1,000 population**	**Number**	**Rate per 1,000 population**	**Number**	**Rate per 1,000 population**
Aberdeen City	10,585	46.3	10,425	45.8	10,425	45.6	10,425	45.5
Aberdeenshire	9,070	34.6	12,100	46.3	12,785	48.9	9,430	36.2
Scotland	**230,115**	**42.4**	**240,625**	**44.2**	**237,840**	**43.5**	**231,925**	**42.4**

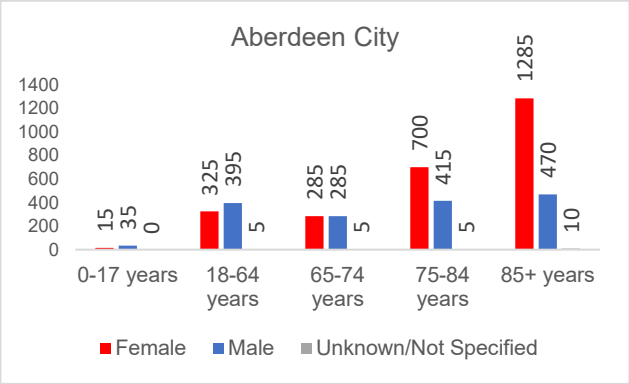
Source: Public Health Scotland, Insights in Social Care Dashboard, 2020/21[76].

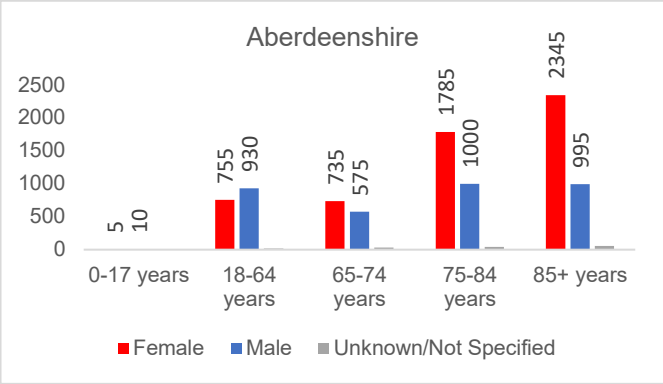
5.278 The rate per 1,000 population has shown little variation between 2017/18 (46.3) and 2020/21 (45.5) in Aberdeen, higher than the Scotland figure of 42.4 per 1,000 population. Over the same period Aberdeenshire saw an increase from 34.6 in 2017/18 to 46.3 in 2018/19, peaking at 48.9 in 2019/20 and then reducing again in 2020/21 to 36.2, lower than the rate for both Aberdeen and Scotland. Over the period the fluctuation in the rate for Scotland followed a similar pattern.

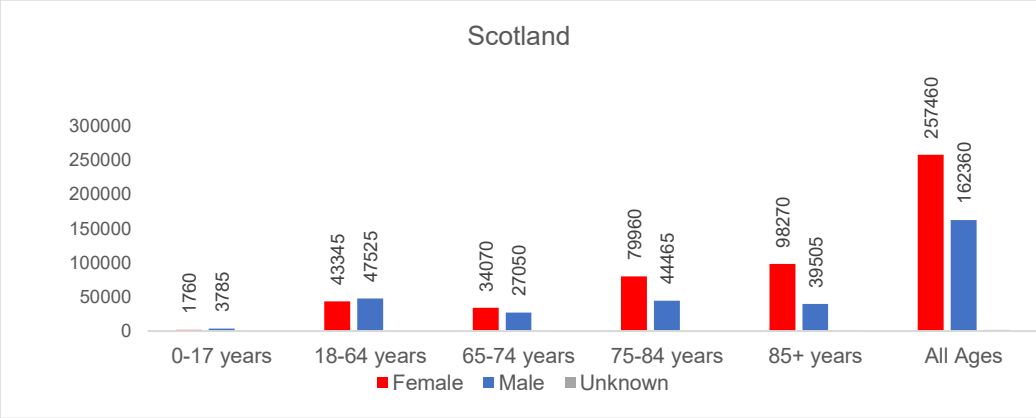
5.279 Figures 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 below show the number of people receiving social care services by age and gender in 2020/21 in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire and Scotland over the same period. The figures indicate a similar trend in both age and gender distribution across each area.

[76] Data limitation: Public Health Scotland's, Social Care Insights dashboards provide detail on a range of services and covered the period 2017/18 – 2020/21. Data for the financial year 2021/22 has not yet been published.

Figures 5.2, 5.3 & 5.4: People receiving social care services by age and gender 2020/21







Source: Public Health Scotland, Social Care Insights Dashboard, 2020/21 publication, April 2022

5.280 In the under 65-year age range there are more males than females receiving social care services, however this changes significantly in the 75 plus age range where the number of females exceed the number of males by over 50%.

5.281 Younger males aged 0-17 years are also shown as receiving more services than females of the same age in across all areas. The higher volume of young males requiring social care services and support could align with evidence suggesting that younger, single males are at higher risk of homelessness.

5.282 Statistics for Aberdeen City show that the highest number of people receiving social care services are females aged 85 years by a large margin. In Aberdeenshire, the number of females aged over 85 years is also the highest, this is also evident for those aged 75 – 84 years also have high levels of social care services in place. This is consistent with the demographic profiles within the areas.

Key issues:

- The group requiring the largest amount of social care are aged over 75 years. The number of service users increases again for those over age 85 with females aged 85 and over requiring the most support. In Aberdeenshire, the number of older people is predicted to be higher than in Aberdeen City over the next 20 years.
- However, there are a larger group of younger males aged 0-17 in Aberdeen City which may be indicative of the requirement for social services to support this demographic to prevent homelessness.

Number of people receiving social care services or support by client group

5.283 Table 5.62 below breaks down the support groups and highlights the number of people receiving these social care services or support from 2018-2021. No data was provided for Aberdeen City for 2020/21, as reflected in Table 5.63, but in line with the decrease in figures identified in Aberdeenshire and nationally, it is likely that Aberdeen City followed a similar trend. Updated figures are required to understand the full picture.

5.284 For Aberdeenshire, the figures show a significant increase in social care services for elderly/frail and a more moderate increase for dementia and the learning disability client group. Social care services for mental health and physical/sensory disability clients have decreased. Older age groups in line with the increase of the ageing population requiring a larger demand for services.

Table 5.62: number of people receiving social care services or support by client group, 2018-19.

	Dementia	Elderly/ Frail	Learning Disability	Mental Health	Physical/ Sensory Disability	Other	Not Recorded
Aberdeen City	1,755	5,155	880	1,855	2,690	3,150	870
Aberdeenshire	1,125	1,285	1,075	705	6,095	2,505	2,455
Scotland	**18,515**	**118,800**	**17,245**	**16,775**	**87,390**	**45,470**	**25,630**

Source: Public Health Scotland, Social Care Insights Dashboard 2018/19.

Table 5.63: number of people receiving social care services or support by client group, 2020-21.

	Dementia	Elderly/ Frail	Learning Disability	Mental Health	Physical/ Sensory Disability	Other	Not Recorded
Aberdeen City*	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Aberdeenshire	1,180	1,640	1,150	445	5,320	1,815	1,210
Scotland	**15,275**	**99,015**	**20,590**	**14,445**	**76,705**	**42,085**	**23,325**

Source: Public Health Scotland, Social Care Insights Dashboard, 2020/21 publication, April 2022. * No data available for Aberdeen City.

People receiving social care services by support type

5.285 Tables 5.64 and 5.65 below break down the various categories of support and highlights the number of people receiving these social care services or support from 2018-2021. Data for Aberdeen City was incomplete for 2020/21. From April 2020, Housing Support was no longer counted as part of the social care collection, so these figures are not included.

Table 5.64: number of people receiving social care services or support by support service type, 2018-19.

	Care Home	Community Alarm/Telecare	Day Care	Home Care	Housing Support	Meals	Social Worker
Aberdeen City	2,600	3,480	630	2,845	1,620	285	4,715
Aberdeenshire	2,700	5,320	785	2,905	2,350	45	7,870
Scotland	**51,475**	**125,120**	**11,175**	**91,590**	**16,305**	**6,435**	**126,400**

Source: Public Health Scotland, Social Care Insights Dashboard 2018/19.

Table 5.65: number of people receiving social care services or support by support service type, 2020-21.

	Care Home	Community Alarm/Telecare	Day Care	Home Care	Housing Support*	Meals	Social Worker
Aberdeen City*	2,140	N/A[77]	0	2,410	N/A	N/A	N/A
Aberdeenshire	2,445	5,195	575	3,625	N/A	20	6,540
Scotland	**48,160**	**113,205**	**6,240**	**93,280**	**N/A**	**5,695**	**127,500**

Source: Public Health Scotland, Social Care Insights Dashboard, 2020/21 publication, April 2022. * Partial data available for Aberdeen City.

5.286 For both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, the largest support services required from the 2018/19 data was social worker support, followed by community alarm /telecare, reflecting the national picture. In Aberdeen, this data was not recorded on the dashboard, but local data for 31 March 2021 shows 1,313 people were using a community alarm, 1,230 had a telecare package and a further 2,367 received a service in sheltered/very sheltered housing via an integrated telecare system. In total 4,910 people were in receipt of a community alarm/telecare services. For 2020/21 for Aberdeenshire, social worker support was again the highest although showing a decrease of 1330 since 2018/19 and again community alarm/telecare was the second highest required and showing a slight decrease of 125.

5.287 Home care support for Aberdeen City shows a decrease of 435 but increased by 720 in Aberdeenshire between 2018/19 and 2020/21.

[77] Data was not recorded for Aberdeen City, local data from Local Housing Strategy, Joint Delivery Action Plan 2020/21 is given in text above.

5.288 Care home support is shown as the fourth highest support service for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire and indicates a decrease in client numbers for both areas, mirroring national trends.

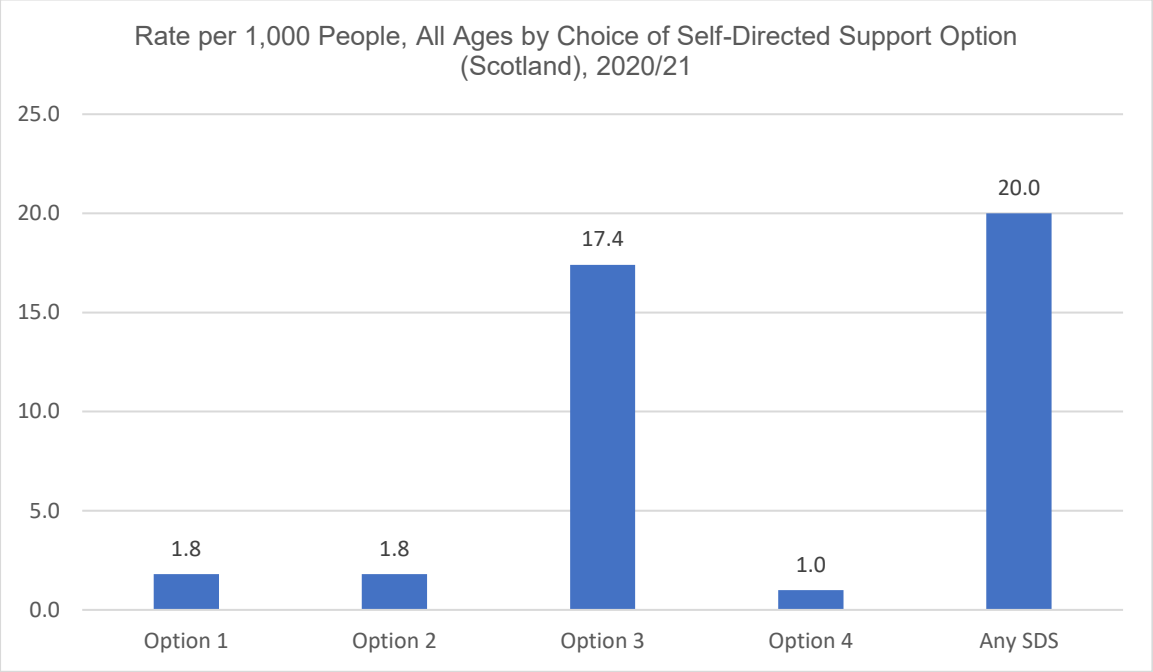
People Choosing Self Directed Support (SDS)

5.289 Self-directed Support (SDS) is the mainstream approach to social care in Scotland. It gives people control over an individual budget and allows them to choose how that money is spent on the support and services they need to meet their agreed health and social care outcomes. The self-directed support options available are:

- Option 1: Taken as a Direct Payment.
- Option 2: Allocated to an organisation that the person chooses, and the person is in charge of how it is spent.
- Option 3: The person chooses to allow the council to arrange and determine their services.
- Option 4: The person can choose a mix of these options for different types of support.

5.290 As seen in Figure 5.5 below, the most popular option in 2020-21 in Scotland was to allow the local Council to arrange and determine the support services required. Data for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire was not available for 2020/21, however previous data from 2018/19 highlights a similar pattern for Aberdeen City where there is a large preference towards option 3, with option 1 being the second most popular in the region. There is no data for Aberdeenshire provided for 2018/19. Updated data is required for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire to determine if they are following the national trends or have unique requirements.

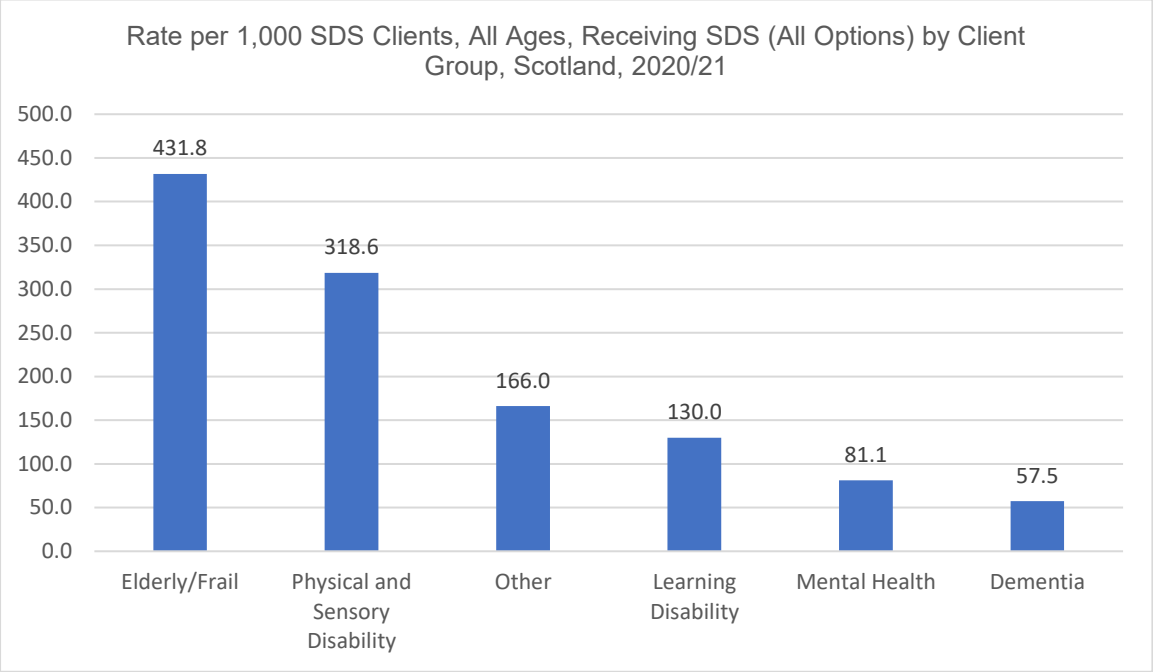
Figure 5.5: Number of people choosing SDS option (Scotland).



Source: Public Health Scotland, Social Care Insights Dashboard, 2020/21 publication, April 2022.

5.291 Figure 5.6 below provides a breakdown of people receiving SDS by client group which is particularly useful in considering future housing needs. The largest group that received SDS in 2020/21 in Scotland are those classed as Elderly/Frail, followed by those with a Physical & Sensory Disability. It is important to note that people may be recorded in more than one client group therefore the individual client group categories cannot be added together to obtain a total number of people.

Figure 5.6: People receiving SDS by client group (Scotland).



Source: Public Health Scotland, Social Care Insights Dashboard, 2020/21 publication, April 2022.

5.292 No data has been reported for Aberdeen City or Aberdeenshire for 2020/21 but 2018/19 data from Aberdeen City indicated a similar pattern, with Elderly/Frail population having the highest proportion followed by Physical & Sensory Disability & Other. Updated data is required for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire to determine if they are following the national trends or have unique requirements.

Key issues:

- Data for the number of people receiving care services in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire follows a similar pattern to national changes.
- The data reflects the demographic profile of the areas. There is higher population of young males receiving services in Aberdeen City. In Aberdeenshire, the number of people aged 75 years and over is higher than the number for Aberdeen. In both areas the number of females aged 75 plus account for the highest proportion of people receiving services

.

Unpaid Carers

5.293 Unpaid carers are people who provide care without pay for a family member, friend, or neighbour, who could not manage without this support for various reasons. The people they care for may be affected by disability, physical or mental ill-health, frailty, or substance misuse. People can become carers at different ages and stages of life, and they do not have to live with the person they care for.

5.294 The actual number of unpaid carers living in Scotland is not known. The data around unpaid carers are not up to date as the most recent census data is not yet available. There was an update provided by the Scottish Government in April 2022 to give more updated estimates. The number of carers living in Scotland is estimated to be around 700,000 to 800,000. The latest figures show an estimated total of around 685,000 carers living in Scotland, including 30,000 young carers (ages 4-18). The latest figures from the Scottish Health Survey 2016-19 also show that for people aged 16 and over, 17% of females and 12% of males are carers. People are more likely to be providing unpaid care in their later working years – especially females. Around a quarter (26%) of females aged 45-54 and females aged 55-64 (23%) provided unpaid care in 2016-19.

5.295 Scotland's 2011 Census highlights that 9.3% of the Scottish population identified themselves as being a carer but this varies quite considerably across Scotland. Aberdeen City had the lowest rate in Scotland, at 7%, and Aberdeenshire also had low figures at just under 8%. However, current estimates suggest the figures have raised since 2011. Local research and updated data are required for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire to determine if they follow national trends. When the 2022 Census data becomes available further analysis will be undertaken to improve understanding of the extent and characteristics of this group.

Key issues:

- The data for unpaid carers is at this time insufficient to enable any predictions on care and support services that may be required to provide support for this group. Research at a local level is required and data from the 2022 Census will provide much needed information to enable further understanding for this group. Findings will be incorporated into the Local Housing Strategy for both areas.

Home Care and Personal Care

5.296 Care at home services can help individuals with personal care, home support and practical support to live independently. This can include people of all ages who experience frailty and/or dementia, people living at home with illness, disability or sensory impairment, mental health problems or substance misuse problems.

5.297 Table 5.66 below shows a snapshot of the number of people receiving home care services Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. This identifies a slight increase in the number of people receiving a service since 2017 which corresponds with national trends.

Table 5.66: Number of People Receiving Home Care Services (all ages) during Census week in March annually.

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Aberdeen City	1,750	1,870	1,870	1,870
Aberdeenshire	2,255	2,025	2,120	2,290
Scotland	**59,940**	**59,875**	**59,000**	**59,960**

Source: Public Health Scotland, Insights in Social Care: statistics for Scotland 2019/20 – 2020/21.

5.298 Table 5.67 shows the data for people receiving a homecare service who were aged 65 years and over. In Aberdeen City, there was a decrease of 530 clients between 2017 and 2021 whereas Aberdeenshire shows a slight increase of 80 clients over the same period, which is similar to the national picture, where the increase in clients was 1,020.

Table 5.67: Number of homecare clients aged 65 years and over.

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Aberdeen City	1,740	1,530	1,410	1,210
Aberdeenshire	2,000	2,050	1,950	2,080
Scotland	**48,800**	**50,590**	**49,160**	**49,780**

Source: Scottish Government, Free Personal & Nursing Care Statistics.

5.299 The number of home care hours delivered for clients of all age groups since 2017 in both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire is shown in Table 5.68. This illustrates a 9% increase or 2,385 hours in Aberdeen City and 11% or 2,030 hours in Aberdeenshire. In comparison the increase across Scotland for the same period was 4%-, or 30,620-hours service.

Table 5.68: Number of hours home care delivered (all ages) during Census week in March annually.

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Aberdeen City	25,050	27,435	27,435	27,435
Aberdeenshire	18,315	16,540	17,685	20,345
Scotland	**702,885**	**686,130**	**721,265**	**733,505**

Source: Public Health Scotland, Insights in Social Care: statistics for Scotland 2019/20 – 2020/21.

5.300 Since 2019, free personal care in Scotland has been available to all adults, previously this related only to those aged 65 years and over. The support provided can assist with personal hygiene; mealtimes; mobility; medication; and general wellbeing.

5.301 Table 5.69 below indicates the number of people aged 65 and over receiving free personal care between 2017/18 and 2020/21. This shows a decrease in Aberdeen City of 19.3% and a small increase in both Aberdeenshire and Scotland (3.1% and 2.5% respectively) during this time.

Table 5.69: Free personal care clients ages 65+ years.

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Percentage Change 2017-2021(%)
Aberdeen City	1,420	1,530	1,410	1,210	-19.3%
Aberdeenshire	1,960	2,000	1,890	2,020	3.1%
Scotland	**46,880**	**48,140**	**46,090**	**46,820**	**2.5%**

Source: Scottish Government, Free Personal & Nursing Care Statistics, 2022.

5.302 The number of people receiving personal care at home or using SDS option 1 represent over half the total number of adults requiring long term care in Scotland. While the figures for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire are slightly lower than the national average of 62%, they are still reporting a high percentage, 53% and 57% respectively, as seen in Table 5.70 below.

Table 5.70: Number of people receiving personal care at home or direct payments for personal care (SDS) as a percentage of the total number of adults needing long-term care.

	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		Total Adults
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	
Aberdeen City	1,970	56%	1,970	56%	1,825	53%	3,540
Aberdeenshire	2,265	58%	1,915	53%	2,170	57%	3,910
Scotland	57,875	63%	58,872	63%	58,250	62%	91,925

Source: Public Health Scotland, Core Suite of Integration Indicators, September 2021.

Key issues:

- The number of people receiving homecare services in Aberdeen fell by 530 between 2017/18 and 2020/21, however the number of homecare hours delivered increased by 9% over this period. In Aberdeenshire, the number of people receiving homecare services increased by 80, and the number of hours also increased by 11%.
- This increase in the number of hours provided was higher in both Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire compared to Scotland, where the increase was 4% over the same period.
- The number of people aged 65 years and over reduced in by 19.3% in Aberdeen City but increased 3.1% in Aberdeenshire and 2.5% in Scotland between 2017/18 and 2020/21.
- The number of people receiving free personal care at home or choosing SDS option 1 accounted for more than half of all people receiving long-term care. Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire were slightly lower at 53% and 57% respectively compared to 62% for Scotland.

Technology Enabled Care

5.303 The Technology Enabled Care (TEC) is an umbrella term that covers a range of technologies that support people to live independently.

5.304 Dispersed community alarm equipment in people's own homes and integrated warden call systems in sheltered and supported housing enable service users to raise an alert in an emergency or where assistance is required. Typically, the equipment can include a button, pull cord or pendant, integrated smoke and heat detection, PIRs[78] and other peripherals to manage safety and security. The alerts can trigger calls on site or remotely via an alarm receiving centre.

5.305 Community and telecare services are operated by Bon Accord Care in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Lifeline in Aberdeenshire.

5.306 Table 5.71 below shows the level of telecare services provided in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. Aberdeen recorded a higher number of telecare packages with 1,242 compared to 162 connections in Aberdeenshire. However, the number of community alarm connections in Aberdeen (1,365) was lower than Aberdeenshire (2096).

Table 5.71: Telecare and Community Alarm provision March 2022.

	Community Alarm only	Telecare package	Other	Total
Aberdeen City	1,365	1,242	2,382 (sheltered[79])	4,989
Aberdeenshire	2,096	162	339 (both)	2,597

Source: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council Community Alarm Teams (2022)

5.307 Table 5.72 below shows the number of people receiving community alarm and/or telecare services between 2017 and 2021. The use of community alarm and telecare services has increased by 17.2% within Aberdeen City during this time, although the use of these services in Aberdeenshire dropped by 5.9% and by 1.4% nationally. There was an increase in people receiving community alarm or TEC services in 2018/19 in Aberdeen City and at a national level. This figure has since plateaued in Aberdeen City while it has decreased nationally.

[78] Passive Infrared detectors that identify activity/inactivity within the home.

[79] Warden call systems in sheltered housing were upgraded to telecare standards in Aberdeen City. Figure indicates number of live connections at 31 March 2022.

Table 5.72: number of people receiving community alarm and/or telecare services, 2017/18 – 2020/21.

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Percentage Change 2018-2021 (%)
Aberdeen City	2,970	3,480	3,480	3,480	17.2%
Aberdeenshire	5,520	5,320	5,335	5,195	-5.9%
Scotland	**131,915**	**136,900**	**132,535**	**130,130**	**-1.4%**

Source: Public Health Scotland, Social Care Insights Dashboard 2020/21.

Key issues:

- The number of people receiving a telecare and community alarm service decreased slightly for Scotland as a whole between 2017 and 2021 (-1.4%). In Aberdeenshire, the percentage decrease was larger at –5.9%, whilst in Aberdeen there was a 17.2% increase in the same time period.

- The number of people receiving a service was lower in Aberdeen City (3,480) compared with Aberdeenshire 5,195 in 2020/21.

Future Provision and Needs Required

5.308 The shift in the balance of care to services to support individuals to remain at home or in a homely setting is apparent in the evidence gathered for this chapter.

5.309 Although the data for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire is incomplete around some areas of social care services, client groups and support types it is probable that future provision will increase in line with population projections. In particular, the number of support hours for learning disability clients has increased. Public Health Scotland show an increase in people with learning disabilities of 3,335 across Scotland between 2018/19 and 2020/21. Although the figures for Aberdeen City are not recorded, the data does show an increase for Aberdeenshire of 75 clients in the same timeframe whilst support hours for other client groups, namely mental health clients and clients with physical and sensory disabilities have decreased. The Scottish Commission for People with Learning Disabilities shows a figure across Grampian of around 2,471 for 2018 and 2019. Figures for 2020 onwards are not yet known. Any future requirements will be identified through working with partners in Health and Social Care Partnerships and where possible additional homes delivered through the Strategic Housing Investment Plans.

5.310 Similarly, an ageing population, the predicted increase in the number of people living with a long-term condition, and the numbers of adults living with multi-morbidity over the age of 65 in both Aberdeen City and in Aberdeenshire is likely to require increased levels of support for independent living at home. Support for clients over the age of 75 and clients living with dementia would be expected to rise in line with the ageing population estimates and more so

in Aberdeenshire where the numbers of older people are anticipated to increase significantly.

5.311 TEC will continue to be an important element of care and support for independent living at home, however the figures for Aberdeen City indicate a potential increase in need for these services, whereas Aberdeenshire indicate a small decrease in need similar to the national picture.

5.312 Public Health information post 2021 and the awaited Census information for 2022 will provide necessary further information on population trends and subsequently should provide some clarity for the support and care services needed.

Location and Land Needs – Site Provision

5.313 Definitions:

Definition	
Gypsy and Travellers	The term 'Gypsy/Travellers' can refer to several distinct groups who consider a travelling lifestyle to be part of their cultural or ethnic identity such as Roma/Romany Gypsy, or Scottish and Irish Travellers. This definition recognises that 'Gypsy and Travellers' are not a homogenous group; although some may share cultural similarities such as nomadism, they may consider themselves to be distinct from others.
Travelling Showpeople	Members of groups organised for the purpose of bringing fairs, circuses or shows to locations across the UK and Europe. They are distinct from Gypsy/Travellers in that travelling is not considered part of their ethnic identity, rather their occupation and resultant lifestyle necessitates that they travel. Although Travelling Showpeople are not considered to be an ethnicity, they have a distinct cultural identity built on their history of providing entertainment to local communities.

National Policies

5.314 National policy and strategy that relate to this area includes:

- Gypsy/Travellers and the Scottish Planning System – A Guide for Local Authorities, 2015,
- Addressing Race Equality in Scotland: The Way Forward 2017,
- Guidance for Local Authorities on Managing Unauthorised Camping by Gypsies and Travellers in Scotland, 2017,
- Gypsy/Traveller Site Provision, 2018,
- Improving the Lives of Scotland's Gypsy/Travellers (2019 – 2021),
- Improving Gypsy/Traveller site: Guidance on minimum site standards and site tenants' core rights and responsibilities,
- A Fairer Scotland for all: Race Equality Action Plan and Highlight Report,
- The Planning Act (Scotland) 2019,
- Gypsy/Travellers – accommodation needs: evidence review 2020,

Local Policies and Strategies

5.315 Local policy and strategy that relates to this area include:

- Aberdeen City Local Development Plan 2023,
- Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2023,
- Aberdeenshire's Site Provision Strategy 2021-2026,
- Grampian Gypsy/Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment 2017.

Land Needs

5.316 The provision of sites requires land that is near amenities and within communities with sufficient space for caravans, trailers, show vehicles, washing/drying area and space for children and young people.

Aberdeen City	Provision of Gypsy and Traveller sites are identified in the respective Masterplans for the sites at Grandholme, Newhills and Loirston. A site at Loirston has planning consent, however no sites have yet been delivered. The provision of further Gypsy and Traveller sites features in the proposed Local Development Plan that is currently under examination by Scottish Government Reporters. The Local Development Plan 2023 is expected to be adopted in early 2023.
Aberdeenshire	Aberdeenshire has identified the need for a site in Central Aberdeenshire and three locations have been identified in the current Local Development Plan (2023). Aberdeenshire's Site Provision Strategy 2021-2026 was approved by the Gypsy and Traveller Sub Committee in November 2021. Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2023 was adopted in January 2023.

Care and Support Needs

5.317 Care and support needs may vary, but generally access to education support, welfare and financial inclusion advice, health services and housing services are required.

5.318 Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council's Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officers provide advice, support, and signposting for all members of the Gypsy/Traveller community, on council managed sites, private sites, unauthorised encampments and in the settled community.

5.319 The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer works closely with Education and Health colleagues to try to achieve the best outcomes for Gypsy/Travellers.

Aberdeen City	Aberdeen City Council's Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer manages the Clinterty Travelling Persons site. The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer is a member of the Site Manager's Group.
Aberdeenshire	Aberdeenshire Council's Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer manages Aikey Brae Travellers' Site and assists with the management and administration of the Greenbanks Travellers' Site. The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer is a member of Aberdeenshire's Tackling Poverty and Inequalities Group which has the remit to maximise income, address fuel poverty and provide training to achieve the best outcomes for Gypsy/Travellers. The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer is a member of the Site Managers' Group.

Suitable for

5.320 These types of sites are suitable for members of the Gypsy/Traveller communities, as well as Travelling Showpeople.

Evidence

5.321 The population size of Gypsy/Traveller groups across Scotland is relatively unknown compared with other ethnic groups. There is limited official data available in terms of the number of households and overall population numbers. The Scottish Government previously published a semi-annual count of households in Gypsy and Traveller communities living on official council sites, private caravan sites and unauthorised encampments. The last year that this count was undertaken was 2009 and only included Gypsy/Traveller households based on sites/encampments, meaning the data is likely not a true reflection of the current population of this group of people in Scotland. The Scottish Government made the decision to cease these counts as there were no notable trends to be drawn from the data.

5.322 'Gypsy/Traveller' was introduced as an ethnic category in the 2011 Census, which provided baseline population data for this group for the first time.

Table 5.73: People identifying as 'Gypsy/Traveller'.

Area	Total Number	Percentage
Aberdeen City	279	6.6%
Aberdeenshire	175	4.2%
Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire	**454**	**10.8%**
Scotland	**4,200**	**100%**

Source: Census 2011.

5.323 Table 5.73 above suggests that around 10.8% of Scotland's Gypsy/Traveller community resides in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. The data is considered to be unreliable due to its age and the fact that members of the community may choose not to identify as part of this ethnic group. The true population figure is likely to be much higher, and organisations that work with Gypsy/Travellers have estimated this to be between 15,000 and 20,000 people. Assuming that Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire are home to 10.8% of the Gypsy/Traveller population in Scotland, the true population may be between 1,620 and 2,160 across both areas. These figures will be reviewed when 2022 Census data becomes available and findings will be reflected in the Local Housing Strategy for both areas.

Key issues:

- Whilst there is a lack of reliable data to provide accurate projections, by using data from the 2011 Census and national population estimates of the Gypsy/Traveller community, there could be an estimated 2,160 Gypsy/Travellers across Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council areas.
- Despite the need for additional sites and potential locations being identified in the respective Local Development Plans of both councils, there has been a lack of progress in terms of delivering further site provision.

Public Sites

5.324 There are two primary obstacles facing Gypsy/Travellers in terms of their accommodations needs: a shortage of available sites, and the poor quality of the existing sites. The Scottish Government's evidence review identified a chronic shortage of sites nationally. As a result, it is estimated that around 80% of the Travelling community in Scotland live in bricks-and-mortar homes, many of whom would rather be a living a 'traditional' lifestyle.

5.325 There is one council run and managed Gypsy/Traveller site in Aberdeen located at Clinterty, which lies close to the border with Aberdeenshire. This provides 17 permanent pitches and 4 short term pitches. The site is currently undergoing significant refurbishment and will be closed until 2023/24.

5.326 There are two council run and managed sites in the North of Aberdeenshire:

- Aikey Brae, Maud, Peterhead. 10 pitches each with an electric pillar and a chemical toilet. There is access to water.
- Greenbanks, Banff. 20 stances, each with an amenity block with a hook up, separate toilet, level access shower, base and wall units, a sink and plumbing for a washing machine. The site is seasonal, open from April to the end of October. Five stances are currently available for occupation throughout the year.

Table 5.74: Traveller site occupancy figures, including children.

Site	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Clinterty Aberdeen	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	40
Aikey Brae, Maud	n/a[80]	63	145	36	25
Greenbanks, Banff	n/a[81]	n/a[82]	65	52	39

Source: Gypsy Traveller Liaison Officers, Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council[83].

5.327 Table 5.74 above shows that the occupancy levels for Aberdeenshire Council's managed sites reached a peak in 2019/20, before declining in 2020/21 and 2021/22. Aikey Brae in particular saw a significant drop in occupancy levels of around 75%. The site is occupied but not on a consistent basis, which is likely due to the basic facilities provided. Greenbanks' occupancy level has remained fairly consistent, apart from the period affected by Covid-19 pandemic. Historic occupancy figures for Greenbanks are limited as the site was previously managed by Aberdeenshire's Tenancy Services and the information is not comparable due to differences in their recording process.

5.328 Both sites in Aberdeenshire can be used for short term/transit stays. Aikey Brae is a transit/stopover with limited facilities, accessible throughout the year and Greenbanks operates on a seasonal basis. Two families have remained on Greenbanks since August 2020 as a result of the pandemic, when Gypsy/Travellers were encouraged to remain in one location. Currently five stances on Greenbanks are accessible all year. Table 5.75 shows the waiting list demand for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council's public sites in

[80] Comparable data not available for this period as sites were managed by Tenancy Services and different recording mechanism applied.
[81] Comparable data not available for this period as sites were managed by Tenancy Services and different recording mechanism applied.
[82] Comparable data not available for this period as sites were managed by Tenancy Services and different recording mechanism applied.
[83] Aberdeenshire Council calculates occupancy figures based on full year (Jan – Dec) figures rather that financial years.

2018 as this is the most recent published data available from Scottish Government. Occupants have remained on Aikey Brae site longer than the two weeks transit option. The longest stay on Aikey Brae to date has been 66 days (2022). Aberdeenshire Council does not maintain a waiting list for either site.

Table 5.75: Waiting list demand.

Area	Current waiting list	Up to 12 months on list	More than 12 months	Turned away in last year
Aberdeen City	7	7	0	2
Aberdeenshire	0	0	0	0

Source: Gypsy/Traveller Site Provision, Scottish Government, 2018.

5.329 In 2021, Aberdeen City Council had 14 people on the waiting list for their public site, double the number of people waiting in 2018, which suggests that demand for pitches has increased. Waiting list data for 2022 was not available due to the ongoing refurbishment at the site, as the list is kept in paper form at the site.

5.330 Aberdeenshire's sites do not have waiting lists as the sites are seasonal/transit. For Aikey Brae, Gypsy/Travellers will typically request access to the site, and they will be assigned a vacant pitch. For Greenbanks, resident families will typically indicate whether they will be returning for the following season and ask for a stance to be reserved if so. It tends to be the same families who return to the site, with any vacant stances being available for occupation by other Gypsy/Traveller groups.

5.331 As of 2019, there were 29 public Gypsy/Traveller sites across Scotland with a total of 397 pitches. The average number of pitches per site is therefore 13.7, with the sites at Clinterty and Greenbanks being well above this figure and Aikey Brae being slightly lower. Aberdeenshire in particular has the third-highest number of public pitches in Scotland.

Key issues:

- Aberdeen City has only one official public Gypsy/Traveller site, and this is currently closed due to refurbishment which may increase the number of unauthorised encampments in the area. Additionally, the waiting list figures for 2021 indicated that there was increased demand for this site prior to the closure.
- The occupancy levels of Aberdeenshire's council owned sites, however, has declined since 2019/20. This is believed to be as a result of the pandemic and reduced opportunities for employment, exacerbated by economic circumstances.

Privately Owned Sites

5.332 Some Gypsy/Travellers have expressed a preference for living on private sites as they can live in family groups and monitor who is admitted on the site. There are eight privately owned and manged sites across two areas detailed in Table 5.76 below.

Table 5.76: Privately owned Gypsy/Traveller Sites.

Area	Site	Number of pitches
Aberdeen City	Dyce	8
Aberdeenshire	New Pitsligo	5
	Boddam	4
	North Esk Residential	11
	North Esk Transit	9
	Findon Football	5
	Boyndie	14
	Clola	3
	Quarry Wood, Greatstone Wood, Kemnay	10
	Standryford Farm Newmachar	1 (subject to conditions)

Source: Gypsy Traveller Liaison Officers, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council.

5.333 There are some barriers faced by those wishing to develop private sites. Owners may face issues with the cost and quality of land availability. Less expensive plots may require expensive solutions in order to satisfy planning requirements. The planning application process can be challenging and objections from the settled community may impact on success. Literacy issues can impact on the organisation of basic infrastructure such as the installation of water, electric and gas supplies. Another factor can be the cost of a residential site licence and the requirement for a fire risk assessment to be carried out. This is a recurring cost as the licence has to be renewed after 5 years.

Table 5.77: Planning applications for private sites, 1992-2018.

Area	Number of Planning Apps	Initial Apps Approved	Approved on Appeal	Called In	Refused, Withdrawn or Pending
Aberdeen	3	1	2	0	0
Aberdeenshire	14	2	2	1	9
Scotland	**88**	**35**	**18**	**1**	**35**

Source: Gypsy/Traveller Site Provision, Scottish Government, 2018.

5.334 Research published by the Scottish Government in 2018 detailed the number of planning applications made by each local authority in relation to private sites, as well their outcomes. During this period, there were 3 applications made in Aberdeen City, whereas 14 applications were made in Aberdeenshire which was the second highest number in any of the local authorities in Scotland.

Table 5.78: Planning applications for private sites, 2018-present.

Area	Number of Planning Apps	Initial Apps Approved	Approved on Appeal	Called In	Refused, Withdrawn or Pending
Aberdeen	1	0	0	0	1
Aberdeenshire	4	1	0	0	3

Source: Planning Services, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council.

5.335 Table 5.78 above shows the number of planning applications made in both areas from 2018 to present day. Aberdeen City Council has received one additional application for a private site since 2018. As part of the application for a residential development in Newhills, there is provision for a private Gypsy/Traveller site to be developed. At this time, the planning authority have issued an opinion that the application will require an Environmental Impact Assessment.

5.336 Aberdeenshire has received four planning applications for private sites since 2018. Three of these applications were made in 2021 and two are still awaiting a decision, these being for the formation of new sites in Newmachar and Portlethen with one and five pitches respectively. The other application made in 2021 in relation to the existing site at Quarry Wood has been approved and the number of pitches on the site has increased to ten. There was also an application approved in early 2019, for the formation of the North Esk transit site which is currently operational.

Key issues:

- Despite Gypsy/Travellers indicating a preference for private sites, constructing these sites can be costly and challenging. Planning permission can be difficult to obtain, and even after receiving approval the sites may be subject to further requirements such as an Environmental Impact Assessment or other additional materials.

Site Standards

5.337 There is a general lack of awareness from the Gypsy/Traveller community regarding minimum site standards for their sites. In a report carried out by the Scottish Housing Regulator in 2018/19, it was found that only around 1 in 10 interviewees were aware that there were minimum site standards published by the Scottish Government in 2015. Table 5.79 below shows the site standards that interviewees viewed as most important

Table 5.79: Site Standards seen as most relevant for tenants of Gypsy/Traveller sites.

Physical Fabric & Facilities	Safety & Security
Condition of amenity blocks (including energy efficiency), the range of facilities provided by amenity blocks, the condition of pitch surfaces and the quality of play park facilities.	Provision of fencing to pitches, safety for children (including road safety on and off-site, and access to suitable secure play parks), and fire safety (including some concerns around the extent to which sufficient smoke detectors and fire extinguishers were provided).
Maintenance & Repairs	**Fair Treatment & Consultation**
Ensuring sufficient ongoing maintenance and investment for sites – there is a common view that there has been insufficient investment in recent years. Repair timescales were also highlighted, with some suggesting that multiple requests are needed for work to be completed. A small number also referred to fly tipping on vacant pitches and noted the detrimental impact on neighbouring pitches.	Ensuring equity with other sites and social tenants. Some compared their rent unfavourably with that for permanent housing and suggested that this was poor value for money relative to the facilities provided. Communication with tenants is also important, although participants typically focused on engagement around specific planned works (rather than ongoing engagement, for example).

Source: Scottish Housing Regulator: National Panel of Tenants and Service Users 2018/19, Thematic Report: Gypsy/Traveller Sites, March 2019.

Unauthorised Encampments

5.338 The number of unauthorised encampments in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire would suggest that there are significant gaps in provision. Tables 5.80 and 5.81 show the numbers recorded since 2017/18. This shows the number of encampments has increased in both areas following the pandemic but still generally remain lower than the numbers reported in 2017/18.

Table 5.80: Number of unauthorised encampments in Aberdeen City.

Area	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Total 2018 to 2022
Aberdeen City	26	27	11	15	22	**75**

Source: Gypsy Traveller Liaison Officer, Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council.

Table 5.81: Number of unauthorised encampments in Aberdeenshire.

Area	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Total 2018 to 2022
Banff & Buchan	4	4	6	1	1	12
Buchan	12	14	10	2	8	34
Formartine	0	0	0	0	2	2
Garioch	0	0	1	0	1	2
Kincardine & Mearns	1	1	3	2	5	11
Marr	3	3	1	0	0	4
Total	**20**	**22**	**21**	**5**	**17**	**65**

Source: Gypsy Traveller Liaison Officer, Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council.

5.339 As one site in Aberdeenshire has basic facilities and the other is open on a seasonal basis (April to the end of October) with five stances currently accessible throughout the year, this has an impact on the number of Unauthorised Encampments. The distribution of these encampments by area reflects the movement patterns of Gypsy/Traveller communities along the A90, A93, A96 and A947.

5.340 The site in Aberdeen tends to be fully occupied which encourages unauthorised encampments and suggests there are not enough pitches to meet demand. Moreover, when public sites are occupied, the tenancies can often last for more than two years. Table 5.82 below shows that in 2018, 61% of tenancies in council owned sites across Scotland were longer than two years, with 83% lasting longer than six months.

Table 5.82: Length of tenancy for pitches in publicly owned sites by percentage.

Area	Occupancy Level	0-6 Months	6-24 Months	2+ Years
Aberdeen	100%	19%	5%	76%
Aberdeenshire	53%	100%	0%	0%
Scotland	**88%**	**17%**	**22%**	**61%**

Source: Scottish Government, Gypsy/Traveller Sites in Scotland, December 2018

5.341 Table 5.82 shows that Aberdeen City broadly followed the national trends in tenancy length, while Aberdeenshire had a lower occupancy level, and most tenancies were short-term. It is important to note that this data was captured in 2018 and these trends may not be reflective of the current occupancy. The figures for Scotland, however, indicate that much of the publicly owned sites are occupied long-term and therefore there are likely to be fewer spaces available for prospective new tenants.

Key issues:

- The number of unauthorised encampments in both areas appears to be rising again following the low number reported during the pandemic. Most of Aberdeenshire's unauthorised encampments are in North of Aberdeenshire, which suggests there is a need for improved facilities on existing sites.

Health, Care and Support Needs

5.342 According to the 2011 Census, Gypsy/Travellers are more likely to suffer from long-term health problems or disabilities, with 28% reporting such a condition compared to 20% of the general population. They were also more likely to be limited 'a lot' by said condition, with 16% reporting this compared to 10% of the general population.

5.343 The Census also showed that 11.7% of Gypsy/Travellers had a caring responsibility. Despite the younger age profile of this group, data suggests

they have a higher rate of ill health than the general population. The accommodation needs of Gypsy/Travellers can be detrimental to their healthcare outcomes, for example if they are moving sites frequently it can be harder to access services. There is, however, a general lack of evidence regarding the health and care needs of Gypsy/Travellers across Scotland.

5.344 Gypsy/Travellers face difficulties when engaging with educational services and their educational outcomes are among the worst in Scotland. Data from the 2011 Census shows that Gypsy/Travellers aged 16 and over are less likely to have qualifications, with 50% of respondents having no qualification compared to 27% of the general population. These difficulties extend to further education beyond secondary school, with only 38% of Gypsy/Travellers aged 16-24 being full-time students compared to 46% of the general population in this age group. School leavers data from 2014-16 shows that 74.6% of leavers who identified as 'White – Gypsy/Travellers were in positive follow-up destinations, compared to 91.7% of the general population. Poor educational outcomes for Gypsy/Travellers can inhibit their ability to access resources which would improve the standards and maintenance of the sites in which they reside.

Key issues:

- Gypsy/Travellers are more likely to report long-term health problems and poor educational outcomes, and these issues can be exacerbated by their living conditions.

Future Needs & Provision Required

5.345 The Grampian Gypsy/Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment carried out in 2017 by Aberdeenshire Council and Aberdeen City Council found that the most desirable type of site was a local authority provided and managed permanent site. However, when data on the number of encampments and community feedback is considered, there is a demand for a range of provision, and it seems likely that there is currently a shortfall in available provision.

5.346 Past research has recommended the provision of a mix of small, family-orientated sites, as well as larger sites to accommodate varying sizes of Gypsy/Traveller groups.

5.347 The Grampian Regional Equality Council has recently undertaken research into the housing needs of Gypsy/Travellers in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. This involved engagement with Gypsy/Travellers through survey consultation and a review of the related feedback, as well as a review of existing national policy and research. The pool of Gypsy/Travellers

consulted was fairly limited, with five being consulted in Aberdeen City and six in Aberdeenshire.

Aberdeen City

5.348 Poor site quality is an issue which affects Gypsy/Travellers in Aberdeen. The Clinterty site is currently undergoing significant refurbishment to help remedy this issue and is due to close until 2023-24. This means that families have been temporarily relocated, but due to the length of time the site will be closed it is possible that Aberdeen may see a short-term increase in unauthorised encampments. The number of unauthorised encampments in the area has risen the pandemic, with the Altens area in particular seeing five appear in the first half of 2022.

5.349 Previous Local Development Plans have indicated an intention to reduce the size of the Clinterty site and develop an additional smaller site with Grandhome, Newhills, and Loirston being considered as viable locations. Despite this, no progress has yet been made in developing new sites.

5.350 GREC's engagement with local Gypsy/Travellers revealed that they had a preference for smaller sites with no more than ten pitches due to potential tension between family groups. They also acknowledged that although a small transit site would be beneficial, local Gypsy/Travellers traditionally prefer to frequent unofficial transit sites. The preferences of the local Gypsy/Traveller community therefore seem to align with Aberdeen City Council's intentions in their Local Development Plan, with a smaller site to Clinterty being desired and the need for a small transit site being acknowledged. The high number of unauthorised encampments in the Altens area may suggest that this would be a beneficial location to develop a smaller public site.

5.351 In the Local Development Plan, Aberdeen City Council is required as part of the 25% affordable housing contribution to make contributions towards provision of sites for Gypsy/Travellers. As part of the masterplan process for Greenferns Landward, a Gypsy/Travellers site has been identified.

Aberdeenshire

5.352 As the facilities at Aikey Brae are basic they do not lend themselves to long term occupancy. However, recently the site has seen occupants staying beyond the typical two-week transit period. Occupancy levels at Greenbanks have been reasonably consistent apart from during the pandemic. The level of demand for these sites means that families may be exploring private site options. There are several families who are in the process of applying for planning permission for additional private sites in the area.

5.353 The Gypsy/Travellers who were consulted were unanimous in their support for increased site provision in the area. Research dating back to 2014 also indicates that the general population of Aberdeenshire would support this, with 53% of those surveyed at the time indicating that Aberdeenshire Council should improve their site provision. The number of unauthorised

encampments in the North of Aberdeenshire has also been increasing, with a recent influx in the Buchan area in particular.

5.354 Aberdeenshire's Local Development Plan 2023 has identified three potential areas for new sites as appropriate locations for development of three new public sites - two halting and one transit. They are Inverurie, Blackdog and Chapleton. However, given that the land is privately owned the delivery of these sites is dependent on the build-out rate by private developers they are therefore unlikely to meet any identified need in the short term.

5.355 Gypsy/Travellers engaged with locally, expressed a desire for an additional site to be built in a location from which Aberdeen City is more easily accessible. Inverurie, in Central Aberdeenshire, was suggested as a suitable location. There may also be a need to provide additional transit pitches elsewhere in Aberdeenshire in the future, to ensure there is sufficient provision to meet local needs.

Travelling Showpeople

5.356 There is a lack of data nationally and locally to complete an in-depth analysis of the housing needs of Travelling Showpeople. Unlike 'Gypsy/Travellers,' this group was not represented as an ethnicity choice in the 2011 Census and as such there was not a population estimate given for this group.

5.357 However, in the 2022 Census there was an option for 'Travelling Showman/woman' to be selected as an ethnic identity following a request from the Scottish Section of the Showman's Guild to the Census Team. The Scottish Showman's Guild estimates that there is a population of around 2,000 Travelling Showpeople in Scotland, consisting of 400 member businesses.

5.358 The Grampian Regional Equality Council have undertaken engagement with Travelling Showpeople frequenting Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. The engagement was restricted to the number of shows visiting the area during the consultation period. As most shows took place in Aberdeenshire, the consultation was limited to those located in this area. Specifically, Travelling Showpeople pitched at Inverurie, Banff, Stonehaven, and Peterhead were consulted.

Aberdeen City

5.359 Those consulted stated that they were less likely to frequent the existing sites in Aberdeen City, such as the Aberdeen Beach sites, as they are perceived as being reserved for more commercial and international shows. The proximity of Codona's Amusement Park also contributes to the feeling within the community that these sites are less accessible to smaller family groups.

5.360 The existing sites at the beach are seen as having suitable facilities to host such groups, but at present the local community does not feel comfortable occupying them. It was suggested during the consultation that an additional site further from the existing sites would help the city become more accessible

to Travelling Showpeople. This site would ideally have at least ten pitches with suitable space for show equipment and access to essential facilities such as water and power sources. This may help to ease the pressure on Aberdeenshire's sites which are reportedly exhibiting signs of overuse.

Aberdeenshire

5.361 The Travelling Showpeople that were consulted visit sites across Aberdeenshire regularly, namely Banff, Ellon, Peterhead, Turriff, Oldmeldrum, Inverurie and Stonehaven, although the Ellon site is reportedly closing soon. The sites tend to be located on public land and a fee is required for their use. The fee paid is dependent on the number of amusement stalls and the duration of their stay.

5.362 Despite paying these fees, poor site quality is an issue faced across Aberdeenshire. Of the sites mentioned above, only Stonehaven has a water source on-site which means that most Travelling Showpeople are relying on the goodwill of neighbours for access to water.

5.363 Generally, the sites also lack an electrical power source which means occupants must rely on gas and electrical generators. These generators can cause friction with neighbours in the settled community due to the resulting noise. Improved site facilities would make Aberdeenshire more accessible to Travelling Showpeople.

Table 5.83: Number of shows in Aberdeenshire.

Year	Number
2018	6
2019	6
2020	None due to the pandemic
2021	10
2022	6

Source: GREC research Paper[84]: Accommodation Needs of Ethnic Minorities, Gypsy/Travellers and Travelling Showpeople (2022).

5.364 Existing sites struggle to accommodate larger groups of Travelling Showpeople and there are concerns that sites are suffering from overuse. Potential new site locations suggested during consultation included plots of land at Westhill and Portlethen. The creation of a new site may ease the pressure on existing sites, but it is important that existing facilities are also improved to help provide a higher quality of life for Travelling Showpeople in the area.

Key issues:

- There is estimated to be around 2,000 Travelling Showpeople in Scotland, but there is a lack of data to estimate the proportion of those in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. However, the Travelling Showpeople community in both areas have concerns about the overuse of existing sites.

[84] Attached separately as Appendix B

Stakeholder Engagement

5.365 Stakeholder engagement was undertaken by working with partners in both Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnerships through established operational and strategic groups that include representatives from multidisciplinary teams, third sector partners and service users and carers.

5.366 Face to face meetings with representatives of Aberdeen University, Robert Gordon University and NeSCOL, informed finding around the accommodation needs of students

5.367 Grampian Regional Equality Council were commissioned to carry out a research project in the accommodation needs of gypsy travellers and migrant workers. This included communication with partner organisations and the Gypsy Traveller Community (attached as Appendix B).

5.368 Care and Repair services, Disabled Persons Housing Service Aberdeen and Houseability in Aberdeenshire were consulted throughout the development of the document. Details of meetings are available upon request.

5.369 Consultees included:
Aberdeen City:
Local Housing Strategy Independent Living sub-group
Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership, Strategic Planning Group
Disabled Adaptations Group
Learning Disability and Mental Health Operational Groups
Complex Care Programme Board
Delayed Discharge Housing Liaison Group
Occupational Therapy
Bon Accord Care
Adaptation Services

Aberdeenshire:
Independent Living Strategic Outcome Group
Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Planning Group
Housing, Health & Social Care Programme Board
Learning Disability and Complex Care supported accommodation group
Adaptations Working Group
Mental Health supported accommodation group
Dementia Outcomes and Reference Group (includes service user representation)

Adaptations Services:
Occupational Therapy Service
Commissioning, Procurement and Contracts Team

Key Issues for Local Housing Strategy and Local Development Plans

Topic	Key Issues Identified in the HNDA
Accessible/adapted housing	1. Generally, there is a lack of accessible accommodation in both areas. In Aberdeen there has been a 47% rise in the number of applications with additional space requirements due to illness or disability. Aberdeenshire has over 900 people waiting for wheelchair/ground floor accessible accommodation. 2. Factors affecting the delivery of disabled adaptations include increased costs due to economic factors, equity in provision and delays in assessment. 3. Based on current estimates, approximately 4,000 properties in Aberdeen and 3,000 in Aberdeenshire require adaptations across all tenures. 4. The adaptations service is demand led, however, based on previous trends, the average annual requirement adaptations[85] for social rented housing is 630 in Aberdeen City and 732 for Aberdeenshire. In the private sector the predicted numbers are around 140 for Aberdeen City and 200 for Aberdeenshire. 5. There is an identified lack of accommodation for people with complex care needs or those with bariatric conditions. The enhanced specification can be delivered through housing provision, however the excess build costs to cover specialist features require capital investment out with the current levels of subsidy available for affordable housing.
Wheelchair housing	1. Aberdeen City has a wheelchair accessible target in relation to affordable housing and is developing a private sector target. Aberdeenshire has a cross-tenure target. It has not

[85] Major and minor adaptations, average per year carried out over 5-year period.

	been possible to determine an accurate measure of demand or provision, particularly for the private sector. A national data set would assist in developing future targets. 2. Using the methodology of the 'Still Minding the Step?' report, it is estimated that 737 households in Aberdeen City have an unmet housing need, with this figure being slightly higher in Aberdeenshire at 767. These figures will likely increase alongside the number of wheelchair households. The estimation of the number of all households requiring wheelchair accommodation is 0.9% in both areas.
Non-permanent housing e.g., for students, migrant workers, people experiencing homelessness, refugees, asylum seekers	1. It is difficult to predict future needs with any sort of accuracy, as the number of refugees and migrants could be affected by broader economic circumstances and world events which are unpredictable. 2. There remain challenges around supply and demand of suitable housing across all sectors, particularly larger family accommodation required to meet the needs of refugee families. 3. Young single males, prison leavers, care experienced young people and people experiencing domestic abuse are at a higher risk of homelessness. 4. In Aberdeen, the number of homeless presentations in 2020/21 of females in 16–17-year-old age group was almost double that compared with males in the same group. 5. There is a growing trend for international students to travel with their families which resulted in the need for larger accommodation in Aberdeen City. 6. Interim housing options for people who cannot return to their home and are delayed in hospital remain challenging. Aberdeen City has provided 22 bedspaces to improve system capacity and enable people to leave hospital to await appropriate housing, adaptations or care package. In Aberdeenshire

	there are no interim housing options available, however it is considered that this resource would be of significant benefit as clients awaiting housing options are currently placed in care homes.
Supported provision. e.g., care homes, sheltered housing, hostels and refuges	1. There is no current evidence to suggest an increased requirement for care home provision in Aberdeen City, however in line with demographic projections and the much larger predictions of the numbers of older people in Aberdeenshire, estimates show that there will be a shortfall in capacity for older people's care home accommodation. The intention is to ensure opportunity for the third and private sector to develop additional provision in areas of under supply and additionally to adjust the geographical nature of care services and ensure provision matches demand. 2. In Aberdeen, the Market Position Statement for learning disability and mental health identified the need for an additional 8 unit development, every 2 years plus one site per year to meet the needs of those with complex care. The Market Position Statement for Aberdeenshire identified a further 130 placement are required by 2025 for people with a learning disability. Work is ongoing to determine the needs for people with mental health issues. 3. Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council are both currently undertaking reviews of their sheltered housing and very sheltered housing services to determine future needs for this model of accommodation.

Care/support services for independent living e.g., home help, handyperson services, Telecare	1. People are living longer and being supported in the community with more complex needs. This is likely to lead to an increased requirement for care and support services, particularly in Aberdeenshire where the number of older people is predicted to be higher than in Aberdeen City over the next 20-year period. 2. In Aberdeen there are a larger group of younger males aged 0-17. This group may be more likely to require support and independent living skills to prevent homelessness. 3. Data on the needs of unpaid carers is not sufficient at this time to reliably predict the care and support services that may be required to provide support for this group. Research at a local level is required.
Site provision e.g., site/pitches for Gypsy/Travellers and sites for Travelling Showpeople	1. There are an estimated 2,160 Gypsy/Travellers across Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council areas. Despite the need for additional sites and potential locations being identified in the respective Local Development Plans of both Councils, there has been a lack of progress in terms of delivering further site provision. 2. Most of Aberdeenshire's unauthorised encampments are in North Aberdeenshire which suggests there is a need for improved facilities on existing sites.

Appendix A

List of Tables/Figures

Tables

2.1: Population Estimates 2011-2021

2.2: Population Age Structure by percentage, 2021

2.3: Percentage change in population by age groups, 2011-2021

2.4: In – Out - and Net migration, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, mid-2020 to mid-2021

2.5: Ethnic Groups in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, 2011

2.6: Households in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire (NRS)

2.7: Average household size, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire (NRS)

2.8: Household composition, 2011

2.9: Household Projections, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, 2018-2028

2.10: Household projections - low international migration variant

2.11: Household projections - high international migration variant

2.12: Projected change in household size by household type, 2018-2028

2.13: Average Monthly Rents Aberdeen City Council

2.14: Average Monthly Rents Aberdeenshire Council

2.15: Average Monthly Rents Registered Social Landlords in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire

2.16: Social Rent compared to Private Rent by Local Authority

2.17: RSL – Mid-Market rental units owned and managed by RSL

2.18: Annual Household Income

2.19: Lower Quartile and Median House Price 2019/20

2.20: House Price to Income Affordability Ratios

2.21: Average Monthly Rent 2021, 2 bed properties

2.22: Rent for 2 bed properties as a proportion of lower quartile income

2.23: Rent for 2 bed properties as a proportion of median income

2.24: Regional Share of the Most Deprived 20% of Scotland 2020

3.1: Proportion of dwelling types and median dwelling size (all tenures) by Aberdeenshire area

3.2: Number of dwellings (all tenures) in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire

3.3: Number of households (estimates) for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire

3.4: Rooms per dwelling in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire

3.5: Number of bedrooms per dwelling in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire

3.6: Dwelling Types

3.7: Dwelling types by tenure

3.8: Dwelling condition as per SHQS (social housing)

3.9: Percentage of dwellings failing SHQS by tenure.

3.10: Percentage of dwellings with stock condition issues by tenure.

3.11: Housing Tenure: proportion of dwellings by tenure

3.12: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire: housing stock by type and number of bedrooms

3.13: Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire Council: waiting lists by bedroom size as of 31.3.22.

3.14: One-bedroom stock breakdown for most pressured area and settlements

3.15: One-bedroom waiting list breakdown for most pressured area and settlements.

3.16: Number of housing applications on waiting lists as of 31st March over 5 years.

3.17: New housing applications received each year.

3.18: Aberdeenshire Council - low demand stock (excluding sheltered and very sheltered housing properties) at 31 March 2022

3.19: Concealed households

3.20: Local authority concealed family estimates from 2016-18, 3-year average

3.21: Households exceeding minimum bedroom standard by 2+ bedrooms.

3.22: Transfer applicants under-occupying a Council property

3.23: Transfer applicants rehoused who had been under-occupying a Council property

3.24: Number of tenancy terminations (by year and as a % of self-contained lettable stock)

3.25: Termination Reasons 2021/22

3.26: Number of relets per year for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire (as a % of total stock)

3.27: Vacant Local Authority Stock as 31st March 2022 and as a % of total stock

3.28: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Void Rent Loss#

3.29: Aberdeen City - number of offers and refusals.

3.30: RSL stock across Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire

3.31: Current RSL applicants as of 31st March 2022

3.32: RSL new housing applications received each year.

3.33: Long term Empty homes in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire

3.34: Number of second homes in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire between 2017-2021

3.35: Number of lets to existing tenants (Transfers)

3.36: Aberdeen City Council - Buy Backs 2019-2022

3.37: Aberdeenshire Council - Buy Backs 2019-2022

3.38: Number of mutual exchanges in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire 2017-2022

3.39: Number of properties by size that were re-allocated following downsizing.

3.40: Projected affordable housing completions 2022/23-2026/27

3.41: Affordable Completions 2017 – 2022

4.1: HNDA Tool Settings, Scenario 1-4, Aberdeen City and Aberdeen HMA

4.2: HNDA Tool Settings, Scenario 1-4, Aberdeenshire and Rural HMA

4.3: Concealed and overcrowded households – waiting list analysis and HoTOC

4.4: Number of households in temporary accommodation on 31 March 2023 and 31 March 2020

4.5: Estimate of existing need from Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Resettlement Schemes

4.6: Local Authority Existing Need Totals

4.7: Housing Market Area Existing Need Totals

4.8: HNDA Tool Settings, Scenario 1, Aberdeen City and Aberdeen HMA

4.9: Aberdeen City Scenario 1 (Default) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, Top Level Results

4.10: Aberdeen Housing Market Area Scenario 1 (Default) - Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, Constrained Results

4.11: Aberdeenshire Scenario 1 (Default) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, Top Level Results

4.12: Rural Housing Market Area Scenario 1 (Default) - Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, Constrained Results

4.13: Scenario 1 (Default) – Total Additional Housing Units by Area (2023-2042)

4.14: Scenario 1 – Total Additional Housing Units by Tenure City/Shire (2023-2042)

4.15: Scenario 1 (Default) – Proportion of Housing Units by Affordability and Area

4.16: HNDA Tool Settings, Scenario 2, Aberdeen City and Aberdeen HMA

4.17: Aberdeen City Scenario 2 (Principal Growth) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, Top Level Results, LA Generated Existing Need Figure

4.18: Aberdeen HMA Scenario 2 (Principal Growth) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, LA Existing Need Figure

4.19: HNDA Tool Settings, Scenario 2, Aberdeenshire and Rural HMA

4.20: Aberdeenshire Scenario 2 (Principal Growth) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, Top Level Results, LA Generated Existing Need Figure

4.21: Rural HMA Scenario 2 (Principal Growth) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, LA Existing Need Figure

4.22: Scenarios 1-2 – Total Additional Housing Units by Area (2023-2042)

4.23: Scenarios 1-2 – Total Additional Housing Units by Tenure City/Shire (2023-2042)

4.24: Scenario 2 (Principal Growth) - Proportion of Housing Units by Affordability and Area

4.25: HNDA Tool Settings, Scenario 3, Aberdeen City and Aberdeen HMA

4.26: Aberdeen City Scenario 3 (High Migration) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, Top Level Results, LA Generated Existing Need Figure

4.27: Aberdeen HMA Scenario 3 (High Migration) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, LA Existing Need

4.28: HNDA Tool Settings, Scenario 3, Aberdeenshire and Rural HMA

4.29: Aberdeenshire Scenario 3 (High Migration) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, Top Level Results, LA Existing Need Figure

4.30: Rural HMA Scenario 3 (High Migration) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, LA Existing Need

4.31: Scenarios 1-3 – Total Additional Housing Units by Area (2023-2042)

4.32: Scenarios 1-3 – Total Additional Housing Units by Tenure City/Shire (2023-2042)

4.33: Scenario 3 (High Migration) - Proportion of Housing Units by Affordability and Area

4.34: Estimate of annual future need p.a. from Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Resettlement Schemes

4.35: Estimate of future need p.a. from Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Resettlement Schemes

4.36: HNDA Tool High Migration household projections 2023-2028 – Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire

4.37: HNDA Tool (Scenario 4) household growth adjustment from Refugees, Asylum Seekers, and Resettlement Schemes 2023-2028

4.38: HNDA Tool Settings, Scenario 4, Aberdeen City and Aberdeen HMA

4.39: Aberdeen City Scenario 4 (High Migration Plus) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, Top Level Results, LA Generated Existing Need Figure

4.40: Aberdeen HMA Scenario 4 (High Migration Plus) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, LA Existing Need

4.41: HNDA Tool Settings, Scenario 4, Aberdeenshire and Rural HMA

4.42: Aberdeenshire Scenario 4 (High Migration Plus) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, Top Level Results, LA Generated Existing Need Figure

4.43: Rural HMA Scenario 4 (High Migration Plus) – Additional Housing Units in 5-Year Bands, LA Existing Need

4.44: Scenarios 1-4 – Total Additional Housing Units by Area (2023-2042)

4.45: Scenarios 1-4 – Total Additional Housing Units by Tenure City/Shire (2023-2042)

4.46: Scenario 4 (High Migration Plus) - Proportion of Housing Units by Affordability and Area

4.47: Estimate of average additional annual housing units p.a. across Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire by tenure (2023-2042)

5.1: Types of Specialist Provision

5.2: Projected percentage change for age breakdown by household, 2018 – 2048

5.3: Housing related hospital delayed discharge cases (people/bed days lost) – snapshot on 31 March annually

5.4: Long-term health problems or disability

5.5: All household members with a long-term physical or mental health condition by year

5.6: Limiting activities by tenure: Household has someone with long-term condition by tenure

5.7: Number of people awaiting accessible housing in Aberdeen City on 31 March

5.8: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council Particular Needs Stock

5.9: Adapted stock by area

5.10: Characteristics, tenure, and household attributes for adapted stock

5.11: Definition used to describe minor and major adaptations

5.12: Number of major and minor adaptations in social rented properties carried out between 2019 – 2022

5.13: Scheme of Assistance – Disabled Adaptations, number of grants approved 2017/18 – 2021/22

5.14: Private Sector Adaptations supported by Care and Repair 2021/22 Aberdeen City

5.15: Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) accessible and wheelchair targets for Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council

5.16: Council Owned Wheelchair Housing, 2021/22

5.17: Registered Social Landlord Wheelchair Adapted Housing, 2022

5.18: Estimate of wheelchair user households in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire based on 2018 household projections

5.19: Estimate of unmet housing need among wheelchair user households in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, based on 2018 household projections

5.20: Estimation of the number of households requiring wheelchair housing

5.21: Aberdeen City Council new build programme, wheelchair accessible properties, 2022

5.22: Registered Social Landlords in Aberdeen, new build programme, wheelchair accessible properties, 2022

5.23: Number of affordable housing units built for particular needs in Aberdeenshire

5.24: New build housing for particular needs in Aberdeenshire

5.25: Type of need: Temporary and Permanent Accommodation

5.26: Homeless applications 2017/18 - 2021/22

5.27: Live homelessness cases 2017/18 - 2021/22

5.28: Aberdeen City Council - breakdown of gender of single people presenting as homeless from 2017/18 – 2021/22

5.29: Aberdeen City Council - breakdown of age and gender of people presenting as homeless in 2020/21

5.30: Aberdeenshire Council - breakdown of age and gender of people presenting as homeless in 2020/21

5.31: Average total time (days) spent in temporary accommodation 2018-2022

5.32: Temporary Accommodation Placements 2020/21 and 2021/22

5.33: Households in temporary accommodation 2018-2022

5.34: Youth homelessness applications 2018-2021

5.35: Prison Service Homeless Applications

5.36: Domestic Abuse Homeless Applications

5.37: Homeless Applications made due to violent/abusive dispute within household – breakdown by gender

5.38: Former armed forces status for households assessed as homeless

5.39: Homeless applications from former members of the armed forces by local authority

5.40: Number of households ineligible for homeless assistance

5.41: Total number of completed matches where the Guests have arrived at their longer-term accommodation, by local authority and matching pathway

5.42: Number of Higher Education Students as at September Intake 2017 - 2021 (including undergraduate, taught post-graduate and PhD)

5.43: NESCOL - number of students 2017 - 2021 (including higher and further education)

5.44: Purpose-built student accommodation, average cost per week in 2021/22

5.45: Definitions of supported provision and property needs

5.46: Number of Care Homes for Adults, Registered Places, Residents and Percentage Occupancy in Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, and Scotland as of 31 March 2021

5.47: Number of care homes for adults, registered places, and residents by sector in Aberdeen City as of 31 March 2021

5.48: Number of care homes for adults, registered places, and residents by sector in Aberdeenshire as of 31 March 2021

5.49: Aberdeen City – specialist housing for older people

5.50: Local Authority Transition, Sheltered and Very Sheltered Housing Stock

5.51: Registered Social Landlord Private Retirement Home stock

5.52: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council waiting lists for sheltered housing and very sheltered housing as of September 2022

5.53: Expected shortfall in care home and very sheltered housing provision by 2037 in Aberdeenshire

5.54: Number of people in receipt of supported living services

5.55: Number of care homes and registered places for older people, Clients with physical and sensory impairment, mental health problems and learning disabilities – Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, and Scotland as of 31 March 2021

5.56: Occupancy rates for client groups in care homes – Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire as of 31 March 2021

5.57: Number of placements – Aberdeen City

5.58: Estimate number of services based on preferred model

5.59: Number of placements – Aberdeenshire

5.60: Number of placements – complex care – Aberdeen City

5.61: Number of people supported by social care services (all age groups)

5.62: Number of people receiving social care services or support by client group, 2018-19

5.63: Number of people receiving social care services or support by client group, 2020-21

5.64: Number of people receiving social care services or support by support service type, 2018-19

5.65: Number of people receiving social care services or support by support service type, 2020-21

5.66: Number of People Receiving Home Care Services (all ages) during Census week in March annually

5.67: Number of homecare clients aged 65 years and over

5.68: Number of hours home care delivered (all ages) during Census week in March annually

5.69: Free personal care clients ages 65+ years

5.70: Number of people receiving personal care at home or direct payments for personal care (SDS) as a percentage of the total number of adults needing long-term care

5.71: Telecare and Community Alarm provision March 2022

5.72: Number of people receiving community alarm and/or telecare services, 2017/18 – 2020/21

5.73: People identifying as 'Gypsy/Traveller'

5.74: Traveller site occupancy figures, including children

5.75: Waiting list demand

5.76: Privately owned Gypsy/Traveller Sites

5.77: Planning applications for private sites, 1992-2018

5.78: Planning applications for private sites, 2018-present

5.79: Site Standards seen as most relevant for tenants of Gypsy/Traveller sites

5.80: Number of unauthorised encampments in Aberdeen City

5.81: Number of unauthorised encampments in Aberdeenshire

5.82: Length of tenancy for pitches in publicly owned sites by percentage

5.83: Number of shows in Aberdeenshire

Figures

1.1 Organisational Structure

1.2 Housing Market Areas

2.1: Annual percentage change in population, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire combined, 2011 – 2021

2.2: Annual percentage change in population, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, 2011/12 to 2020/21

2.3: Projected percentage change in population, 2018 to 2038

2.4: Projected percentage change in population by age groups, 2018-2028

2.5: Population by age group, 2018 and 2028, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire combined

2.6: Components of population change, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, mid-2011 to mid-2021

2.7: Net migration, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire

2.8: Net migration by 5-year age groups, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, mid-2020 to mid-2021

2.9: Net migration for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, mid 2011 to mid-2021

2.10: Flows from Aberdeen City to Aberdeenshire and from Aberdeenshire to Aberdeen City, mid-2011 to mid-2021

2.11: Number of NINo registrations, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, 2011-2020

2.12: Projected change in households – 2018 - 2038

2.13: Comparison of 2014 and 2018 based Principle Household Projections

2.14: Annual net migration 2005 2019

2.15: Projected number of households by household type, 2018-2028

2.16: Projected percentage change in household numbers by age of HRP, 2018-2028

2.17: Projected percentage of households by age group, 2018 and 2028

2.18: Average House Price 2012-2021

2.19: Volume of Sales in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire 2012-2021

2.20: Volume of Sales in Scotland 2012 – 2021

2.21: Lower Quartile House Price 2010-2019/20

2.22: Median House Price 2010-2019/20

2.23: Volume of Sales

2.24: New Private and Affordable Housing Completions 2012-2022

2.25: Average Monthly Private Rents Aberdeen/ Aberdeenshire and Scotland 2010-2022

2.26: Average Monthly Private Rents for Scotland 2016 – 2021

2.27: Average Monthly Rents for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Broad Rental Market Area 2016- 2021

2.28: Change in Average Rents 1 Bedroom Properties

2.29: Change in Average Rents 2 Bedroom Properties

2.30: Average Monthly Rents for Aberdeen City 2017 - 2023

2.31: Average Monthly Rents for Aberdeenshire 2017-2023 (AHMA and RHMA combined)

2.32: Average Monthly Rents in Aberdeenshire AHMA

2.33: Average Monthly Rents in Rural HMA

2.34: Median Annual Household Income 2015-2021

2.35: Lower Quartile Annual Household Income 2015 – 2021

2.36: Household Income Distribution 2021

2.37: Median Income by Datazone

2.38: Median annual gross pay by residence and workplace 2015-2017

2.39: Lower Quartile House Price in Aberdeenshire

2.40: Lower Quartile House Price in Northern Aberdeenshire

2.41: Lower Quartile House Price in Aberdeen City

2.42: Average monthly rent for 2 bed properties 2007-2022 Scottish cities

2.43: Bank of England Base Rate 2012-2022

2.44: GVA per head of population 1998 – 2020

2.45: Employment Industry sectors Northeast Scotland 2020

2.46: Employment Rates 2009-2021

2.47: Unemployment Rate (Claimant Count) January 2015 – July 2022

2.48: Proportion of households claiming housing benefit or housing element of universal credit

2.49: Housing benefit/universal credit claimants by tenure 2018- 22

2.50: Brent Crude Oil Price per Barrel June 2012 - June 2022

2.51: Brexit Vulnerability Index Map for Aberdeenshire

2.52: Brexit Vulnerability Index Map for Aberdeen City

2.53: New Housebuilding Completions Q3 2019 to Q3 2021

2.54: Residential transactions per quarter in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Q1 2017 to Q1 2022

2.55: Annual Change in Price of Construction Materials for New Build Housing UK

3.1: Aberdeenshire Area Map

3.2: Percentage of housing stock and population by Aberdeenshire Area

3.3: Proportion of dwellings by number of rooms

3.4: Housing tenure trends: Aberdeen City, 1999 – 2019

3.5: Housing tenure trends: Aberdeenshire, 1999 – 2019

3.6: Housing tenure trends: Scotland, 1999 – 2019

3.7: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire: stock breakdown by number of bedrooms

3.8: Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire: stock breakdown by type

3.9: Percentage of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council waiting list applications with housing need by bedroom size on 31 March 2022

3.10: Percentage of Aberdeenshire Council waiting list applications with housing need by Aberdeenshire Area on 31 March 2022

3.11: Aberdeen City: housing applications by number of bedrooms

3.12: Aberdeenshire: housing applications by number of bedrooms

5.1: Number of applications for private sector grant in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire between 2017 – 2022 and associated funding levels

5.2: People receiving social care services by age and gender 2020/21 – Aberdeen City

5.3: People receiving social care services by age and gender 2020/21 – Aberdeenshire

5.4: People receiving social care services by age and gender 2020/21 – Scotland

5.5: Number of people choosing SDS option (Scotland)

5.6: People receiving SDS by client group (Scotland)

Appendix B

Grampian Regional Equalities Council - Research Paper: Accommodation Needs of Ethnic Minorities, Gypsy/Travellers and Travelling Showpeople (2022)

Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council commissioned a research paper to investigate the accommodation needs of ethnic minorities, Gypsy/Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in 2022. This research was used to inform sections of this document (see Chapter 5, Specialist Provision). You can find a link to this research paper here.

Appendix C

List of Those Invited to Attend the Engagement Session

Representatives from the following organisations were invited to attend engagement sessions:

Registered Social Landlords

- Castlehill Housing Association
- Grampian Housing Association
- Hillcrest Housing Association
- Langstane Housing Association
- Osprey Housing
- Places for People/Castle Rock Edinvar
- Sanctuary Scotland

House Builders

- Barratts
- Bancon
- CALA
- CHAP
- Dandara
- Malcolm Allan
- Stewart Milne

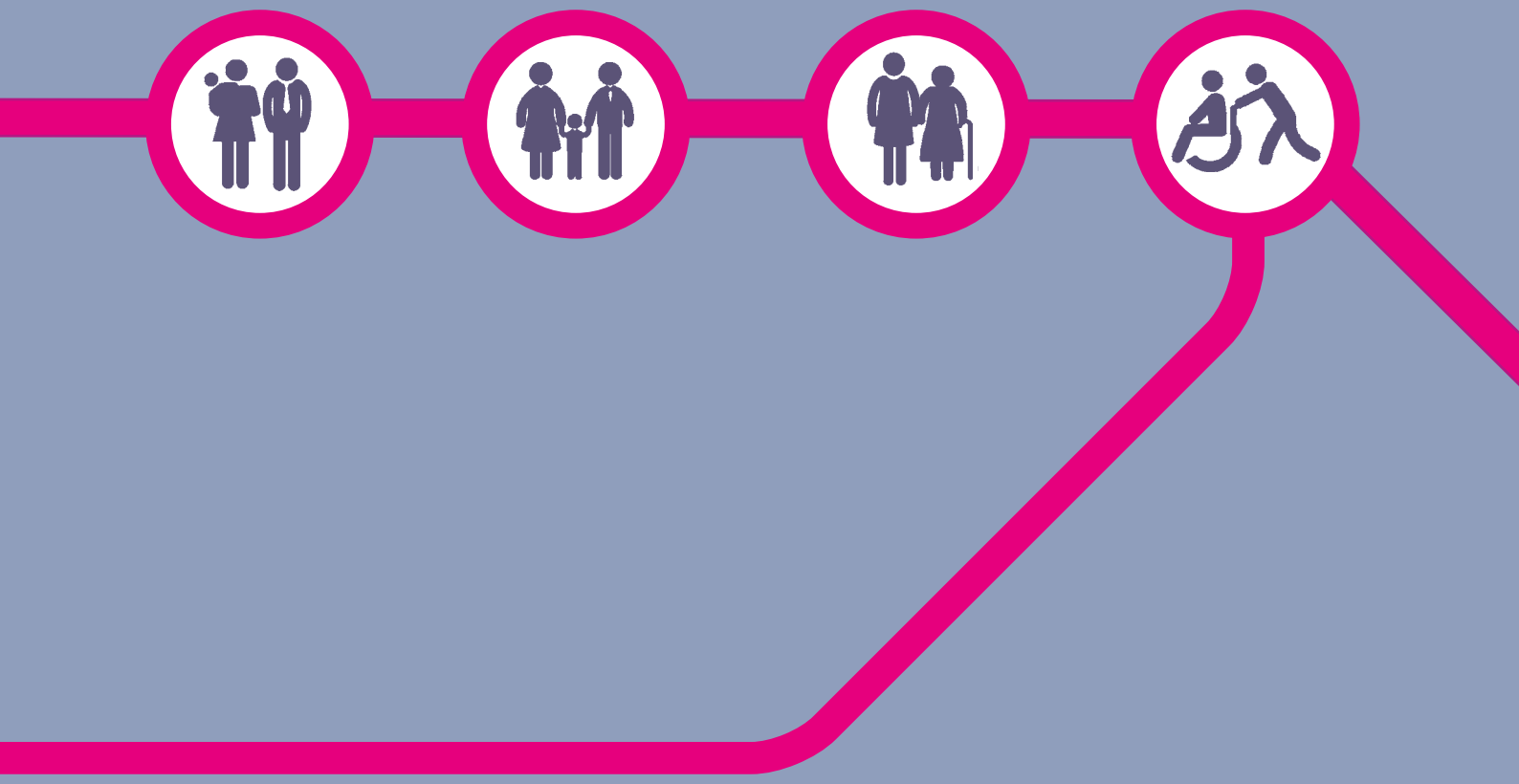
Other

- Aberdeen Solicitors and Property Centre
- Cairngorm National Park Authority
- Homes for Scotland

The Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

National Health and **Wellbeing Outcomes**

A framework for improving the planning and delivery of integrated health and social care services



HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE INTEGRATION

Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014

Contents

1. Foreword 2
2. Overarching statement 2
3. Who should read this framework? 2
4. Overview 3
5. The national health and wellbeing outcomes 5
6. Improving the quality of services 6
7. Purpose of the national health and wellbeing outcomes 7
8. Improving outcomes – what people can expect 10
9. Embedding a human rights-based approach 13
10. Delivering and evidencing improvement 17
11. Delivering across the public sector to improve outcomes for our communities 18

Annex A: Personal outcomes approach 20

1. Foreword

The priority for Scottish Ministers is to improve people"s experience of health and care services and the outcomes that services achieve. In particular, improving the quality and consistency of outcomes across Scotland, so that people and carers have a similar experience of services and support, whichever, Health Board or Local Authority area they live within, while allowing for local approaches to service delivery.

Legislating for national health and wellbeing outcomes[1] that apply equally across health and social care services in Scotland, under the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014[2] ("the Act"), enables service users and carers to have a clear understanding of what they can expect in terms of improvements in their health and wellbeing.

2. Overarching statement

Health and social care services should focus on the needs of the individual to promote their health and wellbeing, and in particular, to enable people to live healthier lives in their community.

Key to this is that people's experience of health and social care services and their impact is positive; that they are able to shape the care and support that they receive; and that people using services, whether health or social care, can expect a quality service regardless of where they live.

3. Who should read this framework?

The framework is for anyone with an interest in health and social care services. In particular, health and social care professionals, including clinicians, GPs, nurses and Allied Health Professionals involved in the planning and delivery of health and social care services, and importantly, people who use services, their carers and their families.

This framework will help to inform how services are planned across the whole pathway of care, to ensure a focus on individuals, and also the practice changes within integrated multidisciplinary teams, that will make a difference to the care people receive.

This framework should be read alongside the guidance[3] on the integration planning and delivery principles.

[1] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2014/343/contents/made
[2] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/9/contents/enacted
[3] http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0046/00466005.pdf

4. Overview

The national health and wellbeing outcomes apply across all integrated health and social care services, ensuring that Health Boards, Local Authorities and Integration Authorities are clear about their shared priorities by bringing together responsibility and accountability for their delivery. The national health and wellbeing outcomes also provide for the mechanism by which the Scottish Ministers will bring together the performance management mechanisms for health and social care.

The national health and wellbeing outcomes provide a strategic framework for the planning and delivery of health and social care services. This suite of outcomes, together, focus on improving the experiences and quality of services for people using those services, carers and their families. These outcomes focus on improving how services are provided, as well as, the difference that integrated health and social care services should make, for individuals.

Each Integration Authority will be required to publish an annual performance report[4] which will set out how the national health and wellbeing outcomes are being improved. This will include reports on a core suite of indicators and measures, identified by the integration authority in line with guidance from the Scottish Government, and contextualising data to provide a broader picture and a rationale of local performance.

[4] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2014/326/contents/made

Mrs Taylor's Story

Mrs Taylor is a retired maths teacher. She lives with her husband in a small village, where she has always been an active member of her community.

She has lived with diabetes since she was born and has always managed it very well. A few years after she retired she began to experience some confusion and struggled with her memory. She visited her GP who referred her to a memory clinic where she was diagnosed with dementia.

A specialist Dementia Nurse spent time with her after the diagnosis. She listened to them and together they talked through what was important in her life, how the condition might affect her and what support could be put in place to work alongside her own strengths and networks.

Mrs and Mr Taylor received a great deal of support from a specialist third sector organisation that the nurse put them in touch with. This included help to learn about self-management and a chance to join a peer support group in a nearby town, providing new friendships and invaluable mutual support.

'The Taylors visited their GP who listened to the daily challenges that they were facing. The GP was concerned that Mrs Taylor was no longer safe at home and that they were both becoming isolated and experiencing symptoms of depression and anxiety due to their personal circumstances.'

After a few years, Mrs Taylor"s dementia progressed to a stage where she was finding daily activities increasingly difficult and feared she might have to move into a nursing home.

Her husband began providing more support and worried about her health including her diabetes, which she was now less able to manage. Getting out and about, including to the peer support group, wasn"t possible as Mrs Taylor could no longer use public transport.

Their local GP, a Dementia Specialist Nurse and an Occupational Therapist worked together with the Taylors to agree the support that would enable them to stay well and independent at home. Their GP also arranged for a Diabetes Specialist Nurse to help Mr Taylor to learn how to support Mrs Taylor. Their daughter also called a helpline run by a third sector organisation and was able to get details of a local carer"s centre who offered support to her father.

Mrs and Mr Taylor and their family feel that the quick, joined-up response of their health and social care team, along with support from their community, enabled them to continue living life the way they wanted to. Without this support, they believe they would have had a lot more trips to hospital as a result of Mrs Taylor"s conditions.

5. National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes

There are nine national health and wellbeing outcomes which apply to integrated health and social care.

Health Boards, Local Authorities and the new Integration Authorities will work together to ensure that these outcomes are meaningful to people in their area.

1	**People are able to look after and improve their own health and wellbeing and live in good health for longer.**
2	**People, including those with disabilities or long term conditions, or who are frail, are able to live, as far as reasonably practicable, independently and at home or in a homely setting in their community.**
3	**People who use health and social care services have positive experiences of those services, and have their dignity respected.**
4	**Health and social care services are centred on helping to maintain or improve the quality of life of people who use those services.**
5	**Health and social care services contribute to reducing health inequalities.**
6	**People who provide unpaid care are supported to look after their own health and wellbeing, including to reduce any negative impact of their caring role on their own health and well-being.**
7	**People who use health and social care services are safe from harm.**[3]
8	**People who work in health and social care services feel engaged with the work they do and are supported to continuously improve the information, support, care and treatment they provide.**
9	**Resources are used effectively and efficiently in the provision of health and social care services.**

6. Improving the quality of services

The suite of national health and wellbeing outcomes, together, focus on improving the experiences and quality of services for people using those services, carers and their families. This visual highlights some of the experiences of those who currently use health and social care services, carers and their families on how services are provided and the difference that integrated health and social care can make to individuals.

7. Purpose of the national health and wellbeing outcomes

The national health and wellbeing outcomes underpin the activities that Health Boards, Local Authorities and Integration Authorities must carry out under the Act to achieve Scottish Ministers intention for integration of health and social care in Scotland. Indeed, Health Boards, Local Authorities and Integration Authorities must have regard to the national health and wellbeing outcomes in certain key aspects of integration activity:

- Health Boards and Local Authorities are to have regard to the national health and wellbeing outcomes when preparing an integration scheme (section 3(2) of the Act).
- Integration Authorities must set out in their strategic plans how arrangements for the delivery of the integrated health and social care services are intended to contribute to achieving the national health and wellbeing outcomes (section 29 (1) (b) of the Act).
- The national health and wellbeing outcomes must be taken into account when reviewing a strategic plan (section 37(2) of the Act).
- A Health Board, local authority or Integration Joint Board, as the case may be, must have regard to the national health and wellbeing outcomes and integration delivery principles when carrying out an integration function, that is when they are delivering integrated health and social care services (section 40 of the Act).
- Scrutiny bodies; Healthcare Improvement Scotland and Care Inspectorate, when inspecting integrated health and social care services must assess the extent to which the service is contributing to the integration delivery principles and the national health and wellbeing outcomes (sections 54 and 55 of the Act).
- Regulations on the performance report require Integration Authorities to report annually on its performance against key measures and indicators in relation to the national health and wellbeing outcomes .

The importance of making a difference to people"s lives through integration is a central objective of the Act. It aims to achieve tangible improvements to outcomes for people and to the quality of services across health and social care. By focussing on outcomes, integration aims to maximise the impact of this opportunity to shift the focus of performance improvement onto the achievement of individual personal outcomes for those receiving support and care, and their carers. This in turn will mean that national strategic outcomes within the National Performance Framework[5] are improved.

It is important that each Integration Authority has a consistent framework against which to plan, report and account for its activities so that the Integration Authority, the Health Board and local authority, Scottish Ministers and the public can assess progress made to improve outcomes locally and in different parts of the country.

An outcomes based approach encourages an examination of the tangible differences support and services make and not just on the inputs or processes.

[5] http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Performance/scotPerforms/objectives

At a local level, a personal outcomes approach requires a new of thinking away from input and process measurement towards focussing on outcomes as experienced by the user of service, and by their carers.

The integration of health and social care represents a major opportunity to bring about improved outcomes for people in Scotland, however, to fully deliver this, will require a shift in culture working towards the common goal of personal outcomes. An outcomes approach can help to provide a common language and shared purpose across and between services, and with people using services and support.

7.1 Development of the national health and wellbeing outcomes

It was important that the national health and wellbeing outcomes were developed in collaboration with the people using health and social care services, as well as those who are responsible for commissioning and delivering the services at a local level.

The Scottish Government was keen to emphasise the importance of outcomes in ensuring services are person-centred, as opposed to focussed on reducing „bad" numbers, such as "delayed discharges". Equally as important was the need for a robust data-capturing infrastructure to provide us with a comprehensive picture of how we are performing against each outcome.

A national working group[6] comprised of a broad range of stakeholders provided support and advice and led on the development of the draft national health and wellbeing outcomes. The working group also proposed developing a national health and care survey, built on the existing Patient Experience infrastructure, which forms the largest national survey of the general population that we have in Scotland. The first set of results from this health and care survey[7] were published in May 2014.

Workshops and events across the country provided a focus on the national health and wellbeing outcomes and the measurement indicators for integrated health and social care. This provided an opportunity to share and explain the policy rational but also, provided the opportunity to hear personal experiences and opinions at a local level, to help shape the national health and wellbeing outcomes. The consensus across the events was that the outcomes and indicators were a positive step forward in putting the service user at the heart of service design and delivery. The feedback received fed into the continuing work on the national health and wellbeing outcomes and associated measurement indicators.

A national consultation[8] on the draft legislation containing the national health and wellbeing outcomes ran from May 2014 to August 2014. This gave stakeholders an opportunity to feedback their views on the draft regulations.

[6] http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/Policy/Adult-Health-SocialCare-Integration/Implementation/working_Groups/OWG
[7] http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0045/00451272.pdf
[8] http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/Policy/Adult-Health-SocialCare-Integration/Consultation

Scottish Government analysed all responses and amended the regulations to reflect, where appropriate, stakeholders views. This led to the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes) (Scotland) Regulations[9] being finalised, and coming into force on 28 November 2014.

[9] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/sdsi/2014/9780111024522/contents

Tariq's Story

Tariq is 20 years old and has just moved into his own flat. Before that he lived with his mother and younger brother and sister. Tariq was born with Down's syndrome and an associated heart condition and visual impairment. His mother has been helping him to eat a healthy diet and take regular exercise. He loves cooking and is currently studying at catering college.

At 15 Tariq and his family, along with the professionals that knew him best began planning for his transition to adulthood. At first he didn't know what he wanted for a career, as he still had a few years left at school. Tariq remembered his friend telling him about support he could get to help him decide what wanted to do and write an action plan for his future. He spoke to his social worker who found a local organisation that offered person-centred planning. This helped Tariq, his family and the professional team around him, to explore his aspirations and skills to work out how he could achieve the future he wanted. Together they developed an accessible action plan.

'Tariq continues to receive support from his community learning disability nurse, social worker, GP and specialist heart and visual impairment nurse. This has helped him to continue to self-manage his conditions and has enabled him to feel confident in being able to live the life that he had planned for.'

During this process Tariq realised that one of his biggest priority was to leave home and get his own flat. His mother was worried if he would be safe living alone and whether he would look after his health properly. While Tariq didn't see why this would be a problem, his social worker arranged for his community learning disability nurse and specialist Heart Nurse to join one of the transition planning meetings to talk through these issues.

Together they found a solution that worked for everyone, concluding that with the right support and use of assistive technology, everyone would feel confident. Tariq also liked the idea of joining a local exercise group and everyone agreed to help him make this happen. They agreed that there were some risks involved for Tariq in leaving home, but that these were worth taking.

Since leaving school two years ago, Tariq has used a personal budget to employ a Personal Assistant (PA) to support him in his daily life. This has enabled him to go to college, look after his flat and go out with friends and family. Tariq's got to know his neighbours and, as well as enjoying chats as they pass in the stair, he has called on them a few times for advice, for example when his washing machine leaked.

Tariq uses a small amount of his budget to pay for membership of a local swimming club, which has helped him to stay fit and resulted in new friendships. This has helped him to grow in confidence and he recently introduced his new girlfriend to his family.

8. Improving outcomes – what people can expect

National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes	What people can expect
People are able to look after and improve their own health and wellbeing and live in good health for longer.	▪ I am supported to look after my own health and wellbeing ▪ I am able to live a healthy life for as long as possible ▪ I am able to access information
People, including those with disabilities or long term conditions, or who are frail, are able to live, as far as reasonably practicable, independently at home or in a homely setting in their community.	▪ I am able to live as independently as possible for as long as I wish ▪ Community based services are available to me ▪ I can engage and participate in my community
People who use health and social care services have positive experiences of those services, and have their dignity respected.	▪ I have my privacy respected ▪ I have positive experiences of services ▪ I feel that my views are listened to ▪ I feel that I am treated as a person by the people doing the work – we develop a relationship that helps us to work well together ▪ Services and support are reliable and respond to what I say

National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes	What people can expect
Health and social care services are centred on helping to maintain or improve the quality of life of people who use those services.	▪ I'm supported to do the things that matter most to me ▪ Services and support help me to reduce the symptoms that I am concerned about ▪ I feel that the services I am using are continuously improving ▪ The services I use improve my quality of life
Health and social care services contribute to reducing health inequalities.	▪ My local community gets the support and information it needs to be a safe and healthy place to be ▪ Support and services are available to me ▪ My individual circumstances are taken into account
People who provide unpaid care are supported to look after their own health and wellbeing, including to reduce any negative impact of their caring role on their own health and well-being.	▪ I feel I get the support I need to keep on with my caring role for as long as I want to do that ▪ I am happy with the quality of my life and the life of the person I care for ▪ I can look after my own health and wellbeing
People using health and social care services are safe from harm.	▪ I feel safe and am protected from abuse and harm ▪ Support and services I use protect me from harm ▪ My choices are respected in making decisions about keeping me safe from harm

National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes	What people can expect
People who work in health and social care services feel engaged with the work they do and are supported to continuously improve the information, support, care and treatment they provide.	▪ I feel that the outcomes that matter to me are taken account of in my work ▪ I feel that I get the support and resources I need to do my job well ▪ I feel my views are taken into account in decisions
Resources are used effectively and efficiently in the provision of health and social care services.	▪ I feel resources are used appropriately ▪ Services and support are available to me when I need them ▪ The right care for me is delivered at the right time

9. Embedding a human rights based approach

The national health and wellbeing outcomes, together with the integration planning and delivery principles[10], are grounded in a human rights based approach. Human rights based on the principle that people should be equal and free to participate as full and active members of society. They belong to us all and are the basic rights and freedoms that we have as human beings, which allow us to live with dignity, and participate in our communities equally.

A human rights based approach is a way of empowering people to know and claim their rights. It increases the ability and accountability of individuals, organisations and the relevant professionals who are responsible for respecting, protecting and fulfilling rights. This means giving people greater opportunities to participate in shaping the decisions that impact on their human rights.

Human rights are closely aligned to the national health and wellbeing outcomes, for example, we have developed the national health and wellbeing outcomes to reflect the desire for people to have the highest possible standard of health and to reflect the principle that everyone should have a right to independent living. A human rights based approach can offer a practical framework to help people to work together to achieve the national health and wellbeing outcomes.

The Scottish National Action Plan (SNAP) on Human Rights recognises that human rights impact on all of us through a basic assumption of humane, dignified, fair and equal treatment in our homes, schools, workplaces and communities. As part of its commitment to SNAP, the Scottish Government, with others, will design and lead a programme of work to ensure that human rights is put at the heart of the integration of health and social care including in outcome measures and guidance.

SNAP advocates the use of the **PANEL** and **FAIR** approaches. There are some underlying principles which are important in applying a human rights-based approach in practice, known as the **PANEL** Principles.

[10] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/9/pdfs/asp_20140009_en.pdf

9.1 PANEL principles

If these principles are used in planning and delivery, services and support should uphold the rights of everyone, be person-centred, and demonstrate that they aim to ensure good decision-making, improvement in institutional culture and relationships, legal compliance and best practice.

PANEL Principles	
Participation	Everyone has the right to participate in decisions which affect them. Participation must be active, free, and meaningful and give attention to issues of accessibility, including access to information in a form and a language which can be understood.
Accountability	Accountability requires effective monitoring of human rights standards. For accountability to be effective there must be appropriate laws, policies, administrative procedures and mechanisms of redress in order to secure human rights.
Non-discrimination and equality	A human rights based approach means that all forms of discrimination must be prohibited, prevented and eliminated. It also requires the prioritisation of those in the most vulnerable situations who face the biggest barriers to realising their rights.
Empowerment	People should understand their rights, and be fully supported to participate in the development of policy and practices which affect their lives. People should be able to claim their rights where necessary.
Legality	The full range of legally protected human rights must be respected, protected and fulfilled. A human rights based approach requires the recognition of rights as legally enforceable entitlements, and is linked in to national and international human rights law.

9.2 FAIR approach

The Scottish Human Rights Commission has also developed the „**FAIR**" approach to help apply a human rights based approach in practice. Often using the **FAIR** approach can be a means of reaching a balanced and just solution in difficult situations. The **FAIR** chart, below, outlines the steps that can be taken in more detail.

FAIR Approach	
Facts	▪ What is the experience of the individual? ▪ Is the individual being heard and if not, do they require support to do so? ▪ What are the important facts to understand?
Analysis of rights at stake	▪ What are the human rights or issues at stake? ▪ Is the right to life or the right not to be subjected to inhuman or degrading treatment at stake? If so, these rights are absolute and cannot be restricted. ▪ Can the right be restricted? What is the justification for restricting the right? ▪ Is the restriction on the right „proportionate"? i.e. is it the minimum necessary restriction to meet the aim or is a "sledgehammer being used to crack a nut"?
Identification of shared responsibilities	▪ What changes are necessary? Who has responsibilities for helping to make the necessary changes?
Review actions	▪ Have the actions taken been recorded and reviewed and has the individual affected been involved?

Graham's Story

Graham is 55 years old, lives with his long-term partner and used to work with a local youth organisation. He volunteers with several charities and is involved in local planning groups for health and social care services. Graham was diagnosed with bipolar disorder when he was a teenager. He received good support from his GP and a psychiatrist, as well as his school. This helped him to go to college and get the job he wanted.

When Graham was 45 he was diagnosed with heart disease, which had a big impact on him physically and emotionally. Graham found it increasingly difficult to manage his mental health effectively, partly due to the effect of his new medication on his moods and due to the stress of his diagnosis. He started to struggle with work, finding that he could not predict how he would feel physically or mentally from one day to the next. He felt tired a lot of the time and found it difficult to stay motivated and positive about the future.

Soon after his diagnosis, Graham"s GP suggested he book a double appointment so they could talk through his diagnosis, how he could manage both of his conditions and what kind of support might help. They talked about the impact on Graham"s ability to work and agreed that Graham would speak to his employer about reducing his hours so that he could continue to work.

The GP also referred Graham to the Practice Nurse and a Social Worker specialising in mental health. The Practice Nurse helped him understand his heart condition and how he could manage it. She also signposted him to a national organisation that ran local cardiac rehabilitation groups, along with the Citizens Advice Bureau, to help with his concerns about the financial impact of reducing his hours. Through the Social Worker, Graham was put in touch with a Peer Support Worker who helped him develop a Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP).

'Graham now feels that he is able to manage his conditions better and feels confident that he knows where to turn to for support when he needs it'.

As a result of the support he has received, Graham has been able to stay in work for several years following his diagnosis, and when he decided he needed to retire to protect his health, he continued to do voluntary work instead. He also became involved in a writing group which helped him to tell his story and share his experiences.

10. Delivering and evidencing improvement

Integration Authorities are under a statutory obligation to develop a strategic plan[11] in line with the integration principles. A strategic plan is to set out arrangements for integrated health and social care and how those arrangements will lead to the improvement of the outcomes for the communities that they serve.

Strategic planning is the mechanism through which partners will work together to deliver and plan services that focus on people and their outcomes. When services are delivered in line with the plan, the person delivering a service is to do so in line with the national health and wellbeing outcomes. In this way partners across statutory, third and independent sectors, will embed a preventative and anticipatory approach to commissioning services – rethinking how best to meet the needs of communities.

Integration Authorities will require robust information and intelligence if the potential benefits of strategic planning are to be realised. In order to support this, the Scottish Government has commissioned NHS National Services Scotland (NSS) to develop linked individual level longitudinal health and social care datasets[12] for all Integration Authorities. These datasets will be provided via a secure storage solution.

Integration Authorities are required to publish an annual performance report, and regulations set out the prescribed content of these reports. The regulations provide for significant flexibility in how and what Integration Authorities will report on to ensure that the annual performance report covers the main aspects of this reform but reflects local priorities.

The Scottish Government is developing a measurement framework that sets out a range of data sources and associated improvement tools and techniques that can support improvement. Integration Authorities will wish to use this to inform local practice and to showcase improvement within their annual performance report. Guidance on the performance report is being developed and will be published by Summer 2015.

To ensure that there is a measure of comparability and focus on national priorities, the regulations require that all Integration Authorities report on key measures and indicators. The Scottish Government"s will set out the key measures and indicators, which should be used to comply with this requirement within a measurement framework.

[11] http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/Policy/Adult-Health-SocialCare-Integration/Implementation/ImplementationGuidance/SCPlans
[12] http://www.isdscotland.org/Products-and-Services/Health-and-Social-Care-Integration/

11. Delivering across the public sector to improve outcomes for our communities

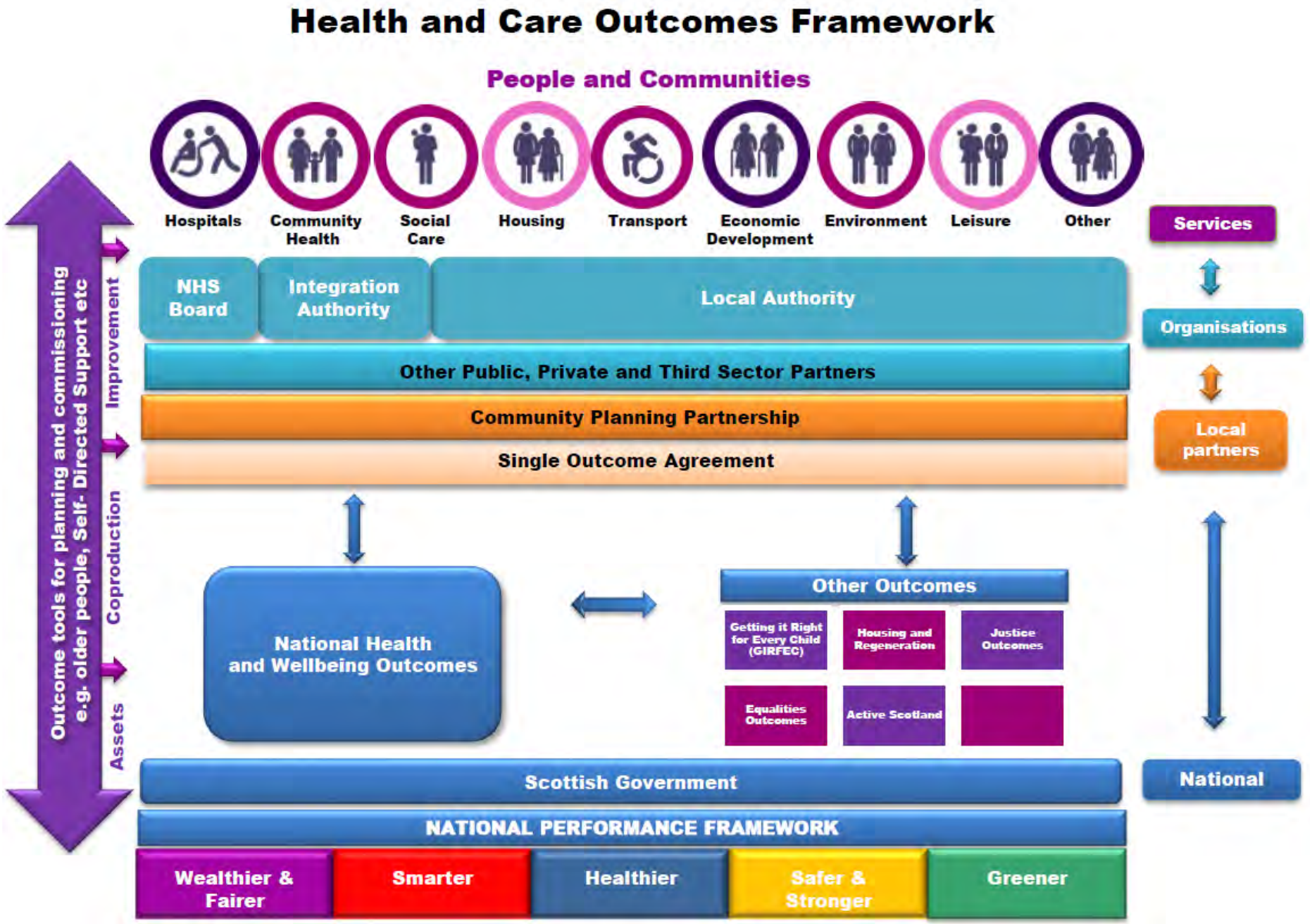
The national health and wellbeing outcomes provide a framework for improving our health and care services across Scotland. There has been a significant amount of work, in recent years, to establish outcomes and related measures for a wide range of health, community care, social care, including children"s and justice services.

The national health and wellbeing outcomes should be applied in conjunction with more specific outcomes relating to individuals and group, such as the SHANARRI[13] outcomes for children and young people expressed in terms of the eight wellbeing indicators specified in section 96 (2) of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014[14], and together underpin the delivery of the national outcomes, which form the National Performance Framework.

The National Performance Framework[15] support delivery of an outcomes based approach to performance and enables partners to jointly drive and track progress towards delivery of agreed outcomes through better integration, supported by the development of Single Outcome Agreements.

Integration Authorities will be partners in Community Planning arrangements, therefore planning and delivery of health and social care services that focus on improving the national health and wellbeing outcomes, will feed into their broader responsibilities in relation to these duties, and related outcomes frameworks, to deliver the Scottish Government"s strategic objectives.

[13] http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright/background/wellbeing
[14] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/8/contents/enacted
[15] http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Performance/purposestratobjs


Health and Care Outcomes Framework
People and Communities
Hospitals
Community Health
Social Care
Housing
Transport
Economic Development
Environment
Leisure
Other
Services
Organisations
Local partners
National
NHS Board
Integration Authority
Local Authority
Other Public, Private and Third Sector Partners
Community Planning Partnership
Single Outcome Agreement
Outcome tools for planning and commissioning e.g. older people, Self- Directed Support etc
Improvement
Coproduction
Assets
National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes
Other Outcomes
Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)
Housing and Regeneration
Justice Outcomes
Equalities Outcomes
Active Scotland
Scottish Government
NATIONAL PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK
Wealthier & Fairer
Smarter
Healthier
Safer & Stronger
Greener

Annex A

Personal outcomes approach

The term „outcome" is now in common usage in health and social care, reflecting a commitment to ensure systems support people using services and unpaid carers in ways that are person centred and effective.

Outcomes are defined as what matters to people using services, as well as the end result or impact of activities, and can be used to both determined and evaluate activity. Personal outcomes are identified through good conversations with people using services during assessment and support planning. It is also critical that the outcomes are reviewed, to ensure the continued relevance of support and services, and to support service planning, commissioning and improvement.

In line with Christie (2011)[16], a personal outcomes approach supports sustainability by moving the focus away from service led approaches. This requires supporting people to make the move from viewing the delivery of service as the endpoint, to focusing on the purpose of engagement and activity with individuals. When the starting point is clarifying purpose (outcomes), the next stage is identifying how those outcomes might be achieved. This includes considering the role of the person and other resources in their lives, as well as services, consistent with an enabling culture.

There are a number of personal outcome approaches used across Scotland, however, they all have shared elements including the importance of focusing on both quality of life outcomes, which prevent deterioration and delay dependency, and change outcomes, more commonly associated with recovery and rehabilitation. Equally important are the process outcomes; the relationship between people using support or services, carers and paid staff. These outcomes all chime well with both the principles of the Act and the national health and wellbeing outcomes.

Through engagement at assessment and review, a personal outcomes approach ensures that care and support are appropriate and effective, avoiding service use that does not make the difference required.

Whilst significant work has been undertaken, it is recognised that there still much to be done to fully embed a personal outcomes approach across Scotland. A key message from embedding outcomes is that, consistent with other programmes seeking to effect culture change, this is a long term game, with the concept of the journey invoked frequently (Petch 2012)[17].

Many organisations have identified that embedding outcomes requires support to frontline practice and strong leadership. The Joint Improvement Team supports the development and implementation of the Talking Points Personal Outcomes approach.[18]

[16] http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/06/27154527/0
[17] http://www.iriss.org.uk/sites/default/files/01913_delivering_integrated_care_and_support.pdf
[18] http://www.jitscotland.org.uk/resource/talking-points-personal-outcomes-approach-practical-guide/

Personal outcomes matter to individual people who use health and social care or support services; but they can also inform the teams, organisations and partnerships providing these services about their impact. People working at each level of a health and social care system will want to know about their effectiveness, and this can best be judged by understanding how personal outcome are being achieved for individuals.

The table below sets out an example of how individual personal outcomes might feed up and link to outcomes for services, organisations, partnerships – or indeed for Scotland as a whole.

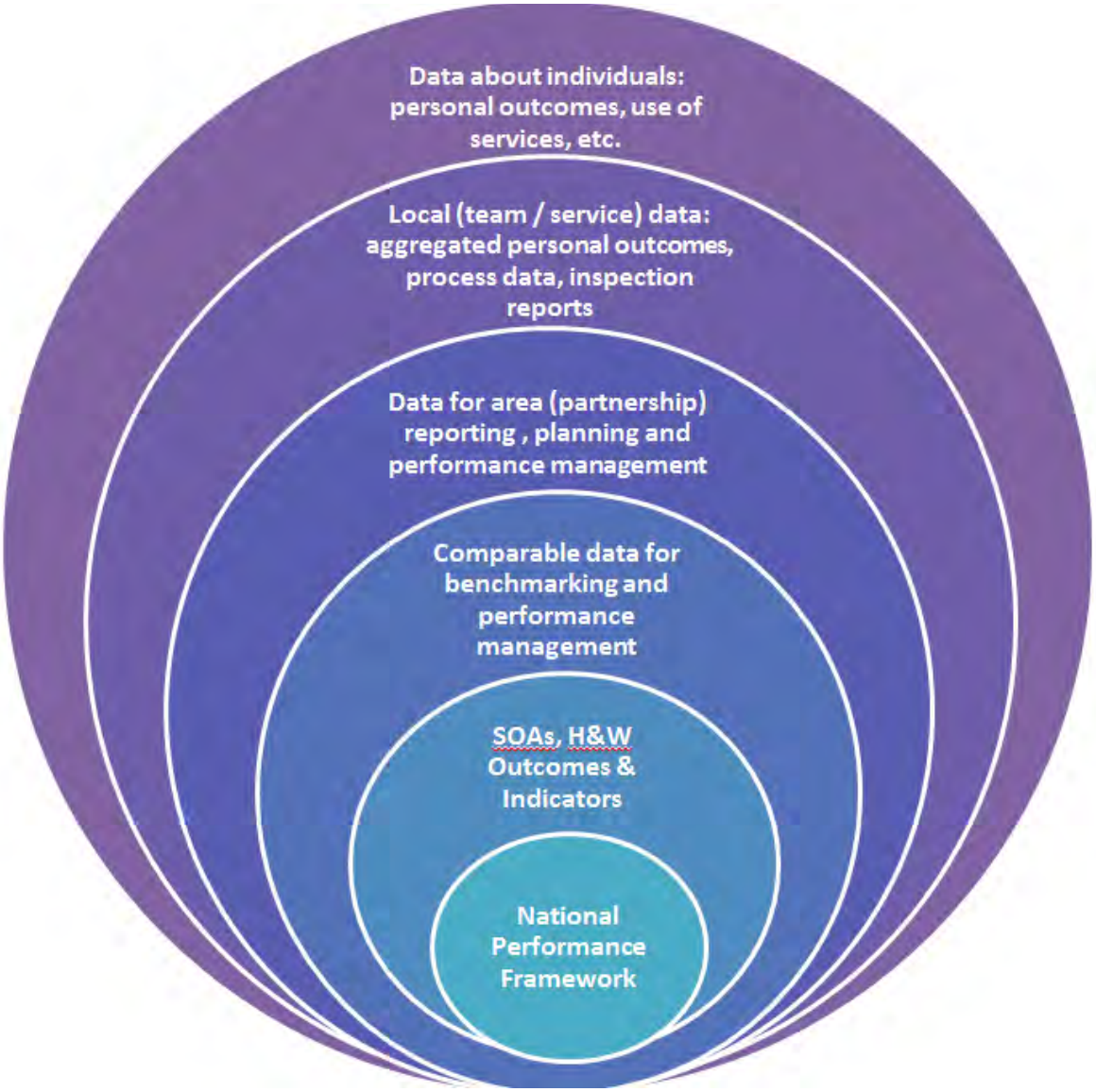
From personal to national outcomes

Outcome Level	Focus	Example
Individual, Personal	Defined by a person as what change/improvement is important to them in life	I want to be able to get back to my walking group
Service, Project	Defined by a service as a key change to work towards with clients/users	We work with people to improve their ability to get out and about
Organisational (Local Authority, Health Board, Third Sector)	Defined by organisations as a priority aim/goal to work towards	The people we work with are more socially included/connected
Partnership (CPP, Integration Authority)	Defined across organisations as a shared outcome to work towards	People are able to maintain their independent living for longer
National	Defined by government as priorities for cross-government activity	We live longer, healthier lives

Source: adapted from Cook and Miller (2012) Talking Points POA practical guide, JIT: Edinburgh Talking Points: Personal Outcomes Approach, JIT June 2012

Many systems for capturing information about the performance of health and social care systems exist already in Scotland. Some of these have been developed in isolation, and work is underway to bring them together to reflect the Integration of health and social care, and wider partnership working. The schematic below aims to show how local and national systems can help to underpin a focus on improving outcomes for individuals – by improving systems and processes with that ultimate goal always in mind.

SOA = Single Outcome Agreement
H&W = Health and Wellbeing



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Appendix 6B: Housing Demand, Health and Land Supply Supporting Information

- **Aberdeen City Council Local Housing Strategy 2018-2032**
- **Coming Home Implementation Report 2022**

ABERDEEN
CITY COUNCIL

Local Housing Strategy

2018 - 2023

Contents

Chapter 1	**Introduction**	**page 5**
Chapter 2	**Strategic Planning Framework**	**page 21**
Chapter 3	**Housing Supply and Placemaking**	**page 27**
Chapter 4	**Homelessness**	**page 41**
Chapter 5	**Independent Living & Specialist Provision**	**page 59**
Chapter 6	**Private Rented Sector**	**page 79**
Chapter 7	**Fuel Poverty and Climate Change**	**page 91**
Chapter 8	**House Condition**	**page 105**

Appendices

Appendix 1: Joint Delivery Action Plan
Appendix 2: Strategic Housing Improvement Plan
Appendix 3: Consultation
Appendix 4: Equalities
Appendix 5: Strategic Environment Assessment
Appendix 6: Housing Legislation
Appendix 7: Housing Need Demand Assessment

Foreword

I'm delighted to introduce you to Aberdeen City's third local housing strategy which covers the five year period from 2018 to 2023. The strategy has been developed in partnership with our key stakeholders including other registered social landlords, service providers, statutory bodies as well as our tenants, residents and elected members. Formal consultation took place in January 2018 and the final strategy was approved by the City Growth & Resources Committee in September 2018.

The new local housing strategy builds on the previous successes and achievements over the last 10 years. It comes at a time of significant change for the council as we face substantial reductions in funding as well as the ongoing uncertainty from welfare reform that affect the lives of many local people. At the same time we need to meet the needs of an increasingly elderly population, as well as the continued need to address homelessness and fuel poverty.

Despite these challenges we believe the local housing strategy can and will help deliver real improvements to people's lives. The strategy sets out how we will improve the quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock in Aberdeen; how we will work with our partners to increase the supply of affordable housing and deliver a range of support services to ensure that all of Aberdeen's citizens feel safe, supported and included.

The actions of the strategy will be reviewed and updated annually over the next five years to make sure that targets are being met, outcomes are being delivered, and that we are responding to further changes as appropriate.

We will therefore continue to build on our excellent track record of working in partnership to deliver positive housing outcomes across all tenures for all households in Aberdeen.

Councillor Sandra Macdonald

Housing Spokesperson

Chapter 1 - Introduction

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 places a statutory requirement on councils to produce a local housing strategy. The local housing strategy is the sole strategic document for housing at local level and sets out the strategy, priorities and plans for housing delivery, investment and related services.

The local housing strategy builds on Aberdeen City Council's existing local housing strategy and supports the Scottish Government's Housing and Regeneration outcomes, the strategy detailed in Homes Fit for the 21st Century and the priority actions in the Joint Housing Delivery Plan. The aim of this is to provide good quality affordable housing to meet existing need and the future demand arising from our growing and ageing population.

Our Vision

To reflect the city's core vision in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan "A place where all people can prosper", the local housing strategy sets out our strategic vision and priorities for the future delivery of housing and housing related services. It identifies the specific commitments made by the council and its key partners to deliver the strategic outcomes within the local housing strategy.

The vision for the local housing strategy is:

> **People in Aberdeen live in good quality sustainable homes, which they can afford and that meet their needs.**

The local housing strategy is supported by a comprehensive assessment of housing need and demand. An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment have been carried out. These can be found as Appendix 4 and Appendix 5 respectively.

The local housing strategy aims to deliver 6 overarching strategic outcomes:

1	There is an adequate supply of housing across all tenures and homes are the right size, type and location that people want to live in with access to suitable services and facilities.
2	Homelessness is prevented and alleviated.
3	People are supported to live, as far as is reasonably practicable, independently at home or in a homely setting in their community.
4	Consumer knowledge, management standards and property condition is improved in the private rented sector.
5	Fuel poverty is reduced which contributes to meeting climate change targets.
6	The quality of housing of all tenures is improved across the city.

The strategic outcomes, key actions and indicators were identified through research and consultation. A series of workshops with council staff, partners, stakeholders and community councils were held to agree their content. Further detail on the consultation process can be found at Appendix 3.

The local housing strategy recognises its' role in enhancing economic growth and social mobility. It links with Community Planning and Health and Social Care Partnership priorities and strategies to strengthen communities, improve health, reduce inequalities and support independent living.

In developing the local housing strategy and its associated strategic documents, consideration has been given to how we will work with our partners to contribute to the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework, Housing and Regeneration Outcomes Framework and National Health & Wellbeing Outcomes Framework. In addition to the council's Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP), Locality Plans and the Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan.

Location

Aberdeen is located in the north east of Scotland and is the country's third-largest city. It is the regional centre for employment, retail, culture, health and higher education. It is also the region's transport hub with road, rail, sea and air links.

The city extends to 185.7 km^2 (71.7 square miles) and shares it boundaries with Aberdeenshire. The local housing strategy covers the area outlined in the map on the right.

Aberdeen is also home to two leading research universities and one of the largest colleges in Scotland.

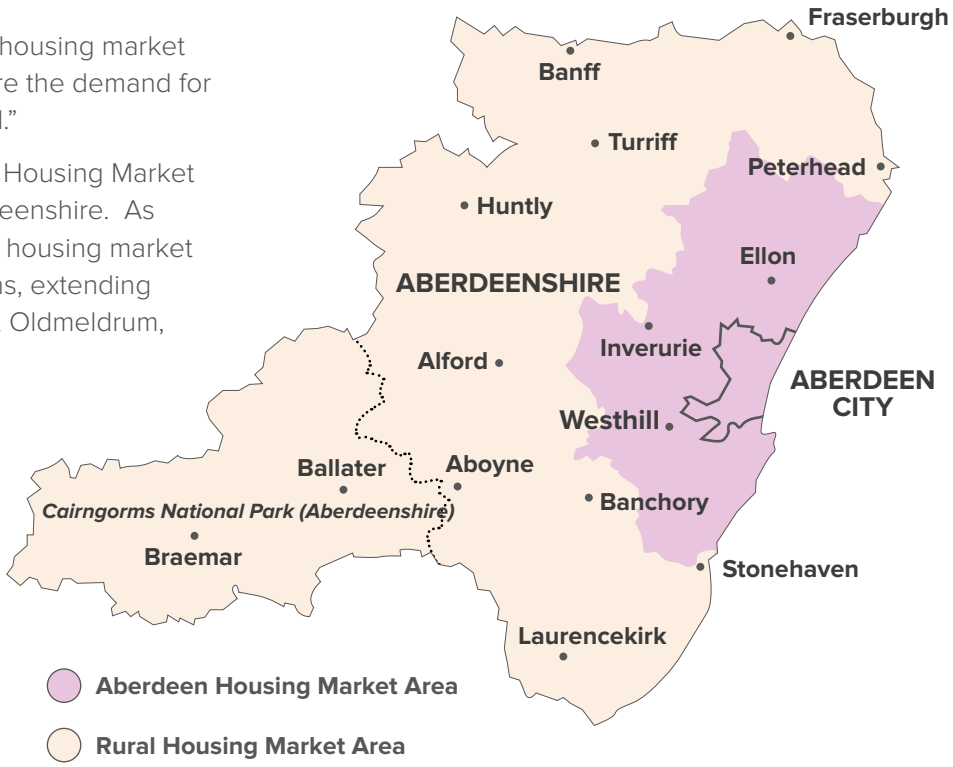
It has some of the most affluent areas of Scotland, but equally some of Scotland's most deprived areas are within the city boundaries. The overall headline levels of deprivation remain low, however almost 30% of households in Aberdeen are living in fuel poverty and 18% of children in Aberdeen are living in poverty, with the majority of those children living in a working household.[1]

Housing Market Area

Scottish planning policy defines a housing market area as a "geographical area where the demand for housing is relatively self-contained."

Aberdeen is part of the Aberdeen Housing Market Area which includes part of Aberdeenshire. As shown in the map on the right, the housing market area includes Aberdeenshire towns, extending to Banchory, Westhill, Stonehaven, Oldmeldrum, Inverurie and Ellon.

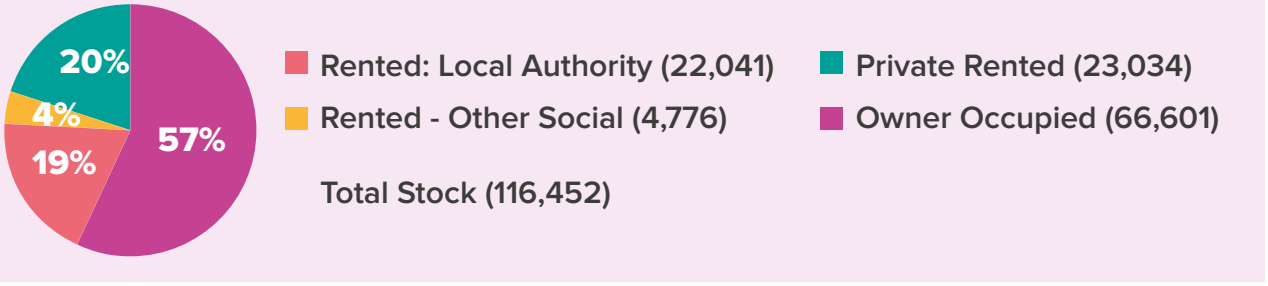
The existing housing market areas were reviewed in August 2015. It was found that there were no significant changes in travel-to-work areas to justify any change in the boundaries between the two housing market areas. Therefore the existing areas were retained.



[1] Aberdeen City Council Strategic Business Plan Refresh 2017-2018

Aberdeen has a strong association with Aberdeenshire and has well established links which provides scope for joint working across a wide range of strategic priorities including the Aberdeen City Region Deal, the strategic development plan, the housing need and demand assessment and some priorities within the local housing strategy, including delivery of affordable housing across the housing market area and provision of accommodation for Gypsy/Travellers.

Housing Tenure



Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

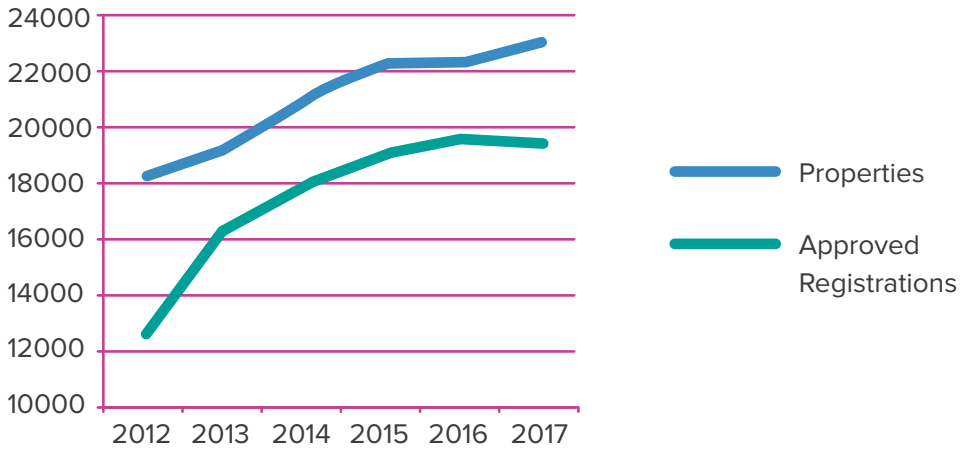
Figure 1.1: Tenure of Housing in Aberdeen

We have used data from the Landlord Registration database, which is considered to be more up to date and robust than the information included in the Census 2011 and the Scottish Housing Condition Survey 2013-15 that shows 15,000 properties in the private rented sector.

Private Rented Sector

The private rented sector has an important role to play in providing housing for local people. It accounts for approximately 20% of all housing in Aberdeen. According to the landlord registration database in 2017 there are 19,438 approved registrations landlords in Aberdeen with 23,034 properties[2]. As can be seen from Figure 1.2 below, these figures have steadily increased over the last five years.

Figure 1.2: Properties and Approved Registrations in Aberdeen 2012 - 2017



	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Change 2012 - 17
Properties	18,249	19,160	20,949	22,252	22,312	23,034	4,785 (26.2%)
Approved Registrations	12,644	16,258	17,889	18,998	19,573	19,438	6,794 (53.7%)

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO)

As at 31 March 2017, there were 1,276 licensed HMO properties and a further 195 with a current application. If all applications were approved, then approximately 1.3% of the properties in the city would be licenced HMOs. This is a 57% increase from 855 in 2012.

Aberdeen City Council Housing Stock

Aberdeen City Council has a total stock of 22,041 properties. The largest proportion of its stock was built between 1965 and 1982 (41%) with 7% being built since 1982. Approximately 25% of the council's housing stock was built pre-war and 52% is more than 50 years old. According to the Scottish House Condition Survey statistics, it is generally accepted that older properties are more expensive to repair and maintain than newer properties. The significance of this is that the majority of the housing stock requires regular financial input and as the stock ages this will continue to pose a challenge.

As at 31 March 2017, the council had 6,631 applicants on its housing lists. Stock turnover is low with current lettings averaging about 140 properties per month which equates to a turnover of around 7.6%.

[2] Caveat to these statistics must be noted - where there are joint owners, they are shown as owning more than one property therefore the number of PRS properties in the city will be slightly inflated. This however will be balanced by the fact that not all PRS properties are registered. Also worth noting that whilst some properties are registered, they may no longer be PRS properties for a variety of reasons but their registration(s) have not been updated.

Registered Social Landlord

There are nine registered social landlords providing housing in Aberdeen and account for 4% of the total stock, providing 4,776 homes as can be seen in figure Figure 1.3 below. They have an important role in the provision of social and mid-market rented housing within the city.

Figure 1.3: Registered Social Landlords Operating in Aberdeen

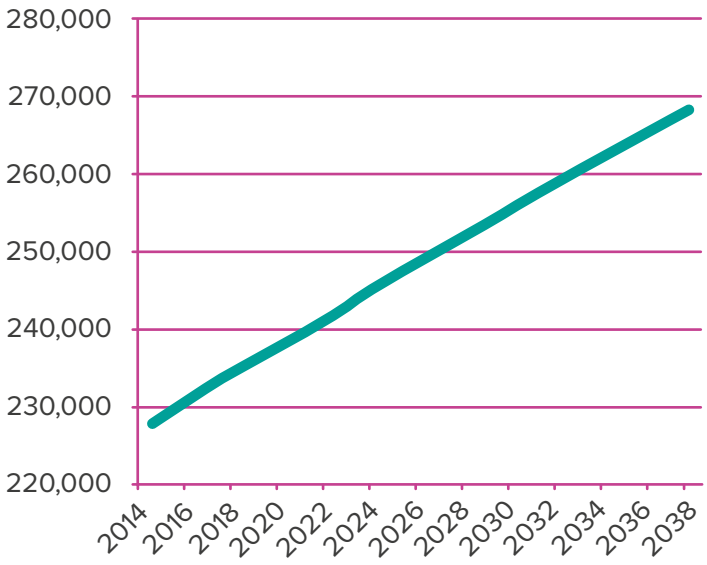
Registered Social Landlords	Number of properties
Soroptomists	15
Ark	22
Blackwood	99
Castlehill	993
Grampian	1,290
Hanover	121
Langstane	1,399
Sanctuary	772
Osprey	65
Total Stock	**4,776**

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

Population

The population of Aberdeen has risen by 8.5% from 211,910 people in 2001 to 229,840 in 2016. In comparison, this is a higher rate of growth than Scotland as a whole, which saw an increase of 6.7% over the same period. Figure 1.4 shows this trend is predicted to continue with the number of people projected to rise to 288,788 by 2039.

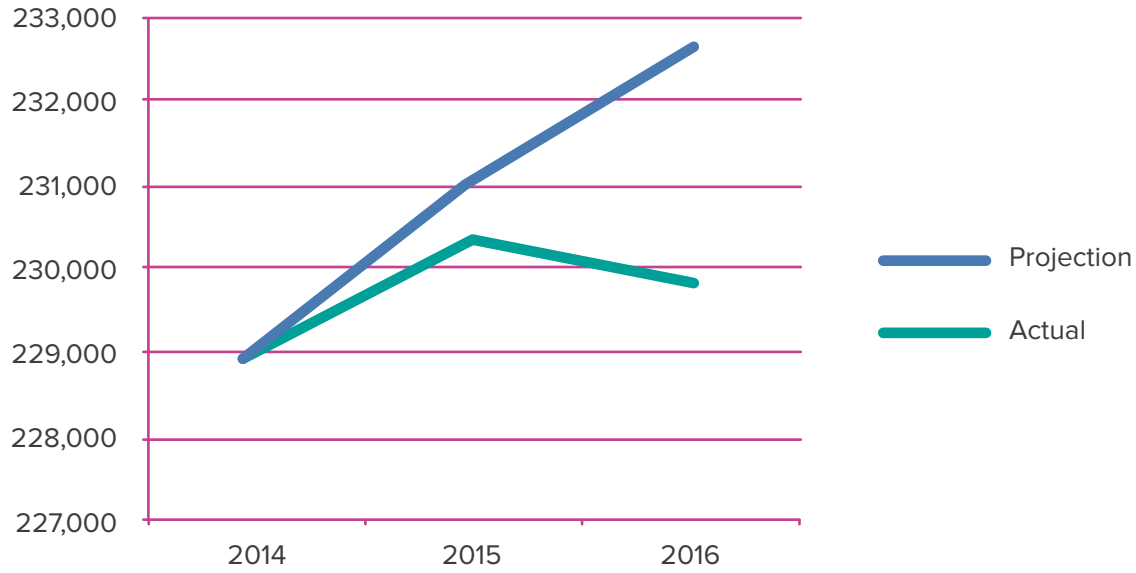
Figure 1.4: Population projections from 2014 to 2039 in Aberdeen



Source: National Records of Scotland (2016)

Despite this projected increase, the latest mid-year population estimates produced by the National Records of Scotland report a small decrease of 0.22%. This is mainly due to outward migration that saw the population drop from 230,350 to 229,840 in 2016. Figure 1.5 below shows the projected population compared to the actual population based on mid-year estimates from 2014 to 2016. This shows actual population growth actual population growth is lower than projected.

Figure 1.5: Population, projection and actual, 2014 - 2016 in Aberdeen

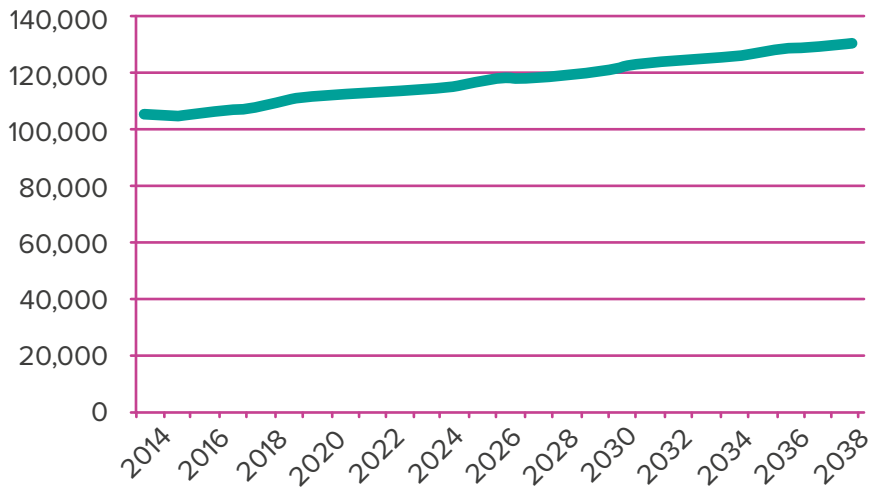


Source: National Records of Scotland (2017)

Households

The number of households in Aberdeen has increased by 10.2% from 96,848 in 2001 to 106,749 in 2016. Over the same period the number of dwellings has increased by 10.6% from 104,030 to 115,080. This growth is expected to continue. Figure 1.6 illustrates the projected growth between 2014 and 2039 with the number of households expected to rise from 105,287 to 130,370.

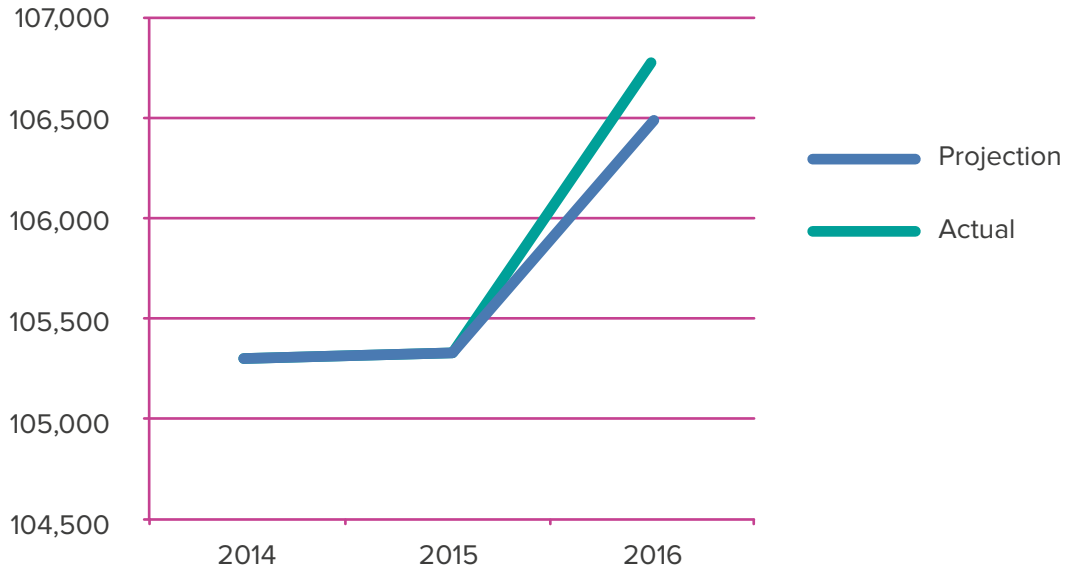
Figure 1.6: Household Projection 2014 - 2039 in Aberdeen



Source: National Records of Scotland (2017)

Figure 1.7 details the actual and projected data from 2014 to 2016. This shows that actual household growth was higher than projected.

Figure 1.7: Households estimates, projected and actual, 2014 - 2016



Source: National Records of Scotland (2017)

Figure 1.8: Projected population and number of household in Aberdeen 2014 - 2039

Aberdeen	2014	2019	2024	2029	2034	2039
Projected population	228,920	237,568	245,730	253,857	261,405	267,963
Projected number of households	105,287	109,846	114,880	119,987	125,327	130,370

Source: National Records of Scotland (2017)

Figure 1.9 below compares the actual number of people and households against the projected number of people and households. It shows the projected figures are similar to actual.

Figure 1.9: Comparison of mid-year estimates, projected against actual population and households in Aberdeen 2014 to 2016

Year	Population		Households	
	Projection	Actual[3]	Projection	Actual[4]
2014	228,920	228,990	105,287	105,287
2015	231,041	230,350	105,311	105,311
2016	233,613	229,840	106,489	106,749

Source: National Records of Scotland (2017)

[3] National Records of Scotland Mid-Year Population Estimates (2016)

[4] National Records of Scotland: Aberdeen City Council Area Demographic Factsheet, 2016

Economy

Traditionally Aberdeen was home to fishing, textile mills, shipbuilding and paper making. These industries were mainly overtaken by the oil industry which has been largely responsible for Aberdeen's economic boom over the last four decades.

As the rest of the UK recovers from the 2008 global financial crisis, Aberdeen is experiencing its own economic decline due to the drop in the price of oil. Since 2015, business has slowed significantly with tens of thousands of job losses. While this downturn is not the first of its kind, it has highlighted a growing and urgent need to diversify the local economy to ensure the long term economic sustainability and future well-being of the city and its people.

The downturn in the north east economy has had a significant impact on house prices, volumes of sales, rental values and availability of property for sale or rent on the market, as shown in Figure 1.10.

Figure 1.10: Change in House Prices, Aberdeen City and Suburbs 2013 – 2017

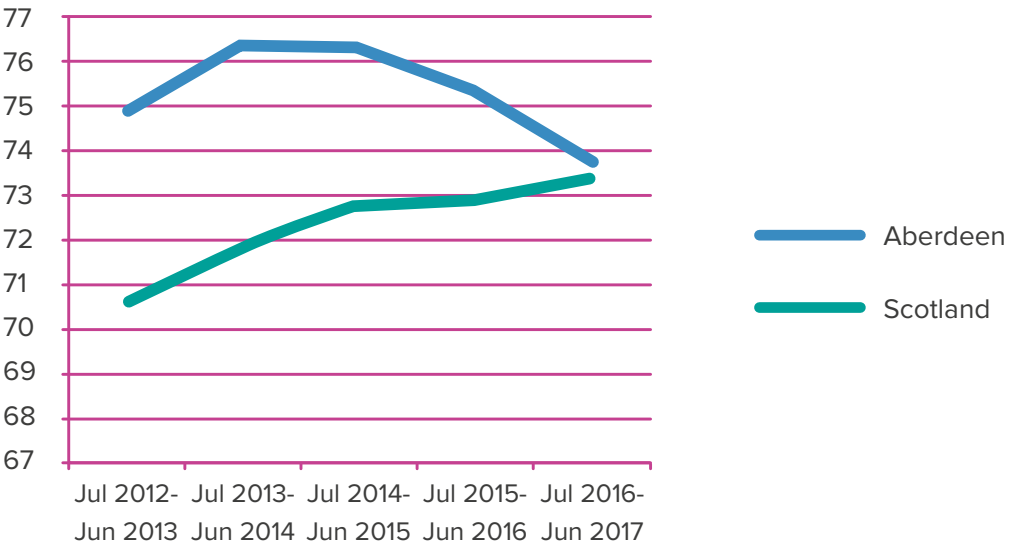
Average House Price	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015	2015 - 2016	2017
Annual Change at Quarter 2	+13.6%	-0.3%	-7.3%	-4.2%
Annual Change at Quarter 4	+9.2%	-2.8%	-9.1%	-4.4%

Source: Aberdeen Solicitors Property Centre (2017)

Employment

Figure 1.11 below shows Aberdeen had a much higher economic activity rate than Scotland but this has fallen recently. In June 2017 there were 123,300 people or (77.4%) in employment which compares to the rate for Scotland of 76.9%. The reduction in employment rates is a direct consequence of the downturn in the oil and gas sector.

Figure 1.11: Rate of economic activity, July 2012 to June 2017



Source: Office for National Statistics (2017)

Affordability

Rents are considered to be affordable if the household pays no more than 25% of their gross household income on housing costs. However, the reality is that many households spend between 25% and 35% of their income on housing costs.

Figure 1.12 below shows the mean[5] and median[6] household income of residents in Aberdeen compared with Scotland. Both the mean and median incomes are higher in Aberdeen with the mean income being 6% higher at £35,083 compared to £33,126 and the median income being 4% higher at £29,249 compared to £28,007 in 2016.

Figure 1.12: Mean and Median Gross Income of Residents in Aberdeen and Scotland

	Mean		Median	
	Aberdeen	Scotland	Aberdeen	Scotland
2012	£35,528	£30,797	£28,342	£25,907
2013	£35,609	£31,566	£27,985	£26,444
2014	£36,950	£31,447	£29,284	£26,955
2015	£36,989	£32,482	£30,151	£27,711
2016	£35,083	£33,126	£29,249	£28,007

Source: Office for National Statistics (2017)

Figure 1.13 below shows the mean and median house price in Aberdeen. The mean house price in Aberdeen is 23% higher than Scotland at £203,303 with the median house price being 22% higher at £204,116.

Figure 1.13: Mean and Median House Price in Aberdeen and Scotland

	Mean		Median	
	Aberdeen	Scotland	Aberdeen	Scotland
2012	£186,533	£154,084	£186,574	£152,751
2013	£195,499	£155,648	£196,944	£157,411
2014	£212,657	£162,704	£213,386	£163,427
2015	£220,817	£169,305	£219,320	£167,294
2016	£203,303	£165,579	£204,116	£166,670

Source: Registers of Scotland (2017)

[5] The mean is also called the average.

[6] The median is the middle point of a number set, in which half the numbers are above the median and half are below.

Figure 1.14 below shows that a person with a mean income of £35,083 would need a 40% deposit and a person earning median income of £29,249 would need a 50% deposit if they were to purchase a property in the mean and median price range in Aberdeen. The median house price in Aberdeen in 2016 was £204,116. Therefore if the person saved £250 a month, it would take them 34 years to save the deposit.

Figure 1.14: Affordability of homes in Aberdeen

2016	Income	Mortgage Multiplier	House Price	Difference
Mean	£35,083	x3.5	£203,303	40%
Median	£29,249	x3.5	£204,116	50%

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

Figure 1.15 below shows, using a 3.5 times mortgage multiplier and a 10% deposit for a person on mean and median income they could potentially afford to purchase property for £135,069 and £112,608 respectively.

Figure 1.15: Affordability based on income

2016	Income	Mortgage Multiplier	Affordable House Price	Deposit	Affordable House Price
Mean Income	£35,083	x3.5	£122,790	£12,279	£135,069
Median Income	£29,249	x3.5	£102,371	£10,237	£112,608

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

Average House Prices

Quarterly reports are produced by the University of Aberdeen (Centre for Real Estate Research) on house sales based on data provided by Aberdeen Solicitors' Property Centre. Findings in the in the fourth quarterly report of 2017 state an annual house price reduction of 4.4% with an annualised house price change over the past five years of 0.2%. These figures reflect the impact of the economic situation in the city and its effects on the local housing market. However, the report also indicates that the city is about to start a slow recovery.

In 2017 the average house price in Aberdeen was £203,257. Figure 1.16 below shows the average house price for 2007 and 2017. Whilst there has been a recent reduction in house prices, the average house price in Aberdeen increased by 14.7% over the 10 year period, whereas the average house price in Scotland increased by 7.7% over the same period.

Figure 1.16: Average House Price 2007 – 2017

	2007	2017	Percentage increase
Aberdeen	£177,237	£203,257	14.7%
Scotland	£154,810	£166,681	7.7%

Source: Registers of Scotland (2017)

Residential Sales

Figure 1.17 shows there has been a significant reduction in the number of residential sales in Aberdeen from 2014 to 2017.

The number of properties sold in Aberdeen in 2014 was 3,481 compared to 2,620 in 2017. This is a 68% reduction in residential sales over three years which can be directly attributed to the downturn in the oil and gas sector.

Figure 1.17: Number of residential sales in Aberdeen

Year	2014	2017
Number of Properties Sold	3,481	2,620

Source: Aberdeen Solicitors Property Centre (2017)

Private Rented Sector

The downturn in the oil and gas industry over recent years has had a significant impact on the private rental market. Figure 1.18 shows in their fourth quarter of 2017 analysis, Citylets highlight the effect of the downturn on the private rental market with large numbers of properties coming on the market, causing significant rent reductions in most types and sizes of property. The fourth quarter results for 2017 shows rents have continued to reduce, especially for 1 and 2 bedroom properties.

This decrease in rental values has made the private rented sector more attractive to those seeking accommodation, some of whom previously may not have been able to access this tenure of housing.

Figure 1.18: Private Rented Sector (PRS) rents in Aberdeen

Average PRS Rents				Average PRS Rents Percentage Change		
	2016	2017				
Beds	Quarter 4	Quarter 4		Over 1 year	Over 3 years	Over 5 years
1 bed	£540	£487		-9.8%	-29.4%	-15.6%
2 bed	£763	£704		-7.7%	-30.0%	-15.5%
3 bed	£1,126	£1,079		-4.2%	-21.4%	-12.5%
4 bed	£1,558	£1,546		-0.8%	-24.1%	-11.7%
Average	**£829**	**£774**		**-6.6%**	**-27.5%**	**-13.9%**

Source: Citylets (2017)

LHS Achievements 2012 - 2017

Over the past five years significant progress has been made through the implementation of the actions within the Local Housing Strategy 2012-2017.

Housing Supply

- A total of 767 affordable houses were completed over the last five years.
- Completion of 179 new build council homes at Smithfield School site and Manor Walk.
- Refurbished a former sheltered housing development to provide housing for key workers in the city.
- Shaping Aberdeen Housing LLP, a 50/50 joint venture between Aberdeen City Council and Places for People, was established to develop and manage housing for affordable rent and sale.
- 2555 private properties built to increase housing supply across the city.

Homelessness

- Achieved the Scottish Government's target to abolish priority need test to provide settled accommodation to all unintentionally homeless people.
- Increased provision of temporary accommodation including the expansion of the Private Sector Leasing scheme from 89 properties in 2012 to 157 in 2017.
- The redevelopment of West North Street from a derelict building into a modern block which provides temporary accommodation of 40 flats.
- All void properties to be offered to those in urgent housing need first. This includes all homeless applicants and assists in reducing the homeless journey.
- Introduction of the Housing Support Services team.
- Introduction of an on-line housing options self-assessment tool to assist those looking for housing to be provided with a range of options dependant on their individual circumstances. Housing options interviews are also available in order to expand on the initial housing advice provided.
- The new Housing Allocations Policy for the allocation of Council Houses based on housing need was introduced in 2012.
- The new Housing Access Service was created which has delivered a number of service improvements including:
    - Online Housing Options and housing application.
    - Increase in front line Customer Service staff.
    - Holistic approach that accounts for individual's needs.
    - More emphasis on housing options as a prevention of homelessness.

- 99% of homeless applications and 100% of housing applications are processed within 28 days and also providing one to one advice to all households on housing lists.
- The Housing Support Service was established with a focus on enabling people over the age of 16 who reside in Aberdeen City, to sustain their tenancies. The teams within the service deliver:
  - Money, debt and benefits advice.
  - Temporary accommodation and floating housing support.
  - Oversee commissioned services related to Housing Support, furniture storage and Homelessness Prevention.
- The Development team have in place a commissioning plan, with the aim of commissioning housing support services that are outcome focused. Currently there are, on average, 1000 hours of support per week delivered by commissioned services, offering support.
- The Housing Support Team are registered with the Care Inspectorate as a Housing Support service.

Particular Needs Housing

- Reduced the number of sheltered housing units to ensure stock levels meet demand.
- Increased the supply of amenity housing.
- Increased very sheltered housing stock by refurbishing a sheltered housing development along with the adjoining former day centre to provide a kitchen. and dining area with additional staff facilities.
- Upgraded the infrastructure across all sheltered housing developments to support technology enabled care.
- Opened a former sheltered housing complex to provided intermediate. accommodation for people who are leaving hospital but unable to go home. The service provides short term rehabilitation and helps older and vulnerable people return to independent living.
- Introduced “MyChoice” which is a fairer meal ordering and payment system for very sheltered housing tenants.
- Completed the renovation of a house to provide four new flats for people with learning disabilities.
- Dementia awareness training events were provided to council and RSL. Housing Officers to provide a better understanding of the condition.
- Implemented a training programme for staff on Telecare.
- Provided 950 major adaptations to private housing.

LHS Achievements 2012 - 2017

House Condition - Social Housing

- SHQS achieved as far as was practicable
- Work was ongoing to ensure that properties with abeyances and exemptions will meet SHQS.
- A rolling programme of works began to ensure all social properties in Aberdeen are complaint with EESSH by 2020.

House Condition - Private Housing

- Scheme of Assistance continued to be delivered across to city to improve the quality of private sector housing.
- Work Notices served on owners to ensure properties are repaired.
- Factoring service established for our mixed tenure multi storey blocks.
- Landlord Registration
  - Process established for dealing with unregistered landlords resulting in the serving of rent penalty notices where there is continued non-compliance with the legislation.
  - Process established for dealing with landlords whose registrations have expired and they have not renewed. Late application fee is applied resulting the serving of rent penalty notices where there is continued non-compliance with the legislation.
  - Process established to allow new applications and renewal applications to be checked by Police Scotland as part of the fit and proper person test.
- Increase in the number of HMO's across the city.

Fuel Poverty & Climate Change

- Total of 5396 basic insulation measures were installed in properties throughout the city. These installations comprised of:
  - o 3261 lofts o 1507 cavity walls o 628 floors

In addition:

- Over 1,400 homes have had solid wall insulation.
- Over 1,000 additional homes connected to district heating systems or networks.
- 44 of the city's 59 multi-storeys are now connected to low carbon district heating, ensuring affordable warmth for all householders connected.
- Over 6,000 households have received bespoke home energy advice visits, helping them save money and keep warm.
- Secured over £14 million of external funding has been used towards the costs of installing energy efficiency measures.
- Over 5,500 tonnes of co2 emissions are saved per year.

Housing Management

- 56% reduction in the number of void properties since the introduction of the revised Void Improvement Plan.
- 43% reduction in the amount of rental income lost through void properties.
- 46% reduction in the average days taken to re-let void properties.
- Reduction in current and former tenants rent arrears has been achieved despite very challenging circumstances, against a background of welfare reform and economic downturn.
- Improved average length of time (hours) to complete emergency repairs - 5.19 down to 2.99 hours.
- Improved average length of time to complete non-emergency repairs - 8.69 to 6.21 hours.
- Increased percentage of reactive repairs right first time - 91% up to 92%.
- Increased percentage of repairs appointments kept - 81% to 99%.
- Gas Safety Record renewed by anniversary date - 97% up to 100%.

Chapter 2 - Strategic Planning Framework

This chapter details the strategic planning framework that our local housing strategy operates within.

National Context

Scottish Government National Performance Framework

The National Performance Framework provides a vision for Scotland and is described and measured in five parts which support and reinforce each other. The national performance framework consists of

1	The Government's purpose.
2	7 high level targets known as purpose targets.
3	5 strategic objectives that describe where Government will focus its actions.
4	16 national outcomes that describe what the Government wants to achieve.
5	55 national indicators that enable progress to be tracked.

The purpose of the Scottish Government is to focus government and public services on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth.

The purpose targets are high level targets that enable progress to be tracked towards the achievement of our purpose.

The purpose targets are:

Growth, Productivity, Participation, Population, Solidarity, Cohesion and Sustainability.

The Scottish Government is aligned around five strategic objectives that underpin its purpose:

A Scotland that is Wealthier and Fairer, Smarter, Healthier, Safer and Stronger and Greener.

National outcomes describe how the Government will achieve its' purpose. National indicators enable progress to be tracked towards the achievement of the national outcomes and ultimately the delivery of the purpose.

Local Context

The local housing strategy is central to meeting our statutory housing responsibilities and our corporate planning activities as well as fulfilling a strategic response to national outcomes and national housing priorities.

Key Strategic Drivers

The diagram below details the key strategic drivers that influence this strategy.

The National Performance Framework has been adopted in the local context and can be illustrated as:

Local Housing Strategy 2018 - 2023					
People live in good quality, sustainable homes which they can afford and that meet their needs.					
Housing Supply & Place Making	Homelessness	Independent Living & Specialist Provision	Private Rented Sector	Fuel Poverty & Climate Change	House Condition

Strategic Outcome 1
There is an adequate supply of housing across all tenures and homes are the right size, type and location that people want to live in with access to suitable services and facilities.
Indicators
Number of affordable homes delivered.
Number of private homes delivered.
Key Actions
Work with partners to increase the supply of housing.
Promote a range of affordable housing models.
Work with partners and stakeholders to lever in additional finance for the provision of affordable housing.

Strategic Outcome 2
Homelessness is prevented and alleviated.
Indicators
Percentage of statutory homeless decisions reached within 28 days.
Length of time spent in temporary accommodation.
Homeless journey time.
Reduce repeat homelessness within 12 months.
Increase the percentage of households, previously homeless, that have sustained their tenancy for more than one year.
Key Actions
Develop a policy for sustainable temporary accommodation.
Implement 'Housing First' model in Aberdeen.
Review the process for people leaving prison in line with the SHORE protocol.
Review the process for supporting looked after children.
Implement a common outcomes tool framework for housing support.

Key Actions continued overleaf

Key Actions
Adopt a preventative approach that will ensure referrals for housing support are made at the appropriate time to avoid homelessness.
Develop a solution for young people who are presenting as homeless.
Develop a policy for improved tenancy sustainment to increase the number of homeless households who have sustained a tenancy for more than one year.
Reduce repeated homelessness.
Promote the use of the private rented sector in Aberdeen to reduce demand on social housing and homeless services.
Roll out the use of the housing options toolkit that is being developed by housing options hubs across Scotland.
Develop solutions to mitigate the impact of welfare reform.

Strategic Outcome 3
People are supported to live, as far as is reasonably practicable, independently at home or in a homely setting in their community.
Indicators
Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that they are supported to live as independently as possible.
Number and percentage of new build properties developed and fully accessible for people with particular needs.
Number of older people or people with a disability given housing options prior to hospital discharge or whilst in interim accommodation.
Number of disabled adaptations carried out in: private sector, local authority and registered social landlord properties.
Enable people to be supported in their own homes through the use of telecare by increasing the percentage of people receiving care in the home.
Key Actions
Progress the planned expansion of extra care housing provision in line with the outcomes of the housing for varying needs review.
Undertake a review of specialist housing requirements to help support people to live independently in line with priorities identified in the strategic plan and strategic commissioning implementation plan.
Revise protocols between all social housing providers across Aberdeen and the Health & Social Care Partnership and review the allocations policy to facilitate hospital discharges.
Increase provision of intermediate care services by providing short stay, adapted housing as step up/step down accommodation to enable people to leave hospital or receive additional support to prevent admission.
Work with the integration Joint Board to identify appropriate levels of funding for adaptations.
Implement the recommendations from the adapting for change demonstrator sites.

Strategic Outcome 4
Consumer knowledge, management standards and property condition is improved in the private rented sector.
Indicators
Number of private rented properties in disrepair.
Landlord Accreditation Scotland training courses.
Third party referrals to Housing & Property Chamber.
Key Actions
Provide information and advice to private landlords and tenants to help improve awareness of their rights and responsibilities.
Work with private landlords and letting agents to improve management standards in the private rented sector.
Work with private landlords and tenants to improve property condition in the private rented sector.

Strategic Outcome 5
Fuel poverty is reduced which contributes to meeting climate change targets.
Indicators
Number of households in fuel poverty.
Number of households in extreme fuel poverty.
Carbon emissions from housing.
Key Actions
Improve energy efficiency of housing across all tenures.
Work with residents to help them obtain the best price for heat and power.
Work with residents to maximise their income.
Work with residents to help them use their energy in the most efficient manner.
Work with residents to encourage a reduction in their carbon footprint.
Work with other agencies and partners, including the Health and Social Care Partnership to deliver the key actions in relation to fuel poverty.
Raise awareness of the issues relating to poverty across all sectors.

Strategic Outcome 6
The quality of housing of all tenures is improved across the city.
Indicators
Number of dwellings meeting Scottish Housing Quality Standard.
Number of dwellings meeting Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing.
Number of dwellings in disrepair in private sector housing.
Number of dwellings with disrepair to critical elements in private sector housing.
Number of dwellings with urgent disrepair in private sector housing.
Key Actions
Continue to deliver information, advice and practical assistance through Scheme of Assistance[1] to improve the quality of private sector housing.
Continue to identify and address housing that is sub-standard, which includes housing that is below the tolerable standard[2] with a particular focus on tenements.
Social housing providers will continue to have rolling programmes of works to ensure compliance with SHQS.
Social housing providers will continue to have rolling programmes of works to ensure compliance with EESSH by 2020.

Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016 – 2026

In line with the requirements of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, Community Planning Aberdeen has developed a ten year Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26. This is the overarching strategy for Community Planning Partners in Aberdeen. It provides a clear blueprint for collaborative actions to tackle the challenges facing the city.

The local outcome improvement plan sets out a shared vision for Aberdeen as "a place where all people can prosper" reflecting our desire to help all people, families, businesses and communities to do well, succeed and flourish in every aspect. This vision is being delivered through four main themes:

Prosperous Economy – Aberdeen has a flourishing, thriving and successful local economy.	Prosperous Place – People experience Aberdeen as the best place to invest, live and visit.
Prosperous People – People in Aberdeen are happy and healthy and enjoy positive life outcomes.	Enabling Technology – Innovative, integrated and transformed public services.

Our local housing strategy is linked to the vision and priorities within the local outcome improvement plan and plays an important role in addressing the critical driving factors that the Aberdeen Community Planning Partnership believes need to be addressed to be successful in ensuring people are resilient and supported.

The local outcome improvement plan identifies some specific improvement measures relating to housing which include:

1.	We will ensure housing that is affordable, across markets, is widely available, and in particular to support vital key workers in the education, care and health sectors.
2.	We will seek to reduce the risk of harm by increasing individual and community resilience to vulnerability.
3.	We will regenerate our city centre to become a vibrant and attractive place to live, work and invest in.
4.	Support community capacity building through the use of technology.

Strategic Business Plan – Refresh 2017/2018

Partner organisations translate the shared priorities within the local outcome improvement plan into their own organisational plans. For Aberdeen City Council this is articulated in the strategic business plan that was refreshed in 2016/17 to take cognisance of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26.

The refreshed strategic business plan sets out how the council is contributing to the strategic priorities within the local outcome improvement plan through implementation of its policy statement 'Aberdeen – The Smarter City' and through the delivery of key action within the plan.

To ensure a clear golden thread between the local outcome improvement plan and the strategic business plan the document has been structured around the same four themes of Prosperous Economy, Prosperous Place, Prosperous People and Enabling Technology.

The Strategic Development Plan and the Local Development Plan

Aberdeen is Scotland's third largest city and forms part of the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan. This region has the greatest projected growth in both population and households of Scotland's four strategic development plan areas.

The Strategic Development Plan informs Aberdeen's Local Development Plan to ensure that the city has enough people, homes, jobs and facilities to maintain and improve the quality of life in the city. The Local Development Plan was adopted by the council in January 2017 and provides a firm foundation for future development in the city with significant land allocations made in terms of housing and employment.

Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2018 - 2023

The Strategic Housing Investment Plan sets out how we direct investment to provide affordable housing in the city and achieve the objectives we have set out in our local housing strategy. The development of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan involves close collaboration between a range of stakeholders including registered social landlords, Scottish Government, private developers and other services within the council.

Aberdeen City Region Deal

Aberdeen City Region Deal is an agreement between the UK Government, the Scottish Government, Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and Opportunity North East and has committed public sector investment of up to £250m over the next 10 years.

The investment will support improvements to the region's digital infrastructure, expansion of Aberdeen Harbour and support investment in Innovations Hubs that will attract and retain key skills and expertise in the region. The housing commitment which includes:

- A joint approach towards planning for meeting housing need across the city region.
- Budgetary flexibility within each financial year across the two local authority areas to facilitate a joint approach to delivery of affordable housing.
- Additional resources through the Housing Infrastructure Fund fund to facilitate a joint approach to support acceleration of new development sites within the wider Aberdeen Housing Market Area.

Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan

The local housing strategy has a key role to play in contributing to the outcomes within the health and social care partnership. Greater emphasis is placed on enabling people to stay in their homes, or in a homely setting where they can live life to the full.

Housing is recognised as a key component in effectively shifting the balance of care from institutional setting to enable community based services and support.

The Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Strategic Plan and Housing Contribution Statement 2016 - 2019 sets out the long term vision for health and social care with high level strategic priorities that show how housing services are contributing to the success of the partnership. This will be underpinned by the Strategic Commissioning Implementation Plan 2018 - 2022 which sets out the key priorities for the Health and Social Care Partnership.

The local housing strategy will link to the Scottish Public Health Network Report 2017 which states the importance of housing and its impact on people's social, mental and physical heath and its role in reducing inequalities through the provision of good quality housing. A Health Inequality Impact Assessment will be carried out to ensure that the local housing strategy is aligned to public health priorities.

The local housing strategy will strengthen these links as well as improve the alignment of strategic planning to support National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes.

Housing Legislation

Relevant housing legislation has been considered when developing the strategy. Details of this can be seen in Appendix 6.

Chapter 3 - Housing Supply and Placemaking

Strategic Outcome 1

> **There is an adequate supply of housing across all tenures and homes are the right size, type and location that people want to live in with access to suitable services and facilities.**

Main Issues

The demand for affordable housing is significant and whilst there is certainty around funding for the next three years, the Aberdeen Housing Need and Demand Assessment 2017 indicates a continuing high need for affordable housing which cannot be met by current levels of funding.
New houses are being built at a time when the housing market is slower than has been previously with properties taking an increased time to sell/let with lower values in both sales and rental market.
There is no longer a shortage of properties in the private rented sector which has resulted in reduced rents. Lower rents are negatively impacting on the viability of mid-market rental properties.

Key Actions

Work with partners to increase the supply of housing.
Promote a range of affordable housing models.
Work with partners and stakeholders to lever in additional finance for the provision of affordable housing.

Introduction

This chapter sets out the council's approach to addressing housing need and demand across the city. It sets our strategic vision for housing supply across all tenures to meet projected needs and demand.

With the current downturn in the local economy, house building will help to support economic growth in these challenging times, with benefits for the local economy by supporting construction, creating jobs and training opportunities.

An adequate supply of housing is one part of meeting need and demand but this in itself is not enough. It is also important to make sure there is enough housing of the right type and size available to meet current and future need and demand. This will help to create balanced and sustainable communities.

Demand for affordable housing is significant and whilst there is certainty around funding for the next three years, there remains a need for affordable housing which cannot be met by current levels of funding.

New houses are being built at a time when the housing market is slower than has been previously with properties taking an increased time to sell/let with lower values in both sales and rental market.

Private rented sector rents have reduced which is negatively impacting on the viability of mid-market rental properties.

Key actions have therefore been identified to address some of the issues. Further detail on how the key actions will be achieved can be found in the joint delivery action plan at Appendix 1.

National context

Homes Fit for the 21st Century sets out the Scottish Government's strategy for housing up to 2020. The first strategic objective is to build new, high quality, affordable homes, including social housing, to meet current need and the demand arising from our growing and ageing population.

There is a commitment to build 50,000 affordable homes during the lifetime of the current parliament.

Local context

Aberdeen Development Plan

The Development Plan for Aberdeen consists of the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan and the Aberdeen Local Development Plan.

Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan

The Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan covers the geographical areas covered by Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council excluding the Cairngorms National Park. The strategic development plan plays a key role in guiding development over the next 25 years. The current strategic development plan was approved by Scottish Ministers in March 2014.

A Main Issues Report is the first significant stage in preparing the revised development plan which will set the framework to develop Aberdeen City and Shire over the next 20 to 25 years. A Main Issues Report is to be approved by the Strategic Development Planning Authority and circulated for public consultation in spring 2018.

One of the main roles for the strategic development plan in relation to new housing is to set realistic housing supply targets which cover:

- Aberdeen Housing Market Area.
- Rural Housing Market Area.
- Aberdeen City Council area.
- Aberdeenshire Council area.

The targets are to be divided between market and affordable tenures. The Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan is currently being drafted therefore it is only possible to set indicative housing supply targets within this strategy. The housing supply targets will therefore be revised, where necessary, following conclusion of the strategic development plan review process.

Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2017

The Local Development Plan[1] sets out which land is being allocated to meet the city's development needs to 2026 and beyond. It also sets out the planning policies we will apply in promoting the growth of Aberdeen over this period.

[1] A Local Development Plan is required for each council area across Scotland. It allocates sites, either for new development, such as housing, or sites to be protected. It also includes policies that guide decisions on all planning applications.

Housing Need and Demand Assessment[2] 2017

The Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) jointly undertaken by Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and the Strategic Development Planning Authority provides the strategic evidence base required by the Scottish Government to inform the housing supply targets within the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan, Aberdeen Local Development Plan and the Local Housing Strategy. See appendix 7 for the full Housing Need and Demand Assessment 2017.

The 2017 HNDA received "robust and credible" status from the Scottish Government's Centre for Housing Market Analysis[3] in March 2018. It provides the main strategic evidence base for housing need and demand over the next five years and beyond.

The Scottish Government refreshed the HNDA guidance in June 2014 and as a result the methodology[4] for assessing housing need and demand has been revised. Households are now only assessed as being in need if they generate a requirement for a net additional dwelling.

The first stage of the HNDA process is to look at those households who are currently experiencing housing need. The HNDA 2017 has identified 360 such households in Aberdeen. These households cannot afford to meet their needs in the housing market without some form of assistance. It has been assumed that these needs will be addressed over a period of ten years.

HNDA preferred scenarios

The next stage of the HNDA looks at the future need for households that have yet to be formed. This is derived mainly by considering future household projections. It is assumed that any future need would be met through the provision of affordable housing.

Figure 3.1 below highlights the estimated additional houses required per annum using the different scenarios in the HNDA tool.

Figure 3.1: Estimate of annual additional housing units

	Principal growth scenario	Low migration scenario	High migration scenario
Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority	2,171	1,566	2,768
Aberdeen Housing Market Area	1,691	1,195	2,179
Rural Housing Market Area	480	371	589
Aberdeen	1,063	679	1,441
Aberdeenshire	1,107	887	1,327
Affordable – Aberdeen	510 (48%)	380 (56%)	706 (49%)
Market – Aberdeen	553 (52%)	299 (44%)	735 (51%)

Source: HNDA 2017

[2] A HNDA estimates the future number of additional homes to meet existing and future housing need and demand. It also captures information on the operation of the housing system to assist local authorities to develop policies on new housing supply, management of existing stock and the provision of housing-related services.

[3] The Centre for Housing Market Analysis is part of the Scottish Government's Communities Analysis Division. It provides support to local authorities and others to aid the strategic planning of housing in Scotland.

[4] The housing need and demand methodology has limitations in that it does not fully quantify the impacts of poor quality and lower demand housing and any subsequent need for replacement of existing housing stock.

Housing Supply Target

Whilst the HNDA has identified the additional houses required by tenure, these figures will not automatically become the Housing Supply Target.

A housing supply target is the Strategic Development Planning Authority's view of the type and level of housing to be delivered over the period of the strategic development plan. Although it takes aspiration into account, targets should be identified which are deliverable.

As per Scottish Government guidance, when setting and agreeing the housing supply target, authorities should give full consideration to those factors which may have a material impact on the pace and scale of housing delivery such as:

- Economic factors which may impact on demand and supply in particular parts of the area.
- Capacity within the construction sector.
- The potential inter-dependency between delivery of market and affordable housing at the local level.
- Availability of resources.
- Likely pace and scale of delivery based on completion rates.
- Recent development levels.
- Planned demolitions.
- Planned new and replacement housing or housing brought back into effective use.

As the strategic development plan and local housing strategy are to be completed at different times, and it is the role of the strategic development plan to set the housing supply target, it is only possible to provide indicative figures for the housing supply target at this stage through the local housing strategy.

The housing supply target set by the proposed Aberdeen City & Shire Strategic Development Plan proposes to utilise the principal scenario from the HNDA, modified to give a policy interpretation of current circumstances and the potential for growth in the medium to long term. This is consistent with the Regional Economic Strategy.

Figure 3.2 below shows the indicative housing supply targets for targets using the modified principle scenario for Aberdeen during the lifetime of the local housing strategy.

Figure 3.2: Indicative Housing Supply Targets – Aberdeen City Council

	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	Total
Affordable	342	342	384	384	384	1,836
Market	634	634	712	712	712	3,404
Total	**976**	**976**	**1,096**	**1,096**	**1,096**	**5,240**

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

House completions

Figure 3.3 below shows the number of house completions for all tenures within Aberdeen over the last five years. It is clear that the indicative housing supply targets are in excess of previous rates of delivery but with the elevated levels of funding committed by the Scottish Government up to 2020/2021 it is felt that these indicative targets could be achievable.

Figure 3.3: House completions in Aberdeen

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Market	416	558	544	788	518
Council	31	0	0	20	0
Registered Social Landlord	51	133	16	84	60
Total	**498**	**691**	**560**	**892**	**578**

Source: *Scottish Government (2017)*

Affordable housing delivery for 2017/2018 has improved significantly. 367 affordable homes were completed in 2017/2018 with 400 completions projected for 2018/2019.

Self-Build/ Custom Build

The draft Scottish Government Planning Delivery Advice: Housing and Infrastructure is supportive of self-build housing as a means of increasing the supply of housing. We do not currently have a policy on this, but it will be considered as part of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan Main Issues Report which is due to be issued for consultation in early 2019.

Strategic Vision for the Future of Housing

The strategic vision for housing in Aberdeen is:

People live in good quality, sustainable homes which they can afford and that meet their needs.

Affordable Housing Policy

Chapter 2 detailed the strategic planning framework that this strategy operates in.

The provision of affordable housing will continue to be a priority for the council which is supported by policy. As detailed in Chapter 1, there are severe affordability pressures in Aberdeen with high levels of housing need identified in the HNDA, market housing will be unable to meet the needs of everyone, therefore, through the use of planning policy, affordable housing is to be delivered.

The local development plan sets a requirement that 25% of all new developments with 20 or more units should be affordable.

There are various mechanisms for the delivery of affordable housing with affordable housing requirements[5] being delivered in three ways:

- On-site (preferred option).
- Off-site[6].
- Commuted payments.

The council has a preferred hierarchy of affordable housing types:

1. Social rented.
2. Intermediate housing.
    - shared ownership[7].
    - shared equity[8].
    - Discounted Low Cost Home Ownership[9].
    - Housing without subsidy[10].
    - Mid-market rented accommodation[11].
3. Off-site.

Social Rent

The council and local registered social landlords have made an important contribution to the provision of affordable housing across the city and will continue to do so with 1,378 social rented properties being identified in the SHIP 2018 - 2023.

Mid-market rent

Mid-market rental properties allow tenants to pay rent levels below the market rent.

Mid-market rent forms a key aspect of affordable housing provision with 1,153 (445 registered social landlords and 708 non registered social landlords) properties identified for mid-market housing in the SHIP 2018 - 2023.

Discounted Low Cost Sale

This is where a home is sold at a percentage discount of its open market value to households in a priority client group. A legal agreement is used to ensure that subsequent buyers are also eligible buyers.

The council works with developers to promote the sale of homes that are to be sold at a discounted price. We also work with owners when the property is to be re-sold to help ensure the home remains affordable.

Housing Without Subsidy

Non-subsidised affordable housing is likely to take the form of entry level housing for sale, some built at higher densities and with conditions attached to the missives designed to maintain the houses as affordable units to subsequent purchasers. Homes delivered without subsidy may be considered to fulfil part of the overall affordable housing requirement where it can be clearly demonstrated that they will meet the needs of, and be affordable to, groups of households identified through the housing needs assessment.

Local Affordable Rent (LAR) Housing Trust

Increasingly limited public finances and resources have reduced what can be achieved through traditional funding approaches. Therefore innovation is required to create and enable innovative ways to deliver more housing with less public investment.

LAR Housing Trust is an example of this. LAR is a charity is governed by independent trustees. LAR's initial funding came from a 25 year loan of £55 million from the Scottish Government. LAR intend to secure at least the same amount of long-term private sector investment. LAR Housing Trust operates across Scotland including Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire with 128 properties in Aberdeen and a further 9 due for completion in 2018.

Housing Investment

The Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) sets out strategic investment priorities for a five year period to achieve the outcomes identified in the local housing strategy. Local authorities are required to submit its SHIP to the Scottish Government annually.

The document informs the Scottish Government housing investment decisions and is developed with the involvement of key housing delivery partners in Aberdeen.

The SHIP sets out investment priorities for affordable housing and demonstrates how these will be delivered. It identifies the resources required to deliver these priorities and shows how the council with our RSL partners will contribute to the Scottish Government target to deliver at least 50,000 new affordable homes during the current parliament.

Based on the information provided in the SHIP, the Scottish Government has issued Resource Planning Assumptions for affordable housing grant for the period 2018/2019 - 2020/2021 totaling £56,489 million:

2018/2019	£17,120m
2019/2020	£18.133m
2020/2021	£19.346m

SHIP 2018 - 2023 which was submitted to the Scottish Government in November 2017 identifies projects to the value of £95,042million:

2018/2019	£48,040m
2019/2020	£37,134m
2020/2021	£9,868m

The council will pursue all opportunities to increase the grant funding available to the city. Section 75 agreements[12] negotiated through the planning process with housing developers along with council tax discount on second homes and long term empty properties will be fully utilised. 15.45M of income has been received through the Council Tax levy which is spent on affordable housing across the city. We are also well placed to accept any potential underspends from other local authorities via the Scottish Government.

The indicative housing supply target for affordable homes detailed within this strategy will be used to inform the SHIP.

Work will continue to deliver a range of affordable housing solutions with partners and stakeholders.

Sustainable Places

Well-designed, sustainable places increase a persons' physical and mental well-being with housing playing a key role. Housing helps to shape, maintain and support sustainable places, through both the provision of high quality development and the provision of effective services that assist in maintaining and supporting communities.

Sustainable communities are generally characterised as those that have a range of services, housing types and people, which promote interaction and integration and create positive, diverse neighbourhoods.

The local housing strategy seeks to increase the provision of affordable housing, reduce fuel poverty as well prevent and alleviate homelessness which are all essential if we are to have sustainable communities across the city.

The local housing strategy sits alongside and works with the local development plan in seeking to support the delivery of new sustainable communities whilst supporting the growth and continued success of existing communities. This is done by ensuring that an adequate supply of a broad range of housing types and tenures are provided to accommodate the needs of all residents of the city.

[5] Local Development Plan, Supplementary Guidance: Affordable Housing

[6] Off-site provision involves a developer providing an equivalent number of affordable housing units on another site. While off-site provision can be a useful mechanism, it can also pose significant risks such as the creation of non-mixed socio economic communities which would be contrary to Scottish Planning Policy.

[7] The owner purchases part of the dwelling and rents the remainder usually from a RSL.

[8] The owner purchases part of the dwelling, with the remaining stake usually held by the Scottish Government. Unlike shared ownership, the owner pays no rent for the equity stake which is retained by the Scottish Government.

[9] A dwelling sold by the developer at a percentage discount of its open market value to households in the priority client group determined by the local authority. A legal agreement is used to ensure that subsequent buyers are also eligible buyers and the property remains affordable in perpetuity.

[10] Nonsubsidised affordable housing is likely to take the form of entry level housing for sale, some built at higher densities and with conditions attached to the missives designed to maintain the houses as affordable units to subsequent purchasers.

[11] Rented accommodation that is rented at a discounted rent level at or below the Local Housing Allowance.

[12] Section 75 Agreements are contracts entered into between a landowner and the planning authority. A planning obligation may arise in connection with applications for planning permission and can include financial contributions towards schools, roads, transport and affordable housing.

Placemaking

Placemaking is a creative, collaborative process that includes design, development, renewal or regeneration of our built environment. The outcomes should be sustainable, well designed places and homes which meet people's needs.

The council has a vision of a sustainable city with quality place-making at the core of planning. Quality place-making plays a positive part in reducing the impact of climate change and improving health and well-being.

Quality place-making is about creating development that sustains and enhances the coastal, economic, environmental and cultural attractiveness of the city as a place to be and is a material consideration in determining planning applications.

All development must ensure high standards of design and have a strong and distinctive sense of place which is a result of context appraisal, detailed planning, quality architecture, craftsmanship and materials. Well considered landscaping and a range of transportation opportunities ensuring connectivity are required to be compatible with the scale and character of the developments.

Places that are distinctive and designed with a real understanding of context will sustain and enhance the social, economic, environmental and cultural attractiveness of the city. Proposals for new developments are considered against the following six essential qualities:

- Distinctive.
- Welcoming.
- Safe and pleasant.
- Easy to move around.
- Adaptable.
- Resource efficient.

Locality Plans and Town Centres

A high quality of life is fundamental to attracting and retaining the talent and investment needed to grow Aberdeen's economy. This sense of place, with added key emphasis on city centre, is crucial in underpinning economic growth.

Three 'Locality Plans' have been developed by the Locality Partnership Boards and have been approved by Community Planning Aberdeen to focus attention on improving outcomes for the populations living in the most deprived communities.

The plans aim to deliver improved quality of life, access to opportunities and a better place to live.

Locality Plan for Torry

Additional refurbishment and environmental improvement programmes with our housing stock and associated land. The provision of affordable housing that is well maintained and sustainable is a priority for Torry.

Locality Plan for Cummings Park, Heathryfold, Northfield, Mastrick and Middlefield

The area is currently developing housing options and plans for environmental improvements to help with the regeneration of Middlefield, including re-housing of tenants and reallocation of community facilities.

Locality Plan for Woodside, Tillydrone and Seaton

In conjunction with a range of community partners, we are building a new Community Hub in Tillydrone. The detail of what the hub will comprise of is still being developed, but it may include a range of local services to support the community, for example: learning and educational programs; social space to support building social networks; access to local services; training and employment support; community café; health and wellbeing services; and suitable space for activities for people of all ages.

Town Centres

Town centres are a major focus within the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and includes actions in relation to satisfaction levels with the amount of green spaces, street design and walkability for children and older people. It also considers how best to tackle underused office space.

Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan

The Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan was approved in June 2016. It has a focus on bringing more people back to live in the city centre. One consequence of this will be facilitating the delivery of housing on brownfield sites in Aberdeen, not only through new build but potentially through conversions.

It identifies 7 intervention areas and 49 projects to define the Masterplan's focus.

The intervention areas are:

- Denburn Valley - Redevelopment of the Denburn Health Centre / car park and refurbishment of the historic Woolmanhill Hospital to provide a new mixed use neighbourhood, set within an attractive green setting, leading to a revitalised Union Terrace Gardens.
- Heart of the City - Reinstating the central role of Union Street in the life of the city, establishing stronger retail linkages north and south and creating a destination not just for shopping but for many city activities. Refurbishment and remodelling of buildings on Union Street. Negligible increase in overall accommodation but increased utilisation of existing floor space. Remodelling of the St Nicholas Centre, Mitherkirk and Aberdeen Indoor Market.
- Queen's Square - There is potential to redevelop the Town House extension and former Grampian Police headquarters along with other buildings and under used spaces within the Queen Street to create a new city centre neighbourhood with a strong urban character. This could include consolidation of public service provision in the eastern annexe of Marischal College, presently vacant.
- Union Street West - A focus for the wider business sector, from new businesses with a "Made in Aberdeen" focus, to spin-outs from the energy sector. Union Street West emerges as a much stronger business address.
- Station Gateway - The critical remodelling of the key gateway to the city centre, with new business and commercial developments, providing city centre users and visitors with a radically transformed arrival experience, leading seamlessly northwards to Union Street.
- Castlegate /Castlehill - A focus for visitors and tourists, taking in the best of Aberdeen's townscape, including Castlegate, Union Street and links to the harbour to the south and the beach to the east.
- North Dee / Torry Waterfront - New riverside quarters connected by a pedestrian bridge and a much improved riverside park and promenade. To the north, an urban business district; to the south, a residential neighbourhood that maximises its relationship to the river.

City Centre Living Strategy

A comprehensive review of the property market in the city centre has been concluded with four key recommendations. The strategy reviews the potential for city centre living and provides an assessment of the scale, scope, programme and actions to achieve this.

The strategy recommends that Aberdeen City Council:

1. Forms a City Living Team
2. Takes the lead role in the delivery of transformational projects
3. Identifies and supports quick wins
4. Introduces a moratorium on developer obligations in the city centre.

The recommendations will result in the introduction of policies to encourage growth of the city centre population and, where appropriate, will be incorporated into actions within the local housing strategy.

Empty Homes

There are three categories of empty properties for council tax purposes:

Long term empty properties:

> Properties which have been empty for 6 months or more and are liable for council tax.

Unoccupied exemptions:

> Properties which are empty and exempt from paying council tax (for example, properties which are unoccupied and unfurnished for up to a maximum of 12 months.

Second Homes

> Properties which are furnished and lived in for at least 25 days in a 12 month period. However, not as someone's main residence, and are entitled to a discount of 50%.

At time of writing, there are no specific statutory requirements on local authorities with respect to bringing empty properties back into use. Therefore, different local authorities across Scotland, will adopt different measures. Aberdeen City Council is currently in the process of creating strategic actions in order to tackle this issue. All available powers, including the use of Compulsory Purchase Orders will be considered as part of our approach to dealing with empty homes.

While there is a need to build new homes, ignoring the potential of existing empty homes in meeting housing supply is costly for the environment. Creating homes from empty properties saves substantial amounts of material compared to building new houses.

Vacant Dwelling Council Tax Powers

Councils have the power, subject to certain exemptions to charge up to 100% extra council tax on long term vacant properties.

Where a property is unoccupied and furnished but not a second home, 10% discount is awarded, up to a maximum period of 12 months from the date the property became unoccupied.

If the property remains unoccupied and furnished for more than 12 months, the discount will end and a 100% additional Council Tax charge will apply.

However, if the property is actively being marketed for sale or rent, a further period of up to 12 months of the 10% discount can be awarded.

Figure 3.4 shows as at August 2017 there are 2,380 privately owned properties that are empty across the city. This equates to 2.8% of private stock or 2.24% of total stock.

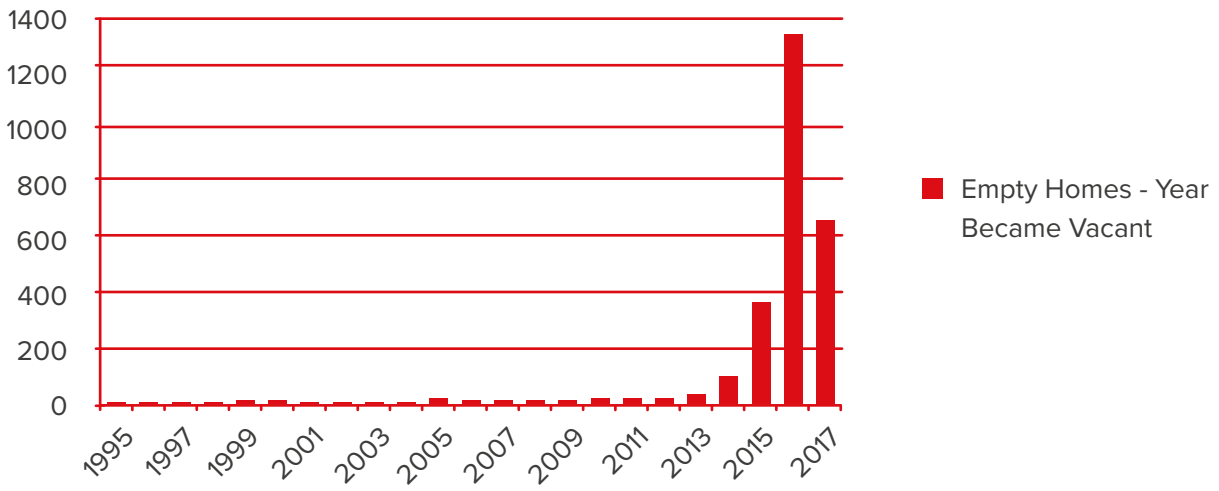
Figure 3.4: Number of properties and length of time empty.

Length of Time Empty	Number of Properties
6 months to 1 year	619
1 to 2 years	1,130
2 to 3 years	363
3 years +	268

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

Figure 3.5 below shows the majority of properties have become vacant since 2015 with 2016 showing a spike in vacancy. Only 7% of properties of vacant properties have been vacant since before 2014 and these properties are primarily in council tax bands A and B.

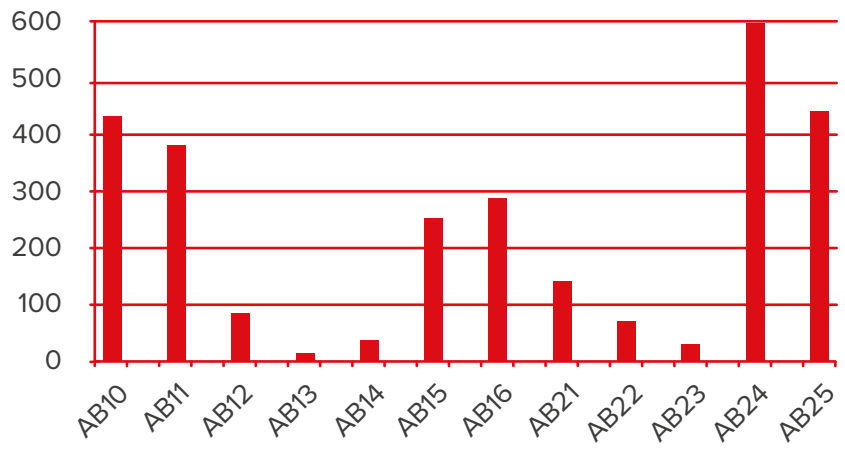
Figure 3.5: Length of time properties have been vacant within Aberdeen.



Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

As can be seen in Figure 3.6, the largest numbers of vacant properties are within AB10, AB11, AB24 and AB25 which all have established residential populations.

Figure 3.6: Vacant properties by postcode



Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

It is likely that the dramatic increase in empty properties is linked to the wider economy and assistance would not enable the properties to be let out or sold. Due to a reduction in house prices, homeowners may not wish to market their property for sale at this time, in the hope that the property will rise in value over time.

A comprehensive review of the property market in the city centre is currently ongoing. The findings of which will inform the introduction of policies to encourage growth of the city centre population and, where appropriate, will be incorporated into the local housing strategy. A plan will be developed as per the Local Outcome Improvement Plan to incentivise bringing underused space above shops and long term empty units into residential use.

Key Indicators

A Health Inequalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken. The indicators and actions will be revised as required.

There is an adequate supply of housing across all tenures and homes are the right size, type and location that people want to live in with access to suitable services and facilities			
Indicator	**Baseline**	**Target**	**Frequency & Source**
Number of affordable homes delivered	117	342 - 384	Annual Aberdeen City Council
Number of private homes delivered	594	634 - 712	Annual Aberdeen City Council

Chapter 4 - Homelessness

Strategic Outcome 7

> **Homelessness is prevented and alleviated.**

Main Issues

- Increased number of homeless presentations.
- Lack of suitable accommodation for single people.
- Length of time spent in temporary accommodation.
- Impact of welfare reform, which is not yet fully understood until guidance is available from UK and Scottish Government.
- Increase in the number of people who have more complex/multiple needs and require bespoke services and support.
- Tenancy sustainment in both social and private sector housing.

Key Actions

- Develop a policy for sustainable temporary accommodation.
- Implement 'Housing First' model in Aberdeen.
- Review the process for people leaving prison in line with the SHORE[1] protocol.
- Review the process for supporting looked after children.
- Implement a common outcomes tool framework for housing support.
- Adopt a preventative approach that will ensure referrals for housing support are made at the appropriate time to avoid homelessness.
- Develop a solution for young people who are presenting as homeless.
- Develop a policy for improved tenancy sustainment to increase the number of homeless households who have sustained a tenancy for more than one year.
- Reduce repeated homelessness.
- Promote the use of the private rented sector in Aberdeen to reduce demand on social housing and homeless services.
- Roll out the use of the housing options toolkit.
- Develop solutions to mitigate the impact of welfare reform.
- Review the choice based lettings service.
- Review nominations agreements and section 5 arrangements.
- Ensure that homelessness services positively influence health inequalities and health outcomes.

[1] SHORE - Secure Housing on Release for Everyone: A draft protocol between Housing and Scottish Prison Service

Introduction

This chapter details the council's approach to preventing and alleviating homelessness across the city. Homelessness is the most acute form of housing need and places significant demands on housing and other services. We have seen a significant shift in focus in successive strategies relating to homelessness over the last fifteen years reflecting changes in legislation and national guidance.

Early strategies focused on increasing the provision of temporary accommodation and the lack of affordable housing. Subsequently we saw a change in focus towards service quality and sustainable housing solutions and developing preventative services.

More recently, the strategic direction has focused on a person-centred approach recognising that homelessness is often a symptom of other complex issues. Sustainable solutions require effective multi agency working to mitigate the long term health inequalities that have become a feature of our society.

All councils in Scotland, have a statutory duty to help people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless as detailed within the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, as amended. These duties include the prevention and alleviation of homelessness and provision of housing support, temporary and permanent accommodation for all unintentionally homeless households.

The Local Outcome Improvement Plan includes a commitment to "work in partnership to strengthen resilience and capacity of people who are at risk of homelessness to maintain stable living arrangements."

Extent and Nature of Homelessness

Homeless Applications

The council monitors the number of homeless applications it receives. In 2016/17 the number of homeless applicants accounted for 1.4% of all households in Aberdeen. This compares to the national average of 1.5%

Figure 4.1 shows the number of homeless applications received between 2010/2011 and 2016/2017. It shows a 56% reduction in the number of applications received between 2010/2011 and 2011/2012. This is because the council set out new plans in 2010/2011 for the future delivery of homelessness services to tackle the growing increase in homelessness throughout the city. Central to this was a move towards prevention which was to be incorporated into a wider change in the culture of the service. A Homeless Prevention Team was created with a remit for early intervention in cases where homelessness was likely to occur and to reduce the incidence of homelessness arising.

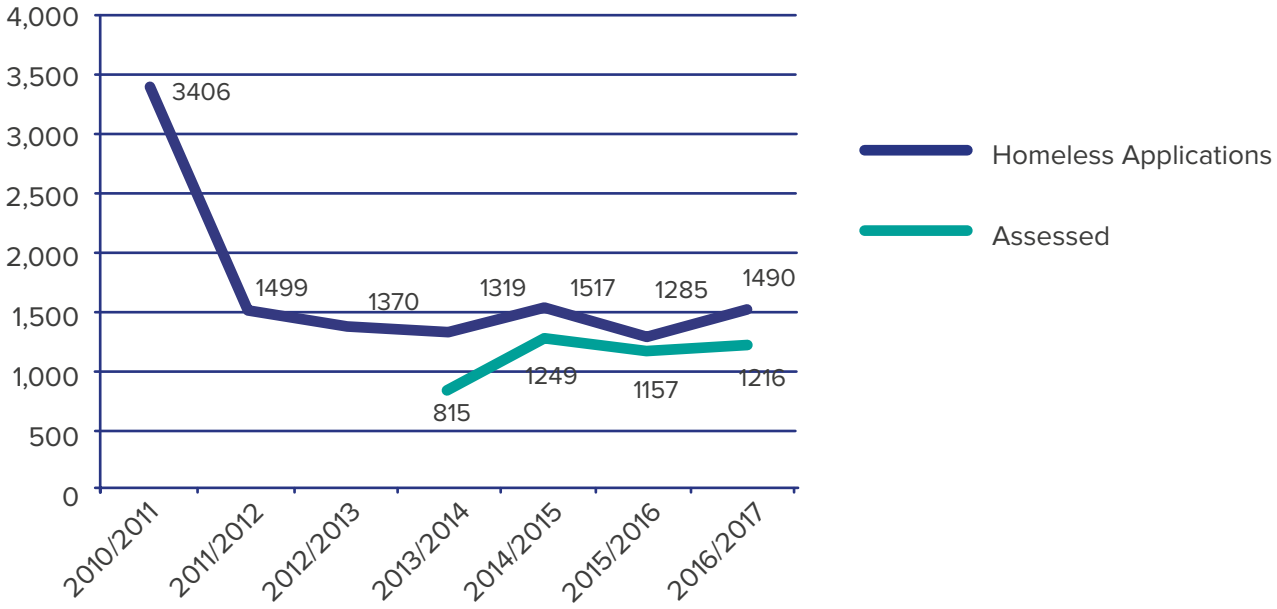
The fall in presentations was mainly due to the impact of new housing options/ homelessness prevention strategies adopted by the council rather than to changes in the underlying drivers of homelessness. Applications then continued to fall until 2013/2014 where they reached their lowest levels since records began at 1,319 applications.

A further review of housing options across the housing service concluded in late 2013, with a central proposal to form a new Housing Access Service, comprising housing advice, prevention, statutory assessment and allocation functions. This new structure was approved and became operational in April 2014. During the first year of operations, a 15% increase in homeless applications was recorded, only to fall by the same margin during 2015/16.

In 2015 the Scottish Housing Regulator completed their annual assessment of risk and began a process of ongoing engagement with the council around improving services and outcomes for homeless people. A key area of enquiry centred upon access to services, advice and prevention for homeless people.

Since then homelessness applications rose by 16% in 2016/2017 where 1,490 applications were received. This increase has continued into 2017/2018 where at the end of November 2017, 1,163 applications had been received which is a 24% increase upon the 935 received during the same period the previous year. Based on the current year to date, a 17% rise in applications is forecast by the end of the year (1,740).

Figure 4.1: Statutory Homeless Applications in Aberdeen



Source: Scottish Government (2017)

As can be seen in Figure 4.2 below, since April 2012 the proportion of applicants assessed with no statutory duty has fallen by 5% from 300 to 229. There has also been a 9% fall in the proportion of applicants found to be intentionally homeless where we have a duty to provide temporary accommodation, information and advice. The proportion of applicants found to be unintentionally homeless and owed a duty to be re-housed has increased by 15% rising from 927 households (65%) in 2012/13 to 1,169 (80%) in 2016/17. During 2016/17 the council had a duty to provide permanent accommodation to 1,169 applicants, 242 more than in 2012/13. Forecasts predict that this figure will rise again in 2017/18 if current trends continue.

Figure 4.2: Outcomes of homeless applications in Aberdeen

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Duty to House	927	663	1,012	1,012	1,169
%	65%	60%	64%	74%	80%
Temp & Advice	202	151	238	147	59
%	14%	13%	15%	11%	4.0%
No Duty	300	301	343	217	229
%	21%	27%	21%	16%	16%
Total	**1,429**	**1,115**	**1,593**	**1,376**	**1,457**

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

The rise in the number of applications which result in the council having a duty to re-house has placed further pressures on the demand for social housing, particularly bedsit and 1 bed properties. The council is heavily reliant on the use of its own stock to discharge its duty in full to unintentional homeless applicants. Figures show that over the past five years, on average, 83% of all homeless applicants securing a Scottish Secure Tenancy are housed into council owned accommodation. Bedsit and 1 bed properties currently form 37% of the current council lettable stock portfolio where turn-over rates are relatively low (estimated to be around 11%).

The majority of homeless applicants qualify for general need housing which places further restrictions on the availability of stock to meet demand. During the last three years, 99% of the 1,825 homeless households permanently housed by the council have been allocated general need housing. Over the same period, there has been 3,749 general need properties re-let, 48% of which have been allocated to homeless households which is slightly lower than the 50% target set. More recently the general need allocation rates to homeless has increased, with 58% of general need properties allocated to this group so far this year. Furthermore 88% of the bedsit and one bed properties re-let this year to date have gone to homeless households.

Household Composition & Gender

Figure 4.3 below gives the number of homeless applications by household type and gender. Other than 2014/15, total applications have been fairly constant however we have seen a 16% increase between 2015/16 and 2016/17 with the trend within the demographics remaining fairly constant.

The vast majority of applications are being made by single person households with more than twice as many males than females applying. These figures highlight that homelessness remains a major issue in the city with single males being most affected.

Figure 4.3: Homeless applications by household type and gender in Aberdeen

		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Single Person	Male	712	644	693	669	761
	Female	287	319	364	316	365
	All	999	963	1,057	985	1,126
Single Parent	Male	20	24	55	51	89
	Female	214	201	259	171	173
	All	234	225	314	222	262
Couple	Male	27	17	21	15	12
	Female	25	19	22	25	28
	All	52	36	43	40	40
Couple with Children	Male	42	55	42	17	19
	Female	37	34	46	16	28
	All	79	89	88	33	47
Other	Male	1	1	4	2	0
	Female	2	1	3	0	3
	All	3	2	7	2	3
Other with Children	Male	2	3	4	0	4
	Female	1	1	4	3	8
	All	3	4	8	3	12
Total		**1,370**	**1,320**	**1,515**	**1,285**	**1,490**

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

Age Profile

Figure 4.4 shows the age profile of homeless applicants. The vast majority of presentations are consistently from people aged 35 or under.

Key actions to address this include:

- The identification of a resource to provide home visits prior to a statutory homeless decision being made for those who are 16 – 25 years old to try and prevent homelessness.
- Assess the viability of the provision of a service similar to the Edinburgh "Nightstop" service whereby young people between the ages of 16 and 25 are provided with emergency accommodation for up to two weeks in the homes of approved volunteers to prevent young people from entering the formal homeless system.
- Raise awareness of the housing options toolkit. It is our intention to promote its use and have other professionals use it to prevent crisis and stop homelessness from actually occurring.

Figure 4.4: Age Profile of Homeless Applicants in Aberdeen

Age	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
16-17	61	43	62	61	61
18-25	421	365	443	369	416
26-35	420	456	494	422	460
36-45	269	258	272	247	314
46-59	176	166	211	153	203
60+	23	32	33	33	36
Total	**1,370**	**1,320**	**1,515**	**1,285**	**1,490**

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

Reason for Homeless Presentation

Homelessness can happen for a variety of reasons. Figure 4.5 below shows the 'reason for homeless presentation', which shows the most common reason is due to 'household disputes'.

Figure 4.5: Presentation Reasons for Homelessness in Aberdeen

Homeless Applications by Reason	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Termination of tenancy / mortgage due to rent arrears / default on payments	75	85	110	95	132
Other action by landlord resulting in the termination of the tenancy	150	160	185	60	85
Applicant terminated secure accommodation	95	90	90	65	81
Loss of service / tied accommodation	15	15	15	5	11
Discharge from prison / hospital / care / other institution	45	45	85	135	75
Emergency (fire, flood, storm, closing order from Environmental Health etc.)	5	0	0	0	0
Forced division and sale of matrimonial home	10	5	10	5	7
Other reason for loss of accommodation	85	120	120	100	93
Dispute within household: violent or abusive	95	100	205	180	228
Dispute within household / relationship breakdown: non-violent	250	250	320	275	394
Fleeing non-domestic violence	15	10	5	10	12
Harassment	5	5	5	10	10
Overcrowding	5	5	10	5	7
Asked to leave	365	245	260	270	265
Other reason for leaving accommodation / household	145	190	105	70	90
All	**1,360**	**1,325**	**1,525**	**1,285**	**1,490**

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

Partnership Working

The council works closely with partners such as registered social landlords and private sector landlords to alleviate homelessness. This collaboration includes private sector leasing with landlords. It can also include entering into nomination agreements with registered social landlords where they have vacancies or making "section 5" referrals.

We have nominations agreements with a number of registered social landlords participating in homehunt® (North East Scotland) NES, which operates a choice based lettings model to allocate 50% of their vacant properties to applicants from the council's waiting lists. The choice based lettings and homelessness protocol adopts a proactive approach to housing applicants with priority need and aims to meet the statutory obligation to allocate a minimum of 50% of properties referred to within the protocol.

Figure 4.6 below shows the number of nominations from the council to registered social landlords in Aberdeen from 2012/2013 to 2016/2017.

Figure 4.6: Nominations to registered social landlords in Aberdeen

Year	Total
2012/2013	151
2013/2014	110
2014/2015	147
2015/2016	247
2016/2017	164

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

We do not however make "section 5" referrals but a key action is to review the nomination agreement and "section 5" referrals arrangements with Homehunt NES.

The council works in partnership with Aberdeen Cyrenian's Domestic Abuse Support & Accommodation Project (DASAP) and commissions services from Grampian Women's Aid to support people fleeing domestic abuse.

Housing Options Approach

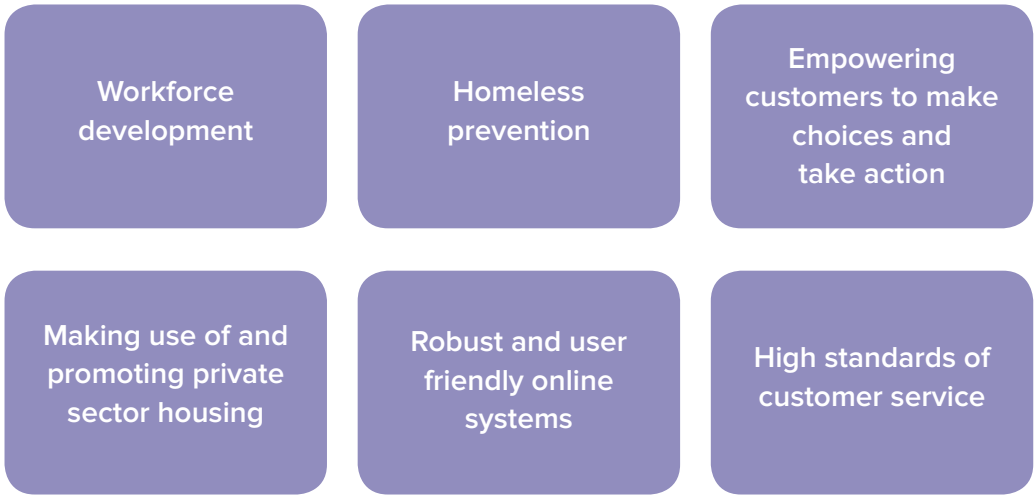
The Scottish Government set out guidance in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 that the main focus should be the prevention of homelessness through a housing options approach.

All applications for council housing are screened through the online housing options checker and proactively contacted by the council's Housing Access Service in an attempt to identify potential issues that could lead to homelessness. In line with the national Housing Options Guidance published in March 2016, the Housing Access Service has been working to establish referral processes for specialist services in the city and improve the information available to households seeking housing to assist them in making informed decisions on their futures.

[1] Registered social landlords have an obligation under Section 5 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 to help provide a permanent home to people experiencing homelessness.

During 2016/2017, Aberdeen recorded the highest levels of housing options approaches throughout Scotland seeing 4,240 registered. This is equivalent to 424 approaches per 10,000 households which is around 4% of all households within Aberdeen and twice the national average of 2%. Because local authorities have discretion to decide what constitutes an approach this leads to substantial differences in the volume of approaches received across the country. 49% of the households approaching the council during the year required basic housing advice only and would not be deemed to be at immediate risk of homelessness.

The following key principles have been identified in relation to our housing options approach:



Workforce development

The success of any housing options approach will be determined by the knowledge, skills, attitude and understanding of not only those delivering services but of the overall organisational awareness of the housing options approach. Staff will be given ongoing training to ensure that their knowledge is kept up to date to deliver an effective housing service for all our customers.

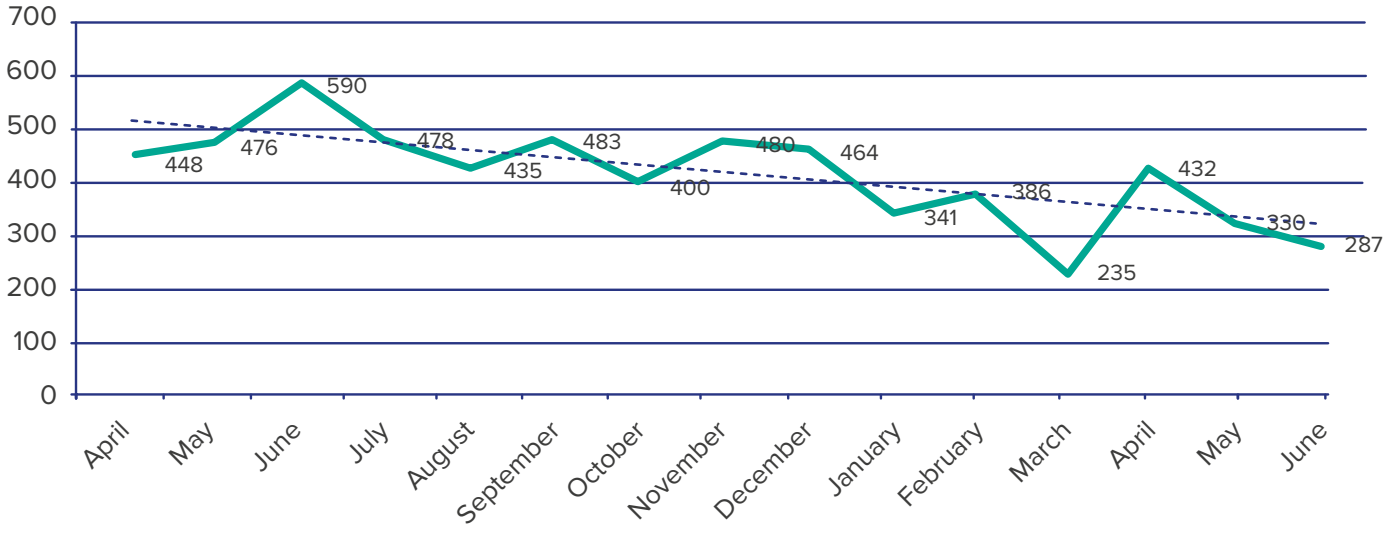
Homeless prevention

The council aims to help people to stay in their existing accommodation or where that cannot be achieved, help them to make a planned move into alternative accommodation. Homelessness prevention can resolve the uncertainty for families more quickly. There are a number of tools that are used to prevent homelessness for example, discretionary housing benefit payments, mortgage rescue schemes or a rent deposit scheme.

Using a preventative approach has already proved to be successful in reducing homelessness in Aberdeen and has been positively received by customers. Developing a flexible prevention service that meets the needs of all households at risk of becoming homeless will remain a key theme to future service development.

Housing Options and Prevention activity is monitored through the 'Prevent 1' Scottish Government statistical return. Figure 4.7 shows the number of approaches for housing options advice has reduced from a monthly high of 590 in June 2016 to 285 in June 2017.

Figure 4.7: Number of approaches for housing options advice in Aberdeen



Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

The council's prevention approach includes:

1. The "prevention fund" which is a financial resource to help prevent homelessness. The prevention fund is set up to provide two types of assistance:
    - Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme (on page 52).
    - Travel expenses to prevent homelessness such as paying for an applicant to return to the area they have accommodation available.
2. Shelter Scotland have been commissioned by the council to work with all those households who are at risk of being evicted to promote tenancy sustainment.
3. The council's Financial Inclusion Team provides money advice to residents of Aberdeen.
4. Work by Aberdeen Cyrenians to provide a service which provides information, advice and support to those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Empowering customers to make choices and take action

The starting point for the delivery of housing options services is a customer's rights, needs and aspirations, as well as the local authority's duties towards them.

Whatever housing options are eventually pursued, this decision must be made by the customer, fully informed and fully supported by services. Citizens of Aberdeen have made it clear that they want to be treated as individuals, involved in making their own decisions regarding where they live. Providing households with information about the options available to them so that they can make their own choice about their housing can be a significant element to building more sustainable and vibrant communities. Whatever each households' priority, people in Aberdeen will welcome having more involvement in choosing where they live and being given the information which allows them to help themselves to avoid becoming homeless.

We are currently contacting every person applying for housing on our waiting lists to discuss their situation and to make them aware of their options for finding accommodation through the self-service tool to empower them to make choices. We are also considering peer worker involvement and how we can involve people with lived experience in service design.

Making use of and promoting private sector housing options

Working with private landlords to raise the standard and availability of private rented accommodation across the city gives customers greater choice in the type and location of their housing. The development of services that caters for all households in the private rented sector will reduce the reliance on social housing which is already unable to meet current demands. It will also decrease the demand for housing services dealing with people in crisis.

The recent reduction in private sector rents makes the private rented sector a more viable option for some people. Rents are now broadly in line with local housing allowance rates which means it is now more affordable than in the past. The changes to the tenancy regime also mean that tenants are afforded more security of tenure with open ended tenancies which last until the tenant wishes to leave or the landlord uses one or more of the 18 grounds for possession.

A key action is to develop the circumstances in which we can discharge our duty to provide housing to the private sector. This is likely to be in cases where the individual is unlikely to be offered accommodation that will be available within the council's target of 100 days or where the individual is deemed to be intentionally homeless. In order to be able to do this successfully we need to develop stronger links with local estate agents and landlords in order to provide up to date information on the availability of housing in the area.

An initiative in the prevention and alleviation of homelessness is the help with the deposit that is needed to secure a privately rented property. This is a particularly cost-effective method for delivering help whereby a deposit guarantee is offered. Rather than handing cash to a landlord or letting agent, a guarantee is given that in certain circumstances such as rent arrears or damage, the landlord will be recompensed up to a set limit.

Figure 4.8 below shows the amount paid to private landlords by the council under the Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme over the last five years in order to prevent homelessness. 59% of these deposits have been provided to those who are 35 years and under.

Figure 4.8: Rent Deposits by Aberdeen City Council

Year	Number Rent Deposits	Payment Amount
2016/17	83	£52,512
2015/16	34	£28,558
2014/15	5	£2,980
2013/14	0	£0*
2012/13	6	£3,300
Total	**128**	**£87,350**

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

**No rent deposits were paid in 2013/14 due to a systems error.*

High standards of customer service

Central to the delivery of effective housing options is a focus on customer service. The varying demands of customers' means that services are delivered across a number of platforms, allowing customers to interact effectively with services to receive the required advice and information at times and locations convenient to them.

Robust and user friendly online systems

A key component of providing effective and efficient housing options is the provision of suitable on line technology which will allow customers to access information about their housing options online and in accessible locations. The provision of self-assessment tools will allow customers to input their individual circumstance and produce a tailored list of housing options.

Planning for known milestones

Effective partnership working is essential to ensure a joined up approach to planning for known milestones such as looked after children who are leaving care or those leaving institutions such as prison.

Looked after children

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 placed new duties on local authorities in terms of their Corporate Parenting responsibilities for looked after children and young people and care leavers. The council's Corporate Parenting Policy makes a commitment to ensure that the needs of children and young people are at the centre of decisions made around housing and any housing support offered to families. A joint working protocol was agreed between our housing and children's social work services in April 2011. This protocol is currently being reviewed and there is ongoing work to continue to explore how we improve the outcomes for looked after children following their transition on from care.

Leaving Prison

The council works closely with the Scottish Prison Service to prevent homelessness and provide the support prisoners may need on their release from prison. One full time member of staff is based at HMP Grampian to support prisoners manage their housing situation and to plan for their release. There is a single point of contact which has been shared with Scottish Prison Service for them to inform us of an imminent release from either HMP Grampian or other areas of the prison estate.

The Scottish Quality Standards for Housing Advice, Information and Support have produced the Sustainable Housing on Release for Everyone (SHORE) protocol for people on remand or serving short term sentences. The council will review its protocol in line with the recommendations and continue to explore options to improve outcomes for this particularly vulnerable group.

Case conferences and crisis situations have highlighted the need for outcomes to be improved, with an agreed consensus that a different approach such as Housing First, could likely contribute to a far wider prevention agenda. Subject to committee approval, it is proposed that Housing First customers will be identified across these three identified categories:

- Looked after children.
- Prison leavers.
- Those identified as being chronic homeless.

Housing First

Housing First has gained international attention and acclaim as a model to support households with chaotic or complex backgrounds to move permanently out of a cycle of rough sleeping or homelessness by provision of a solid foundation. There is extensive evidence from Scotland, England and overseas showing that a Housing First model provides a sustainable solution to resolving homelessness.

The principles of a Housing First service are:

- People have a right to a home.
- Flexible support is provided for all, as long as needed.
- Housing and support provision are separated.
- Individuals have choice and control.
- An active engagement approach is used.
- The service is based on people's strengths, goals and aspirations.
- A harm reduction approach.

Following extensive consultation with key stakeholders, requirements and resources have been identified and a roadmap to delivering a Housing First service in Aberdeen is well underway. Previous work to map chronic homeless cases and associated costs have been utilised to identify a potential pool of customers for this service.

Scottish Social Housing Charter

The Scottish Government's Social Housing Charter came into force in April 2012.

The charter sets out clear standards and outcomes that homeless people or those threatened with homelessness can expect from the council. Section 12 makes specific mention of homeless applicants where it states:

"Homeless people get prompt and easy access to help and advice; are provided with suitable good quality temporary or emergency accommodation when this is needed; and are offered continuing support to help them get and keep the home they are entitled to".

The role of the Scottish Housing Regulator is to monitor and assess landlords' performance against the Charter, through regulatory assessments, published analysis and thematic work. The regulator will intervene to secure improvement when there is a need to. Each year they publish reports about each social landlord's performance against the charter.

In 2016/17, Aberdeen City Council reported to the regulator that 92% of new tenancies to applicants who were assessed as statutory homeless sustained for more than a year. It also reported 86% of those households who were homeless in the last 12 months were satisfied with the quality of temporary or emergency accommodation.

Welfare Reform

Changes to the benefits system are reducing the value of benefits that people are able to claim which is undermining the current delivery models for temporary accommodation. The full impact of this cannot be assessed until full guidance is available from the UK and Scottish Governments'.

Benefits Cap

In November 2016 the amount of benefits that can be claimed was restricted to:

- £257.69 – single person
- £384.62 – family

In April 2017 the cap affected 46 households in temporary accommodation.

Universal Credit

The implementation of Universal Credit has had a significant impact as claimants are no longer entitled to receive enhanced assistance to meet housing costs whilst in temporary accommodation, which has resulted in rent arrears for those unable to meet the shortfall.

Local Housing Allowance Rate

Changes to housing benefits regulations due to be introduced in April 2018 will see rates capped to the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate. Those aged 35 and under will see the rate further reduced to the equivalent of 'shared room rates'. Figure 4.9 shows the LHA rate for 2017/18.

Figure 4.9: Local Housing Allowance Rates for Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire, 2017/18

Number of Bedrooms	Weekly Rate	Calendar Monthly Equivalent
Shared room rate	£75.63	£327.73
1 Bedroom	£120.82	£523.55
2 Bedrooms	£161.10	£698.09
3 Bedrooms	£184.94	£801.40
4 Bedrooms	£235.97	£1,022.53

Source: Scottish Government (2017)

In order to mitigate some of the impacts of welfare reform, shared accommodation is being considered for all single homeless applicants. For those individuals who have been determined as intentionally homeless, temporary accommodation will, as far as possible, be limited to those with non-secure tenancies, for example, managed shared units. There is also to be a review of the rents levied in temporary accommodation.

Temporary Accommodation

The council has a legal duty to help people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. This duty includes a duty to provide temporary accommodation while their application is being assessed and until they have permanent accommodation if they are deemed to be intentionally homeless.

We currently have a range of fully furnished, self-contained temporary accommodation properties that are a mixture of property types and sizes. As shown in Figure 4.10 below, the majority of properties are provided by the council with little reliance on bed and breakfast or hotel accommodation.

Figure 4.10: Temporary Accommodation in Aberdeen

	Aberdeen City Council Temporary Accommodation	Hostel	B&B	Hotel	PSL	Supported Flats	Total
2012/2013	296	60	30	0	86	60	532
2013/2014	297	60	30	0	101	59	547
2014/2015	315	60	30	61	103	37	606
2015/2016	349	63	30	27	139	56	664
2016/2017	325	66	15	0	156	56	618

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

It should be noted that temporary accommodation is not universally used for persons presenting as homeless. At any given time we are consistently using around 12% (74) of the stock for other purposes such as housing mainstream tenants who need to be decanted, Syrian Refugees as part of the New Scots Programme and for interim homeless discharge.

In order to ensure we continue to have a sufficient and effective supply of temporary accommodation, key objectives that underpin the local housing strategy in relation to temporary accommodation are:

- Demand for temporary accommodation will reduce because of the success of our housing options and prevention approach which will reduce our requirement to use bed and breakfast accommodation.
- Through earlier interventions and a housing options approach we will mitigate the need for interim temporary accommodation.
- The average length of time spent in temporary accommodation will be reduced and a target of no more than 90 days will be set.
- The entire homeless journey will be no more than 100 days.
- Where appropriate, private sector housing will be utilised in order to discharge accommodation duties.

The Council intends to reduce the use of hostels and temporary accommodation by moving towards a Housing First model.

Temporary Accommodation and Welfare Reform

Two of the proposed changes to the welfare benefits system give cause for concern for those who require temporary accommodation. Firstly, the restriction of Local Housing Allowance rates will reduce the level of housing benefit or housing costs element of Universal Credit. Secondly, the abolition of the help with housing costs for those aged 21 or under will also have an effect. To mitigate this, shared accommodation will be better utilised.

Housing Support and Supported Accommodation

The council has a duty to assess the housing support needs of homelessness applicants who are unintentionally homeless or threatened with homelessness and where there is reason to believe there is a housing support need. The council has a housing support team that provides around 720 hours per week of basic tenancy support across all tenures. Figure 4.11 below shows the number of applicants assessed and the number where housing support is provided.

Figure 4.11: Housing Support Provision in Aberdeen

	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017
Assessed under the Housing Support Regulations	288	553	694	627
Support Provided under the Housing Support Regulations	221	366	403	559

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

In addition to the housing support provided by the council, a range of housing support is commissioned from:

- Aberdeen Cyrenians.
- Penumbra.
- Grampian Autistic Society.
- Inspire.
- Turning Point Scotland.
- Castlehill Key Project.

Supported accommodation services are also commissioned from:

- Aberdeen Cyrenians Margaret House: care home providing 12 spaces.
- Scottish Association for Mental Health Bloomfield Road: supported accommodation providing 5 spaces plus outreach services.
- Grampian Woman Aid: provide 'core and cluster' model that provides self-contained accommodation.

In 2016/17 the following new services were commissioned:

- Aberdeen Foyer: A service for young people providing 27 spaces in supported accommodation.
- Barnardos: An outreach housing support service for young people.
- Shelter Scotland: A service to prevent evictions and provide in court advice.

Supported Accommodation

On 31 October 2017, the UK Government issued a policy statement and consultation paper 'Funding Supported Housing' concerning the future funding of supported accommodation. This effectively reversed the previous decision that tenants in social housing would be capped to the Local Housing Allowance rate for their rents from April 2018, while in receipt of Universal Credit and for supported accommodation, where the implementation date was deferred to April 2019.

Short-term supported housing will now be funded through a new ring-fenced grant to local authorities in England. In Wales and Scotland, an equivalent amount will be provided and it will be for our respective administrations to decide how best to allocate funding. UK Government has given commitments to work with sector and devolved Governments on a longer term solution, which will deliver the original policy aims of better oversight and linking funding with outcomes for individuals and value for money.

The Scottish Government approach following the consultation is currently being developed and as such, it is not known at this stage what support will be given to local authorities or on what basis this money will be distributed.

In light of the current unknown financial position and lack of funding instruction for social and supported accommodation, planning ahead and predicting the impact of this is difficult. However, key actions to reduce demand and the subsequent cost of temporary accommodation have been developed and are outlined in the joint delivery plan at Appendix 1.

Key Indicators

A Health Inequalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken. The indicators and actions will be revised as required.

Homelessness is prevented and alleviated.			
Indicator	**Frequency & Source**	**Baseline**	**Target**
Percentage of statutory homeless decisions reached within 28 days.	Annual Aberdeen City Council	97%	100%
Length of time spent in temporary accommodation.	Annual Aberdeen City Council	103.9 days	90 days
Homeless journey time.	Annual Aberdeen City Council	182 days	100 days
Reduce repeat homelessness.	Annual Aberdeen City Council	5.08%	5% (2016/17) 4% (2020/21) 2% (2026/27)
Increase percentage of households previously homeless that have sustained their tenancy for more than one year.	Annual Aberdeen City Council	92.7%	94% (2016/17) 96% (2020/21) 100% (2026/27)

Chapter 5 - Independent Living & Specialist Provision

Strategic Outcome 3

> **People are supported to live, as far as is reasonably practicable, independently at home or in a homely setting in their community.**

Main Issues

- Increasing demand for services due to demographic changes as people live longer and have more complex long term conditions.
- Lack of suitable housing for people who have a learning disability, mental health or substance misuse problems.
- Suitable properties to facilitate hospital discharge.
- Budget pressure in relation to the provision of adaptations across all sectors.

Key Actions

- Progress the planned expansion of extra care housing provision in line with the outcomes of the housing for varying needs review.
- Undertake a review of specialist housing requirements to help support people to live independently in line with priorities identified in the strategic plan and strategic commissioning implementation plan.
- Revise protocols between all social housing providers across Aberdeen and the Health & Social Care Partnership to facilitate hospital discharges.
- Increase provision of intermediate care services by providing short stay, adapted housing as step up/step down accommodation to enable people to leave hospital or receive additional support to prevent unplanned admission.
- Work with the Aberdeen Intergration Joint Board to identify appropriate levels of funding for adaptations.
- Implement the recommendations from the adapting for change demonstrator sites.
- Update housing contribution statement.
- Ensure that the local housing strategy positively influences health inequalities and health outcomes.
- Establish a Joint Assessment Panel - Very Sheltered Housing/Care Home Panel.
- Review of charging policy for sheltered/very sheltered housing (including meals charge).
- Review service level agreements in place with the Disabled Persons Housing Service and Citizens Advice Bureau for the provision of housing information and advice.
- Increase the number of new build properties that are adapted to meet particular needs.
- Develop a housing, health and social care performance framework.

Introduction

Housing is at the heart of independent living; good quality housing and support services can significantly improve the lives of older people and those with complex needs.

This chapter focuses on how housing and housing related services enables people to maintain their independence in their own home, or in a homely setting in their community. It demonstrates the actual and anticipated contribution made across the housing sector to meet the needs of an ageing population, people with a disability or long term health condition or complex needs. It also addresses the needs of young people and ethnic minorities as well as planning the requirements for supported accommodation.

This is in line with the main drivers articulated within the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership's Strategic Plan, which is to enable people to live within their community in a manner in which they feel safe and protected from harm, supported when necessary and fully included within the life of the city.

Independent Living

Independent living is about freedom, choice, dignity and control for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to live safely and as independently as possible in appropriate housing with control over their care and support.

Demographic projections indicate a significant increase in the number of older people and people with complex needs who are living longer with a combination of physical and mental health conditions. Local and national policies around "shifting the balance of care" away from residential/institutional settings to the provision of care at home has significant implications for housing and housing related services, such as the provision of housing support and adaptations.

Health and Social Care Partnership

Aberdeen City's Health & Social Care Partnership was formed in February 2016 following the introduction of the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 The Act sets out a range of health, social care and housing function which must or may be delegated.

Delegated housing functions include the provision of aids and adaptations in council and private sector housing. It also includes the provision of garden maintenance services for vulnerable people. Aids and adaptions for registered social landlords are funded directly by the Scottish Government.

The Integration Joint Board is responsible delivery of the delegated function and the outcomes articulated in Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan 2016 - 19.

The strategic plan is aligned with the nine national health and wellbeing outcomes.

Housing makes a key contribution to the delivery of these outcomes, in particular Outcome 2: "People, including those with disabilities, long term conditions or who are frail are able to live as far as is reasonably practicable independently and at home or in a homely setting in their community".

The Housing Contribution Statement 2016 - 2019

The housing contribution statement is the key link between the local housing strategy and the strategic plan. It sets out the key housing actions and priorities which include:

Increase the provision of intermediate care through the provision of furnished step up/step down accommodation.
Progress the expansion of extra care housing provision.
Undertake a review of specialist housing requirements for people with mental health, learning disabilities and substance misuse.
Provision of resources to assist health and social care professionals to address the shortage of carers in the city.
Review the allocations policy and the voids process to minimise time to allocate suitable properties for urgent medical priority cases and to provide for decants for homeowners whilst adaptations or sale/ purchase of not or more suitable property proceeds.
Revise protocols between housing providers and the Health & Social Care Partnership for hospital discharges.

The local housing strategy and the strategic plan are aligned to ensure delivery of priorities in relation to housing and health and social care. The strategic plan and housing contribution statement is due to be refreshed in 2018/19. This will articulate how we will address joint challenges around changing demographics identified within this section.

Care and Support

Care and support services can support people to live independently. The growing number of older people and people living with high and complex care needs has seen the requirement for care and support services increase. This combined with workforce recruitment and retention challenges can lead to unmet need, affecting people who are struggling to cope, which may put a strain on carers and family members.

Care packages may include: a care at home service, providing personal care and support, a housing support service that enables people to maintain their own tenancy, or a combination of these. This can be provided in mainstream, sheltered, very sheltered, supported housing or hostel settings.

Home care supports people to live at home who may otherwise require care home provision. Figure 5.1 shows that the majority of home care provision in the city is for older people and people with dementia; these two client groups account for 79.4% (1,460 people) of the home care provided.

Figure 5.1: Home Care Provision by Client Needs in Aberdeen

	Dementia	Mental Health Problems	Learning Disabilities	Physical Disabilities	Older People	People in Other Groups	All People
Number	270	30	100	220	1,190	30	1,840
%	14.7	1.6	5.4	12	64.7	1.6	100

Source: Social Care Survey 2016

Care and Repair

Aberdeen Care and Repair provides help to older homeowners and those with a disability or long term illness to repair and adapt their homes to allow them to remain living within the community. The council funds the core elements of the service with additional funding sourced from a variety of charitable organisations.

The services provided include:

- Small Repairs service to carry out minor but essential repairs.
- Assistance with larger repairs to the external fabric of the home.
- Assistance with adaptations to the home.
- Advice on financial inclusion and funding options.
- Home safety screening tool.
- Energy advice, including affordable warmth loan agreements.
- Signposting to other services and agencies.

Aberdeen Care and Repair is also participating in the Care and Repair Dementia Enablement project (2016-2019) that is funded through the Life Changing Trust and the Big Lottery. The project had 107 referrals made during its first year, providing advice and practical assistance for people with dementia to improve safety and support independent living.

Technology Enabled Care

Technology Enabled Care (TEC) improves the quality of life for older people and people with specific needs by enabling them to maintain their independence and help them to live longer in their own homes. TEC can reduce unplanned hospital admissions, enable timely discharge from hospital and avoid admission to residential care or nursing homes.

TEC can enhance safety, and security, promote independence and is widely used in a variety of accommodation including amenity with telecare, sheltered, very sheltered housing and specialist housing services for people with mental health conditions or learning disabilities.

In 2014, the council embarked on a two year programme to upgrade the infrastructure to support TEC within sheltered and very sheltered housing to ensure properties were fully telecare enabled. In 2016/17, Castlehill and Sanctuary Housing Associations received funding to upgrade systems in their sheltered and very sheltered properties.

Since 2015, Bon Accord Care[1] and the council have received funding from the Scottish Government Technology Enabled Care Programme to raise awareness in the acute hospital sector and develop community capacity. In particular a key aim is to improve awareness and use of technology within the housing sector. Dedicated staff provide training and awareness raising sessions for staff and tenants and have developed a screening tool to aid housing staff to identify where TEC may be beneficial for tenants.

In 2016 a pilot project took place in Loch Court; a local authority sheltered housing development using a combination of the housing service portal[2] and inactivity sensors to remotely monitor tenant activity as an alternative to the morning welfare call. Following the success of this project, the housing service portal is being rolled out to other sheltered housing developments in the city.

[1] Bon Accord Care is a Local Authority Trading Company, established in 2013 to deliver a range of adult social care services.

[2] Tunstall's Housing Services portal is a scheme management application that operates on windows tablet or PC

Care Home Provision

A key priority within the Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan is to "promote and support self-management and independence for individuals for as long as reasonably practicable". However, independent living may eventually become an option that is no longer appropriate for some people and they may require residential or nursing care in a care home setting.

Figure 5.2 shows the number of registered places in care homes for older people per 1,000 population, which has fallen (by approximately 160 bed spaces), in line with local and national policy.

Figure 5.2: Registered Places in Care Homes for Older People per 1,000 Population aged 65 and over

	2006	2016	Change
Aberdeen	48	43	-5
Scotland	46	38	-8

Source: ISD Scotland Data Tables October 2016

The Partnership's Strategic Commissioning Implementation Plan indicates its future commissioning intention is to focus on individuals with more complex needs. The needs of those with less intensive needs that might previously have been met in a care home setting will be supported in a combination of 'extra-care housing' and 'flexible intermediate care support'. This policy shift will have significant implications on the type of housing required to meet the needs of older people and the future demand for extra care or very sheltered housing provision for older people in the city. Therefore, a key action of this strategy is to progress the expansion of extra care housing provision.

Hospital Delayed Discharge

Hospital delayed discharge continues to be a challenge. The rising trends in the number of people in hospital waiting for specialist housing presents challenges, whilst these are not high in numbers, the length of delay, often more than six weeks, can result in a high number of bed-days lost. In Aberdeen, establishing a multidisciplinary approach has significantly reduced the number of patients delayed by housing issues. A range of measures have been introduced such as regular multidisciplinary meetings, led by housing services with representation from the Health and Social Care Partnership, the council, NHS Grampian and Disabled Persons Housing Service. The group meet regularly to discuss cases, including those who are likely to be delayed and those in interim accommodation, taking a person centred approach to finding a solution to the persons housing needs.

This approach has resulted in identifying a number of strategic priorities such as the need for interim housing solutions, where patients can wait for adaptations to their property or alternative housing. In response to this we have provided:

- Clashieknowe: providing short-term bedsit accommodation in 18 properties (including 6 suitable for wheelchair use). Rehabilitation and support is provided on site.
- Interim accommodation: for those with low level support needs. In June 2017, the Integration Joint Board agreed to fund a pilot using two wheelchair accessible properties that will provide accommodation for those with low-level support needs awaiting adaptation or rehousing.
- Bariatric accommodation: in response to increasing needs we have designed 2 x two bedroom flats within council new build due for completion in 2018.

Complex Needs

Research has shown there are a significant number of people with complex needs in hospitals across Scotland unable to leave due to the absence of suitable accommodation and support in the community. This includes people with profound learning disabilities or mental health problems who also have physical and/or behaviour issues. In response to this, the "Community Based Living Solutions for People with Complex Needs" project was established in January 2016.

The project sponsors and the Good Life Group will publish a report on the findings from the pilot exercise in 2017. Recommendations and solutions relating to meeting housing need will be incorporated within the local housing strategy's joint delivery action plan and updates provided in the annual local housing strategy reports.

Adaptations

Adaptations are consistently shown to deliver better outcomes at a lower cost, providing a better quality of life for service users and their carers. In 2016, the private and council housing aids and adaptations functions were delegated to the Integration Joint Board, whilst the Scottish Government remain responsible for managing the distribution of Stage 3 funding for adaptations to properties owned by registered social landlords. Adequate funding levels remains challenging across all sectors. The shift in the balance of care has intensified pressure on already overstretched budgets with a higher level of investment in adaptations required to help people maintain their independence and avoid more costly interventions.

Private Sector Adaptations

The budget is currently set at £700,000[2] per annum to provide disabled adaptations in the private sector in accordance with the Scheme of Assistance. Demand on this service is growing from 151 cases in 2012/13 to 223 cases in 2016/17. Figure 5.3 details the number of cases and spend since 2012.

Figure 5.3: Disabled Adaptations in the Private Sector in Aberdeen

Disabled Adaptations (Private Sector)		
Financial Year	**No of Cases Approved**	**Amount Spent**
2012 - 2013	151	£ 737,311
2013 - 2014	171	£ 619,858
2014 - 2015	186	£ 680,799
2015 - 2016	219	£ 834,656
2016 - 2017	223	£ 777,626

Source: Scottish Government (2017)

[2] Set as part of the council's 5 year budget setting process from 2014/15 to 2018/19. This is now part of the functions delegated to the Integration Joint Board and will be negotiated as part of their budget setting processes.

Council Housing Adaptations

Council housing equipment and adaptations are funded by the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The annual £1millon[3] budget was overspent in 2016/17.

Figure 5.4 shows the number of adaptations and costs since 2015/16.

Figure 5.4: HRA Equipment and Adaptations in Aberdeen

Council Housing	2015/16	2016/17
Total Adaptations	898	1,219
Total Properties	655	732
Total Costs	£967,750	£1,100,689

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

In 2014, Aberdeen became one of five Adapting for Change demonstrator sites, responsible for testing the recommendations given in the Scottish Government's report. The main aim of the Aberdeen project was to develop a more streamlined adaptations service across Aberdeen. The cross sector project team looked at early intervention and preventative approaches as well as re-ablement, to ultimately promote independence at home through appropriate adaptations. This has included development of technology enabled solutions alongside traditional adaptation provision, and attention to design in the home environment. Work is ongoing to identify specific actions which will be included within the action plan and progress will be reported through annual updates.

Specialist Provision

Specialist provision refers to the wide range of accommodation needs and care support services required to allow people to live independently.

In order to progress the national health and wellbeing outcomes and the priorities within the Aberdeen Local Outcome Improvement Plan, Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership's Strategic Plan and housing contribution statement we need to address future demand for specialist provision housing.

The delivery of specialist provision housing can be achieved through new build or the re-provisioning or adapting of existing properties. It can also be delivered in non-adapted properties through the provision of aids and/or care and support service.

Specialist provision includes:

- Accessible or adapted housing.
- Non-permanent accommodation.
- Supported accommodation.
- Care and support services.
- Sites and pitches for Gypsy/Travellers.

[3] Set as part of the council's 5 year budget setting process from 2014/15 to 2018/19. This is now part of the functions delegated to the Integration Joint Board and will be negotiated as part of their budget setting processes.

People requiring specialist provision housing may include:

Older people.
People with dementia.
People with a physical disability.
People with a mental health condition.
People with a learning disability.
Young people.
Students (See Private Rented Sector chapter).
People requiring or leaving supported accommodation.
Ethnic minorities including migrants, asylum seekers, refugees, Gypsy/Travellers.
Supported accommodation (also see Homelessness chapter).

Aberdeen City's Health & Social Care Partnership has identified an increasing problem in housing younger people living with mental health conditions, physical disabilities or early onset dementia. Although not ideal, care homes are being used due to a lack of appropriate supported accommodation in the community. Traditionally this group are not eligible for sheltered/very sheltered housing but require a similar type of extra care housing provision so they can be supported within the community. The needs of this group will be considered as part of the accommodation review that is due to commence in 2018.

Older People

Age, Home and Community: A Strategy for Housing for Scotland's Older People: 2012 – 2021 sets out the vision that "older people in Scotland are valued as an asset, their voices are heard, and older people are supported to enjoy full and positive lives in their own home or in a homely setting". In line with this, our local housing strategy recognises the importance of making better use of our housing stock, providing adaptations and good information and advice to support older people to live independently for longer.

The National Records of Scotland population projections show significant increases in the city's older population over the next 25 years. Figure 5.5 shows the highest increase at 94.8% is in the 85 years and over group.

Figure 5.5: Population, projected increase for older people, 2014 – 2039 (2014 based)

Age	Population 2014	Population 2039	Population increase	Percentage increase
65-74 years	18,104	22,947	4,843	+26.8%
75 -84 years	11,643	18,030	6,387	+54.9%
85 years and over	**4,515**	**8,795**	**4,280**	**+94.8%**

Source: National Records of Scotland (2017)

In line with the ageing population projections, anticipating the percentage of households headed by someone aged 60-74 is projected to increase from 17% to 21% and the 75+ age group is expected to double from 10% to 20%.

The Strategic Commissioning Implementation Plan, 2017 is proposing to reduce its 'bed based care' for older people within care home settings with alternative community settings. All housing options for older people, including ownership, private rented, and social rented housing need be considered to support independent living options for as long as practicable.

Within the private sector there are over 300 retirement homes in the city available for older people to buy or rent. The majority of private sector new build projects within the city are providing small family accommodation in the form of two bedroom flats or family housing. Planning for new developments needs to include affordable housing that is accessible, adaptable and meets the changing needs of older people. Figure 5.6 shows there are 5,653 specialist housing properties in the social rented sector in Aberdeen designed to meet the needs of older people.

Figure 5.6: Social Housing Specialist Housing Provision in Aberdeen

Housing Type	Number of specialist provision properties	As a % of 65+ age group 2014 (Population 34,262)	As a % of 65+ age group 2039 (Projected Population 49,772)
Very Sheltered	110	0.3%	0.2%
Sheltered	2,573	7.5%	5.2%
Medium Dependency Housing (including amenity)	1,031	3.0%	2.1%
Other dwellings fitted with community alarm	1,939	5.7%	3.9%
Total	**5,653**	**16.5%**	**11.4%**

Source: Scottish Government (2016)[4]

In 2011 a review of the council's sheltered and very sheltered housing was carried out to ensure a sustainable mix of housing and housing with support was available to meet the future needs of older people. The Housing for Varying Needs Review looked at demographic projections, considered the trends in demand and the quality and quantity of its existing provision of sheltered and very sheltered housing stock. It identified an overprovision of sheltered housing and shortage of very sheltered and medium dependency (amenity) housing and recommended a realignment of accommodation.

An implementation plan was agreed which has seen the council's sheltered housing stock reduce by 14% from 2,277 in 2012 to 1,939 in 2017 and medium dependency housing increase by 81% from 695 to 1,261 over the same period. Clashieknowe was decommissioned, refurbished and now provides an intermediate care facility and Provost Hogg Court has been upgraded to very sheltered housing standard.

In March 2015, the council introduced a change in its allocations policy for low demand multi-storey sheltered housing complexes. This allowed properties to be let to applicants who may not necessarily require sheltered housing but would benefit from staying in this type of accommodation. This enhances the range of options to housing with flexible support.

These changes are beginning to have an impact on waiting times. In January 2016 there were 782 applicants on the council's waiting list for sheltered housing with an average waiting time of 59 months for this type of accommodation. By September 2017 this has reduced to 509 applicants with the average length of time on the list reducing to 41 months.

The waiting times are generally due to applicants choice of area rather than availability of sheltered housing.

[4] Information on RSL properties has not been recorded since 2013

In 2016/17, 240 applicants with 'priority need' were housed. The average waiting time was 16 months. Figure 5.7 shows the number of people on the waiting list for sheltered housing by priority need. The high number of applicants with 'priority need' means that there are number of people with 'low level' needs who have little or no likelihood of being housed. The allocation of very sheltered housing is overseen by a joint panel who consider both the care and support needs of individuals.

Figure 5.7: Sheltered Housing Waiting List - Aberdeen City Council

	January 2016	September 2017
High	82	64
Medium	315	123
Low	280	145
Social Support	22	65
Low Demand	83	52
No Priority	Not Available	60
Total	**782**	**509**

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

Partners involved in the production of this strategy also suggested a more flexible allocations process across social sector housing to enable older people to downsize but still remain within their local community where possible.

People Living with Dementia

The number of people in Scotland with dementia is expected to double over the next 25 years which presents a number of challenges. A report by Alzheimer Scotland (2017) ascertained that 3,455 people (1.5% of the population) are living with in Aberdeen. Research also shows that people with learning disabilities have a higher risk of developing dementia than the general population and there is an increased risk for people with Down's Syndrome developing this condition at a much earlier age.

One of the key outcomes within the National Dementia Strategy 2017 - 2020 is that "...more people with dementia are enabled to live well and safely at home or in a homely setting for as long as they and their family wish." To meet this outcome we need to provide housing and support that maximises and promotes independence. Services provided by landlords such as housing support, aids and adaptations and Care and Repair services (provided to people in private housing sector) are an essential part to help people with dementia to live safely at home.

Aberdeen is implementing the recommendations of the Scottish Dementia Strategy, through actions identified in its Dementia Action Plan 2014 - 2024. Work is ongoing to ensure that Aberdeen is a 'dementia friendly city'. Dementia awareness training will continue to be implemented across all front line housing services.

People with Physical Disabilities

People with physical disabilities require a range of specialist or adapted properties in order to enable independent living. The council reports annually to the Scottish Government on the provision of accessible housing and adapted properties across the council housing sector[5]. Figure 5.8 shows an 11% increase since 2012, from 2,262 to 2,502 properties.

Figure 5.8: Council Housing for People with Physical Disabilities

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Sheltered Housing - Wheelchair Accessible	150	192	212	218	223	223
Housing for People with Physical Disabilities	296	266	279	283	293	293
Ambulant Disabled	61	61	63	85	86	86
Other Adaptations	1,755	1,755	1,899	1,899	1,900	1,900
Totals	**2,262**	**2,274**	**2,453**	**2,485**	**2,502**	**2,502**

Source: Scottish Government (2016)[6]

Analysis of the council's housing list (as at 1 September 2017) showed 57 applicants required wheelchair accessible housing. Figure 5.9 shows the breakdown of house size required. To help reduce the number of applicants waiting for wheelchair accessible housing, the Aberdeen City Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2019 - 2024 will include wheelchair accessible housing as part of the city's affordable housing new build programme.

Figure 5.9: Housing List for Wheelchair Accessible Housing

Number of Bedrooms	Number of Applicants
1	30
2	22
3	2
4	3
Total	**57**

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

[5] This information is published in the Scottish Government S1B statistical returns. Comparable information on RSL has not been produced since 2013

[6] Information on RSL properties has not been recorded since 2013

New build council housing is being built which includes housing suitable for people with particular needs. See Figure 5.10 below.

Figure 5.10: Council New Build Disabled Adaptation Provision

Smithfield			
Property type	Size	No. of properties	Additional features
House	3 bedrooms	36	Ground floor: - adaptable shower room - bedroom
House	4 bedrooms	6	Ground floor: - adaptable shower room - bedroom
Flat	1 bedroom	4	Adaptable shower room
Flat	2 bedroom	12	Adaptable shower room
Manor Park			
House	4 bedrooms	8	Ground floor: - adaptable shower room - bedroom
Flat	1 bedroom	6	Adaptable shower room
Flat	2 bedroom	2	Suitable for bariatric clients

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

The demand for wheelchair accessible properties continues to be monitored with targets being considered as part of the discussions around the Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2019 - 2024.

Mobility Scooters

The number people using mobility scooters is increasing. This has presented an issue in some of our sheltered housing developments as poor storage of some scooters has caused an obstruction, sometimes blocking corridors and fire escape routes. In response, the council introduced a mobility scooter policy in January 2016. Given this trend, recharging facilities and storage need to be considered in new build sheltered/very sheltered/extra care developments.

People Living with a Mental Health Condition and Substance Misuse

Mental health and housing are intrinsically linked. Good quality, affordable housing is essential to the wellbeing of people living with mental health problems. Secure and settled accommodation in a safe and stable environment with the right support, can have a positive impact in supporting people's recovery.

The majority of people with mental health conditions live in mainstream housing but some require more supported accommodation. The current social care eligibility criteria mean those who are 'high risk' or emergency cases are eligible for supported accommodation.

It is becoming increasingly difficult to find appropriate accommodation for people with dual diagnosis such as substance misuse/mental health problems or those with long term, enduring mental health problems. Those who are assessed as low to medium risk are often not eligible for supported accommodation but may still have support needs.

We have seen an increase in the number of people with particular needs requiring specialist supported accommodation living in temporary homeless accommodation. Lack of supply of this type of accommodation can increase the length of stay which has implications for homeless people and other service users. This is addressed further in Chapter 4 - Homelessness.

We have identified two residential care accommodation facilities that would benefit from being reprovisioned to provide a 'very-sheltered' model of support; Seabank House provides 24 hour residential care service for 19 people with mental health conditions and Wernham House that provides accommodation for 17 adults with substance misuse issues.

There is an ongoing need for smaller 'core and cluster' developments of supported housing providing one bedroom flats where people with a range of issues can be supported within the community.

In addition to the demands for appropriate housing, the national Mental Health Strategy 2017 – 2027: a 10 year vision recommends mental health awareness training such as "first aid" in mental health is made available to all front line housing staff to enable them to feel confident in dealing with people with mental health problems. Housing staff can often be the first point of contact for vulnerable people and training is provided on an ongoing basis.

People with Learning Disabilities

The Scottish Commission for Learning Disabilities Report 2015 shows the number of people with learning disabilities who are known to the local authority and is detailed in Figure 5.11.

Figure 5.11: People with Learning Disabilities Known to Aberdeen City Council

	Age Groups							
	16-17	**18-20**	**21-34**	**35-44**	**45-54**	**55-64**	**65+**	**Total**
Male	16	62	186	93	132	94	77	660
Female	5	28	112	52	89	88	77	451
Total	**21**	**90**	**298**	**145**	**221**	**182**	**154**	**1,111**

Source: Scottish Commission for Learning Disabilities (2016)

The report shows that the majority of people with a learning disability live in mainstream accommodation (42%) supported accommodation (25%) and registered adult care homes (15%), as shown in Figure 5.12.

Figure 5.12: Accommodation by Type Used by People with Learning Disabilities

Accommodation Type	Number of People
Mainstream accommodation with support	157
Mainstream accommodation - no support	149
Mainstream accommodation support status not known	164
Supported accommodation	277
Registered Adult Care Home	168
Other setting	111
Living arrangements not known	85
Total	**1,111**

Source: Scottish Commission for Learning Disabilities (2016)

The demand for learning disability services continues to increase as people live longer with more complex needs. In addition, there is a growing trend of young people moving into the service with complex and challenging health and social care needs. This increased and somewhat changing demand has led the service to start the development of a five year learning disability strategy in addition to mapping the current portfolio of service and accommodation models, allowing for evaluation of their suitability and sustainability to be fully considered. Housing is a key part of the strategy and any actions will be aligned to the local housing strategy.

The Keys to Life (2013) recommends that residential models of care should be viewed as a minority element of overall provision working with the most complex individuals. In 2013, social care commenced a programme to de-register a number of its learning disability care homes which now provide care at home and housing support services. This has given individuals security of tenure, and greater control over their support and how they live their lives.

The Strategic Commissioning Implementation Plan 2017 has identified care provision for this client group including:

Standard care home services.
Nursing care home provision.
24-hour small volume services generally in mainstream housing type accommodation for 4 -6 individuals.
Single occupancy settings i.e. core and cluster provision within a close geographical area providing visiting support.

A key priority is to ensure that people with learning disabilities are supported in the right environment with the right level of support in relation to their needs. There is recognition that needs fluctuate and it is important to recognise the variety of service and housing models required to ensure this aim is achieved.

Aberdeen City's Health and Social Care Partnership is currently developing a tender for a two year framework contract for care at home and supported living services. The aim is to develop sustainable service and housing models for current and future demand.

Supporting Carers

Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership's Strategic Plan identifies that support for carers is a key priority. The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 includes the requirement to develop a Carers Strategy and to set out how the partnership will work with other agencies, including housing providers to commission services for carers. Locally, we will ensure that our policies support carers to enable them to continue in their caring role for as long as they choose to do so.

Young People

Research shows that care leavers have some of the poorest outcomes in society. They experience higher rates of early mortality, poorer access to continuing education and training, worse mental health and physical wellbeing, greater rates of teenage pregnancy, an increased likelihood of involvement in, or exposure to criminal activity and are at a greater risk of unemployment and homelessness. That said, poorer outcomes are not inevitable and there are many examples of young people who have made successful transitions to their own accommodation, and many who move successfully into the world of work.

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 placed new duties on local authorities in terms of their Corporate Parenting responsibilities for looked after children and young people and care leavers. The Council's Corporate Parenting Policy makes a commitment to ensure that the needs of children and young people are at the centre of decisions made around housing and any housing support offered to families. A joint working protocol was agreed between our housing and children's social work services in April 2011. This protocol is currently being reviewed and there is ongoing work to establish a Housing First approach to improve the outcomes for looked after children following their transition from care.

Ethnic Minority Groups

Ethnic Minority refers to ethnic groups who are in the minority. In Scotland this would also include European minorities such as Polish, Irish, English and Gypsy/Travellers as well as non-European ethnic groups such as Indian, Pakistani, African etc. The term would also include refugees and asylum seekers.

The Equality Act 2010 provides the legislative framework which protects people who are recognised as a distinct ethnic group from being discriminated against on the grounds of ethnicity.

The 2011 Census is the most comprehensive source of information on ethnicity. Figure 5.13 shows that 167,727 (75.3%) people identify as 'white-Scottish' which is below the Scottish average of 84%. The data also show a higher proportion of 'white-Polish' (3.2%) in Aberdeen compared to the Scottish average of 1.2%. Similarly a higher proportion (4.3%) identify as 'African', which is significantly above the Scottish average of 2.7%. It is likely Aberdeen has a diverse population due to the oil industry and further education opportunities.

Figue 5.13: Ethnic Groups in Aberdeen, 2011 Census

Ethnic Group	Aberdeen		Scotland	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
White - Scottish	167,727	75.3%	4,445,678	84.0%
White - Other British	16,910	7.6%	417,109	7.9%
White - Irish	2,213	1.0%	54,090	1.0%
White - Polish	7,031	3.2%	61,201	1.2%
White - Other	10,555	4.7%	102,117	1.9%
Asian, (including Asian Scottish or Asian British)	9,519	4.3%	140,678	2.7%
African, (including African Scottish, African British or Other African)	5,042	2.3%	29,638	0.6%
Caribbean or Black (including Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish, Caribbean British, Black, Black Scottish, or Black British, Other Caribbean or Black)	588	0.3%	6,540	0.1%
Other ethnic group	3,208	1.4%	35,352	0.7%
All people	**222,793**	**100%**	**5,295,403**	**100%**

Source: National Records of Scotland (2017)

Migrant Workers

Statistical information on National Insurance Number (NINo) allocations to migrant workers is available from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and provides an indication of the inflow of overseas migrants to Aberdeen.

In 2015/16, there were 4,909 NINo registrations in Aberdeen, 15% (871) lower than the previous year and a higher decline than other major cities as shown in Figures 5.14 and 5.15. This decline continued in 2016/17 with the number of registrations dropping to 3,805.

Figure 5.14: NINo Registrations to Overseas Migrants

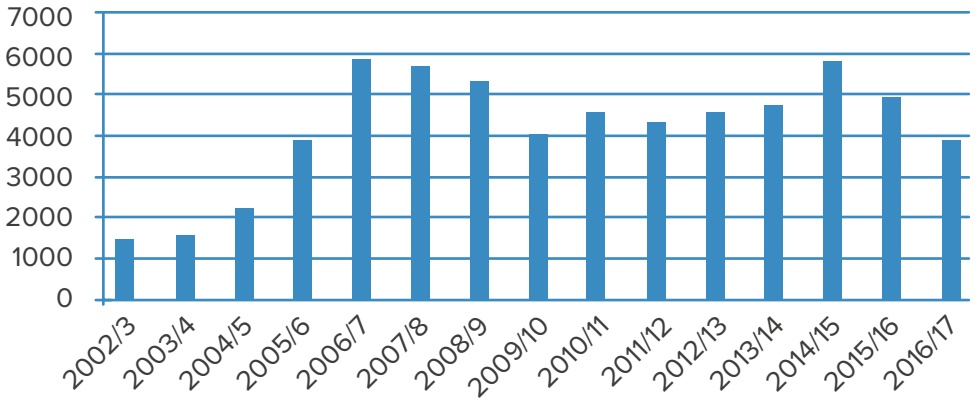
	2014/15	2015/16	Change	Percentage
Aberdeen	**5,780**	**4,909**	**-871**	**-15%**
Edinburgh	12,009	11,770	-239	-2%
Glasgow	9,200	9,076	-124	-1%
Dundee	1,314	1,352	+38	+3%
Scotland	46,288	46,149	-139	-0.3%

Source: Department for Work and Pensions (2017)

Between 2002/03 and 2015/16, 59,971 migrant workers were allocated a National Insurance number in Aberdeen[7]. This shows the sharp increase in net in-migration that occurred subsequent to the 2004 enlargement of the European Union (EU) following the accession of A8 and A2 countries[8] to the EU.

It should be noted that whilst the National Insurance Number registration statistics are helpful in giving the current location of applicants, they cannot tell us if people then move to a different area once the number has been issued.

Figure 5.15: National Insurance Registrations to Migrant Workers 2002-2017 (Financial Years)



Source: Department for Work and Pensions (2016)

[7] Migrant Workers in Aberdeen City, Research and Information Team, Aberdeen City Council (April 2017)

[8] A8 = Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. A2 = Bulgaria and Romania.

The Social Support and Migration in Scotland (SSAMIS) interim report published in January 2016 explores the experiences of migration and settlement amongst migrants from Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) living in Scotland. A number of key themes emerged during the research:

- Informal networks of family/friends play a highly significant role in the migration process.
- Job opportunities and earnings are commonly cited as a reason for migration.
- Migrants are typically clustered in low skilled/low paid employment.
- Finding affordable and flexible childcare is an issue.
- Migrants expressed mixed opinions about social housing and some prefer to rent privately.
- General lack of knowledge in relation to rights and responsibilities as a private rented sector tenant.
- Reports of renting poor quality housing in private rented sector.
- Increase in number of tenants in financial difficulties linked to the downturn in oil industry who have no recourse to public funds.

Partners involved in the production of this strategy also spoke of issues for local migrant workers relating to:

- General lack of knowledge in relation to rights and responsibilities as a private rented sector tenant.
- Increase in number of tenants in financial difficulties linked to the downturn in oil industry who have no recourse to public funds.
- Reports of renting poor quality housing in private rented sector.

In order to address this we will provide information and advice to private landlords and tenants to help improve awareness of their rights and responsibilities. We will also work with private landlords and letting agents to improve management standards and improve property conditions. This will be addressed further in Chapter 6 - Private Rented Sector.

Refugees & Asylum Seeker Resettlement

Scotland has a long history of welcoming refugees and asylum seekers from all over the world. The Scottish Government New Scots: integrating refugees in Scotland's communities 2014-2017 report set out the importance of housing's role in providing information on housing options, access to accommodation and support.

Refugees in the UK are granted protection on one of the legal grounds which entitle them to different types of status and leave to remain. The three main categories of legal status are:

- Refugee status.
- Humanitarian protection.
- Discretionary leave to remain.

Each status differs slightly in its legal basis and specific rights associated with it, however, most of the individuals with these statuses hold the same legal rights to housing. The needs of this group of people has been considered throughout the development of our local housing strategy.

Syrian Resettlement Programme

The council is participating in the UK Home Office's Syrian Resettlement Programme and has agreed to accept a 5% share (100) of the estimated 2,000 refugees expected to come to Scotland. Since March 2016 the council has welcomed 20 households (88 people) from Syria and aims to resettle a further 12 individuals to meet the city's commitment of 100 Syrian refugees.

The council is continuing to work with services across the public and voluntary sectors to support new families and sustain tenancies. Some families have been in Aberdeen for over a year now and housing support provided by the Refugee Project Team is gradually being phased out and mainstreamed with the help of the community.

Work is ongoing to overcome:

Language barriers.
Access to affordable housing.
Finding properties that are large enough to accommodate large and growing families.
Access to ground floor accessible properties to meet medical needs.
Transition arrangement from private sector leasing to mainstream housing.

Asylum Seekers

Aberdeen is not part of the voluntary asylum dispersal scheme; however, discussion is ongoing at Scottish and UK Government level regarding the Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Schemes. Housing need cannot be determined until further information is available but could include a range of supported housing, hostel and HMO-type accommodation.

Asylum dispersal and refugees are intricately linked. As there is no asylum dispersal in Aberdeen, we believe there are very few refugees in the area. This information is not collected via our housing allocations system so we do not have exact data, however, refugees essentially have the same entitlements as any other citizen so they receive exactly the same level of service that anyone else who approaches the council seeking assistance receives.

Gypsy/Travellers

The term Gypsy/Traveller refers to distinct groups such as Romany Gypsies, Scottish and Irish Travellers who regard the travelling lifestyle as being part of their ethnic identity and are recognised as an ethnic group. Gypsy/Travellers have been in Scotland for many centuries and still retain their own cultures and customs.

The lack of suitable secure accommodation underpins many of the inequalities that may be experienced. It often leads to Gypsy/Travellers using public and private land to set up unauthorised encampments which sometimes creates tensions between Gypsy/Travellers and the settled community. Establishing new permanent and transit sites can help alleviate some of the problems that Gypsy/Travellers face.

Travelling Person Site

Aberdeen City Council provides one travelling person's site at Clinterty which has 21 pitches; 17 permanent and 4 short term pitches. The pitches and chalets have been assessed to ensure that they meet minimum site standards issued by Scottish Government. Currently there are no other sites provided by Aberdeen City Council but there is a private site in Dyce that is owned by Travellers which has 8 plots.

Due to the lack of halting sites and Clinterty being permanently full, there is a continuing issue of unauthorised encampments within Aberdeen.

Figure 5.16 below shows the number of unauthorised encampments since 2012

Year	Number of Encampments on Private Land	Number of Encampments on Council Land
2012	36	21
2013	38	43
2014	30	20
2015	9	19
2016	27	19
2017	16	10

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

In order to address this, the Local Development Plan 2017 has identified sites as part of the 25% affordable housing contribution offering opportunities to the north, west and south of the city. Grandhome, Newhills, and Loirston are considered most appropriate for on-site provision of smaller transit sites with a net area of approximately 0.5 hectares providing six pitches on each site. Provision at the remaining locations will take the form of a commuted sum (equivalent to 15 affordable units) as set out in the Local Development Plan Supplementary Guidance.

Such sites would help to meet the accommodation needs of Gypsy/Travellers as identified in the Craigforth Accommodation Study (2009). Craigforth recommended providing a mix of small, family orientated sites as well as larger sites to accommodate Gypsy/Travellers who travel in varying sizes of groups. This should include a mix of fully serviced and stopover sites. Given the significant numbers of unauthorised encampments since the Craigforth report was published in 2009, this recommendation is unchanged but a new study is underway to identify if the needs of Gypsy/Travellers has changed.

Between 1 June and 31 July 2015, 24 Gypsy/Travellers in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire, from 12 different groups of Gypsy/Travellers took part in a consultation exercise to assess the accommodation needs of the Travelling community. Results showed that 100% of all participants thought there should be an increase in site provision in both Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. There was no clear preference on whether they are developed and managed privately or by the local authorities. A further Gypsy/Traveller survey was carried out in Autumn 2017. Results of this survey will be published in 2018 and actions will be incorporated into the North-East Inter-Agency Joint delivery Action Plan.

Travelling Showpeople

During the summer season travelling showpeople visit the city attending fairs and living in caravans on the fairground. There are no showpeople sites in Aberdeen and at present no demand for these facilities has been identified. However consideration will be given to meet future needs for appropriate sites should the requirement arise.

Key Indicators

A Health Inequalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken. The indicators and actions will be revised as required.

People are supported to live, as far as is reasonably practicable, independently at home or in a homely setting in their community.			
Indicator	**Frequency & Source**	**Baseline**	**Target**
Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that they are supported to live as independently as possible.	Biennial Health and care experience survey	82%	90%
Number and percentage of new build affordable properties developed as accessible for people with a particular need.	Annual SHIP	0 properties	15% of all new build stock
Provide better outcomes for people leaving hospital who have housing issues by reducing the number of people whose discharge is delayed because of housing related issues and/or reduce the length of housing related delays.	Annual NHS Grampian	4 delays 527 days (December 2017)	2 delays 200 days
Number of disabled adaptations carried out in: • Private Sector properties • Registered Social Landlords properties • Local Authority properties	Annual Aberdeen City Council Registered social landlords	2016/17 223 203* 1,219 *Figure includes both properties in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council boundaries.	2017/18 250 210* 1,300
Enable people to be supported in their own homes through the use of telecare by increasing the number of people receiving care in the home.	Annual Aberdeen City Council Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership Bon Accord Care	5% 2602 (excluding sheltered housing) as at September 2017	2017/18 2,800

Chapter 6 - Private Rented Sector

Strategic Outcome 4

> **Consumer knowledge, management standards and property condition is improved in the private rented sector.**

Main Issues

- The impact of the downturn in the oil and gas sector on the private rented sector.
- Landlords and tenants lack of awareness of their rights and responsibilities.
- Poor quality private rented sector housing.
- HMO provision.

Key Actions

- Provide information and advice to private landlords and tenants to help improve awareness of their rights and responsibilities.
- Work with private landlords and letting agents to improve management standards in the private rented sector.
- Work with private landlords and tenants to improve property condition in the private rented sector.

Introduction

This chapter details the council's approach to private rented sector housing across the city. The majority of housing in the city is private sector housing (77%) which includes both owner occupied and the private rented sector. Private rented housing accounts for 20% of all housing (20,034 properties).

Private renting is an increasingly important housing option for many people in Scotland at different points in their lives. It is important that tenants who rent privately live in good quality and well managed homes. It is equally important that both landlords and tenants are fully aware of their rights and responsibilities.

The partners involved in the production of this strategy agreed that the issues affecting the private rented sector in Aberdeen are not particularly unique in that they tend to be the same issues that are encountered across Scotland. The main exception to this is the impact that the downturn in employment in the oil and gas sector has had on the demand for housing. This has resulted in a reduction in rents and an increased time to let properties.

All partners agreed that the downturn in the sector means there is a lot more competition in the private rented sector. This provides opportunities for landlords to ensure their properties stand out by improving the condition of their property. This is especially beneficial when there are a number of vacant properties in any one area at a given time.

Key actions have been identified to address some of the issues. Further detail on how the key actions will be achieved can be found in the the joint delivery action plan at Appendix 1.

National Context

Private Rented Sector Strategy

A Place to Stay, A Place to Call Home: A Strategy for the Private Rented Sector in Scotland is the Scottish Government's strategy which sets out its' vision and strategic aims for the private rented sector.

It aims to improve and grow the private rented sector by enabling a more effective regulatory system, targeting tougher enforcement action and attracting new investment.

The vision of the strategy is:

A private rented sector that provides good quality homes and high management standards, inspires consumer confidence, and encourages growth through attracting increased investment.

Source: Scottish Government (2017)

The strategy has three strategic aims:

1	to improve the quality of property management, condition and service.
2	to deliver for tenants and landlords, meeting the needs of the people living in the sector; consumers seeking accommodation; and landlords committed to continuous improvement.
3	to enable growth, investment and help increase overall housing supply.

We have aligned our strategic outcome for the private rented sector with the Scottish Government's Private Rented Sector Strategy.

Local Context

Extent and Location of Private Rented Sector

According to the landlord registration database, in 2017, there were 19,438 registered landlords in Aberdeen with 23,034 properties.[1] As can be seen from Figure 6.1 on the right, these figures have steadily increased over the last five years from 12,644 landlords with 18,249 properties in 2012.

Whilst the number of registered landlords has increased each year, there are a small number of landlords who have ignored the legislation and have not registered or there are some who have allowed their registrations to expire. Aberdeen City Council investigates reports of all unregistered landlords and will take enforcement action against landlords who are continuing to operate.

Figure 6.1: Properties and Approved Registrations in Aberdeen 2012 - 2017

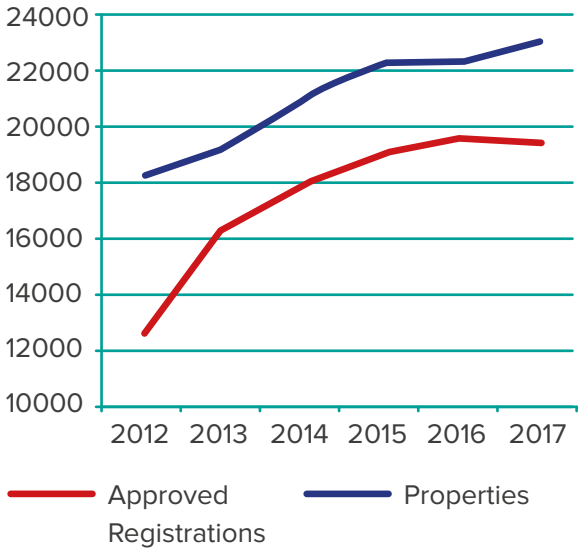


Figure 6.2: Properties and Approved Registrations in Aberdeen 2012 - 2017

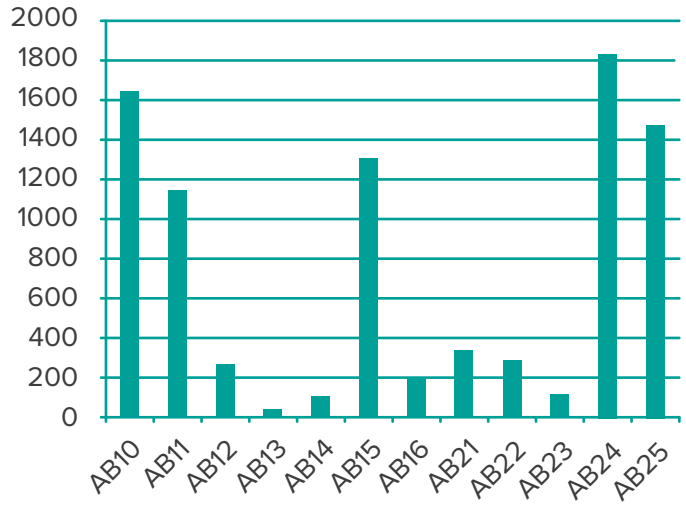
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Change 2012 - 17
Properties	18,249	19,160	20,949	22,252	22,312	23,034	4,785 (26.2%)
Approved Registrations	12,644	16,258	17,889	18,998	19,573	19,438	6,794 (53.7%)

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

[1] Where there are joint owners, the statistics shows them as having more than one property therefore the number of PRS properties in the city will be slightly inflated.

Figure 6.3 shows the number of private rented sector properties by postcode. As would be expected, the majority of properties are either in close proximity to the two main universities or are centrally located. Properties in the AB24 and AB25 are in close proximity to Aberdeen University, while AB10 properties are in close proximity to Robert Gordon University. Figure 6.4 shows a map of the postcode boundaries.

Figure 6.3: Private Rented Sector Properties



Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

Figure 6.3: Postcode Boundaries

Extent and Location of Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO)

As at March 2017, there were 1,341 licensed HMO properties and a further 195 with a current application. If all applications were approved, then approximately 1.3% of the properties in the city would be licenced HMOs. This is a 57% increase from 855 in 2012.

Whilst the number licensed HMOs has increased each year, it is believed that there will still be a number of unlicensed HMOs. The council investigates all complaints regarding unlicensed HMO properties.

Figure 6.5 below shows that the majority of HMOs house between 3 and 5 people in standard sized properties with the larger HMOs generally being purpose built properties.

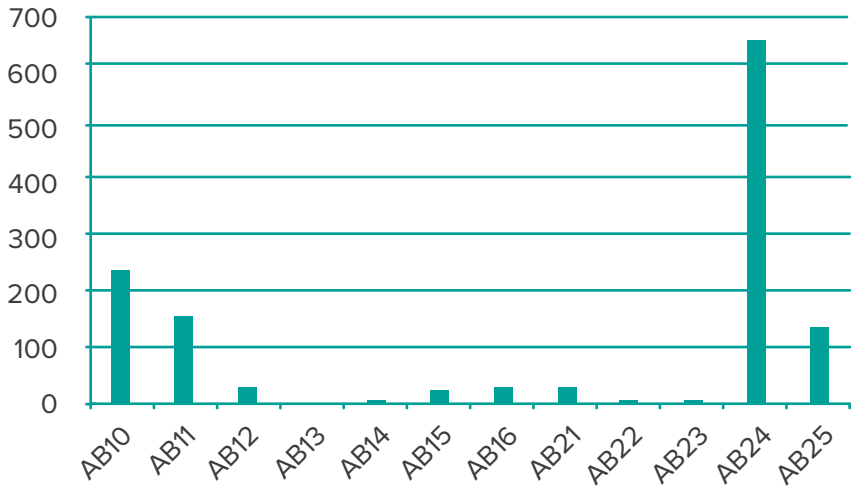
Figure 6.5: Number of HMOs by Number of Occupants in Aberdeen

Number of Occupants	Number of Licenses
3	587
4	404
5	238
6-10	75
11-20	7
21-100	15
100+	15
Total	**1,341**

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

Figure 6.6 below shows the majority of HMO's are in AB24, with 662 properties having a HMO licence. This is to be expected as this postcode is closest to the University of Aberdeen. AB10 and AB11 have a total of 397 HMO properties combined. This is also expected due to properties in AB10 being of close proximity to Robert Gordon University and AB11 being of close proximity to the city centre. Other areas tend to have small numbers of HMOs which is likely due to them being further away from the universities.

Figure 6.6: HMO Properties by Postcode



Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

Local Issues

The partners agreed the main issues at a local level are:

1. **The downturn in the oil and gas sector**

   The downturn in oil and gas sector has reduced the demand for properties and increased the time to let. (See supply of private rented housing below for more detail.)

2. **Lack of awareness in rights and responsibilities**

   One of the main issues, which is similar to the rest of Scotland, is that not all landlords are fully aware of their rights and responsibilities. This can lead to properties failing to meet the Repairing Standard, incorrect tenancy management and even illegal evictions which can then in turn, impact on the number of homeless presentations made to the council.

   Tenants too are not always aware of their rights and responsibilities which can lead to general lack of consumer knowledge and understanding as to what minimum standards can be expected.

3. **Poor quality private rented housing**

   Private sector housing across the city has high levels of disrepair (79%) and as can be seen from Figure 6.7 below, data from the Scottish House Condition Survey suggests that disrepair in the private rented sector is even more extensive. 90% of privately rented housing is in disrepair with similarly high levels being reported across Scotland (82%).

Figure 6.7: Disrepair in Private Rented Sector

	Any (Basic) Disrepair		Disrepair to Critical Elements	Urgent Disrepair	Extensive Disrepair
	No Disrepair	Some Disrepair			
Aberdeen	10%	90%	67%	48%	-
Scotland	18%	82%	62%	42%	8%

Source: Scottish House Condition Survey (2013 - 2015)

Tenants who contact the council's private sector housing unit with complaints about the standard of repair are provided information and advice on the Repairing Standard and are given information on how to make an application to the Housing and Property Chamber of the First-tier Tribunal.

4. HMO provision

Local authorities have the power to refuse to grant a HMO licence where it considers that there is overprovision in an area. Extensive work has been undertaken to consider HMO provision across the city which has involved public consultations.

In order to utilise this ground of refusal, a licensing authority must have a policy on overprovision in place which has regard to the relevant provisions of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006.

Accordingly, the local authority must carry out an assessment of housing need in each locality. It is for the local authority to determine its localities as it sees fit. Section 131A Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 requires that the need for housing accommodation in the locality and the extent to which HMO accommodation is required to meet that need should be assessed at the same locality at which a threshold would be applied.

Whilst a housing need and demand assessment has been undertaken, this is at a city wide level, with the requirement here being for the assessment of need to be at the same geographic level as any proposed locality for which a policy would be introduced e.g. neighbourhood.

The requirement for a HMO overprovision policy is to assess housing need at a locality and a methodology for doing so has not been established. Further guidance on the extent to which HMO accommodation in particular is required to meet that need in certain neighbourhoods across the city. Currently it would be possible to demonstrate a general demand for HMO properties overall, but demand is not the same as need. It is difficult to envisage circumstances that would mean a HMO property would need to be in one particular locality as opposed to another. HMO properties respond to a market demand and their delivery location depends on the availability of property of an appropriate size and value which makes the delivery of a HMO viable.

In the absence of any reliable method of calculating such a need at the required level, the council's current position is that any policy established on the more general evidence available would therefore not satisfy all the legislative requirements of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006.

After consideration Council agreed that it is not agreed that it is not possible to suitably assess the need for HMOs in localities to an extent that would enable an overprovision policy to be properly formed under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 and an overprovision policy is not to be introduced at this time. HMO provision and student accommodation are however to be included within the main issues report for the next local development plan to facilitate mixed and balanced communities.

Supply of Private Rented Sector Housing

Demand for private rented housing across Scotland has increased. Ownership is not necessarily an option for all those who wish to buy because they may not be able to raise a sufficient deposit or meet stricter credit requirements stipulated by lenders.

There is also a section of society who do not wish to own because they enjoy the flexibility renting can bring which allows them to be part of the mobile workforce.

Over recent months there has consistently been more than 1,000 properties advertised to let across Aberdeen on Citylets with a significant increase in the time it takes for the property to be let and at reduced rents. A build to rent development in Aberdeen which was created as a solution to the shortfall of high quality private sector properties available to rent, has experienced similar issues. This is in direct contrast with the position a few years ago when letting agents had intense marketing campaigns seeking additional properties to meet demand. This would suggest there are not currently any issues with an under-supply of private rented housing in Aberdeen.

The council supports the private rented sector as a tenure of choice but notes the following:

- The purchase of properties to rent is a business decision made by individuals or companies which the council has little influence over.
- Many private landlords invest in the cheaper end of the market which in turn adds pressure on first time buyers who may be looking to enter the market at this level.
- Most landlords have small portfolios of only one or two properties.
- Some people become landlords because they choose not to sell a property at that particular point in time.
- The private rented sector in Aberdeen is not as buoyant as has been previously. Rents have fallen from their peak in 2014 with an increased time to let, therefore it may be less financially viable for some landlords wishing to invest in the sector.
- Build to rent[2] is part of Scottish Government policy and is supported by the planning system[3].

Key Workers

Local employers previously highlighted there was an issue in attracting people to relocate to Aberdeen to carry out key worker roles, with the affordability and availability of housing being cited as one of the main reasons.

Another reason relates to pay; public sector workers are generally paid the same across the country. Aberdeen generally has a higher cost of living than other parts of the country which is not reflected in national pay structures. Key workers can therefore expect a higher standard of living in parts of the country that have a lower cost of living which makes recruitment and retainment of key workers to this area more difficult.

[2] Build to Rent is form of housing delivery that offers purpose-built accommodation for rent within high-quality, professionally managed developments.

[3] Planning Delivery Advice: Build to Rent. Scottish Government, 2017

In response to this a number of initiatives have been undertaken:

1. In 2015 a council owned block of 58 flats was let to three organisations to assist in recruiting and retaining key workers such as teachers and police officers. The initiative started well but the changes to the local housing market with greater availability of property and lower costs led to a review of the development. Subsequently, committee approved a recommendation to allocate vacant flats to applicants on the council's waiting list and qualifying key workers.
2. Sanctuary Housing are developing 124 affordable homes for key workers. The properties will be available to local teachers, medical staff and other key workers for mid-market rent when completed in March 2018. Demand has been slow therefore they are currently open to all applicants (subject to specified criteria) with key workers being prioritised.
3. Grampian Housing Association are also to build 101 properties close to the hospital which will be targeted at key workers.

When these initiatives were planned, the rents in Aberdeen were some of the highest in Scotland with properties being re-let very quickly. This meant that accessing housing that was affordable was difficult. However, the housing market has now changed; rents are lower, demand for properties has reduced and there is an increased time to let properties. The delivery of key worker and mid market housing will be monitored to ensure that we can respond to any changes in the market.

Student Accommodation

Between 2012 and November 2017 planning consents were issued by the council for 21 student housing developments with 4,349 beds. Significant new supply has been delivered into this segment of the market with further developments under construction and in the planning process across the city. The student accommodation sector is therefore well served by market delivery.

Regulation

Landlord Registration

All landlords in Scotland are required to register with the local authority in which they rent out properties. As part of this process, all applications are assessed to determine if the applicant is a "fit and proper" person to act as a landlord. The fit and proper person test involves all new and renewal applications being checked by Police Scotland in relation to criminal convictions and involves an assessment of their suitability to act as a landlord. Any concerns that Police Scotland may have regarding the application are reported to the council's Licensing Committee who will determine whether the applicant is a 'fit & proper' person and therefore whether the application should be approved.

Where information is received which suggests that a registered landlord may not be a "fit and proper" person, the information is investigated and where necessary, a report is submitted to the Licensing Committee where their registration may be revoked.

HMO Licensing

Mandatory HMO licensing applies to houses or flats occupied by three or more unrelated people as their only or main residence who share bathroom or kitchen facilities. Licensing helps ensure that accommodation is safe, well managed and of good quality.

Before granting a licence we must be satisfied that:

- The owner and any manager of the property is 'fit and proper' to hold a licence.
- The property meets required physical standards.
- The property is suitable for use as an HMO (or could be made so by including conditions in the licence).

Aberdeen City Council works in partnership with the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service (SFRS) and a licence will not be granted until SFRS has confirmed that the property is fire-safe. In addition, we report HMO applications to the Licensing Committee in certain circumstances which may include situations where Police Scotland has concerns about the applicant or agent, letters of representation have been received or upgrading works have not been carried out within the specified timescales.

It is a criminal offence to operate a HMO without a licence. The maximum fine is £50,000. The Licensing Committee has a range of other enforcement options, including the power to vary the terms of a licence or revoke it.

Letting Agent Regulation

A new regulatory framework for letting agents is being introduced. This includes compulsory registration, a statutory Code of Practice with a means of redress to the Housing and Property Chamber along with powers for monitoring compliance and effective enforcement. These measures will give landlords and tenants confidence in the standard of service they should expect and the means to challenge poor practice where it occurs.

Letting agents will be required to join a mandatory register of letting agents to undertake letting agency work. To be accepted on to the register, those in charge of the business must be assessed as fit and proper with key individuals within the company meeting a minimum level of training.

The Scottish Government has published a guide to letting agent registration as a means of support to letting agents so they can understand what the requirements mean for their business and what they need to do before they can register. The register is likely to start accepting applications from early in 2018. Agents must have submitted an application by 30 September 2018.

The Scottish Parliament approved the first Letting Agent Code of Practice in February 2016 and it came into force on 31st January 2018. The Code makes clear the standards of practice those carrying out letting agency work must meet.

The Code will help to make sure good standards of practice are consistently applied across the letting industry and will provide tenants and landlords with an effective way to challenge poor practice. The Code also includes a requirement for letting agents to hold professional indemnity insurance and to hold client money protection.

The Scottish Government will have responsibility for letting agent registration.

Management Standards in the Private Rented Sector

There are various pieces of legislation or services available to help improve the standards in the private rented sector with further legislation due to be implemented in coming months.

Landlord Accreditation Scotland

Landlord Accreditation Scotland (LAS) is the national accreditation scheme for Scottish landlords & letting agents, promoting best practice in the private rented sector by offering training and education across the country.

LAS is a voluntary scheme set up to promote and support letting agents & landlords in Scotland by accrediting their property management skills.

The scheme is open to all Scottish letting agents and landlords wishing to have their professionalism recognised and who wish to demonstrate to clients and tenants their commitment to delivering the highest standards within their profession.

LAS work in partnership with local authorities across Scotland to maximise contact with Scottish letting agents and landlords. Local authorities recognise that those who have chosen to meet accreditation standards are those providing the best service for tenants in that area.

In partnership with LAS and Aberdeenshire Council we provide access to landlord training in all aspects of managing residential property in Scotland. Training courses are held across the year and are available to all landlords to attend. The aim of the training courses is to improve standards across the sector.

Private Housing (Tenancies) Scotland Act 2016

The Private Housing (Tenancies) (Scotland) Act 2016 introduced a new private residential tenancy for all new lets in the private rented sector from 1st December 2017. The purpose of the new tenancy is to improve security and stability for tenants balanced with safeguards for landlords, lenders and investors. The key features are:

- A more streamlined system with no confusing pre-tenancy notices, an easier-to-understand model tenancy agreement and a simplified eviction notice.
- A modern open-ended tenancy where landlords cannot evict a tenant simply because their tenancy agreement has reached its end date.
- Landlords will be required to use one of the 18 new grounds for repossession which offer a modernised process for regaining possession in all reasonable circumstances.
- Rents can only be reviewed once in a 12 month period (with 3 months' advance notice). Tenants will also be able to refer perceived unreasonable rent increases for adjudication to protect them from unfair rent rises (which takes their rent beyond the market rate for other comparable properties).

Condition of Private Rented Sector Housing

Repairing Standard

A privately rented property must meet the Repairing Standard as follows:

- The property must be wind and water tight and in all other respects reasonably fit for people to live in.
- The structure and exterior (including drains, gutters and external pipes) must be in a reasonable state of repair and in proper working order.
- Installations for supplying water, gas and electricity and for sanitation, space heating and heating water must be in a reasonable state of repair and in proper working order.
- Any fixtures, fittings and appliances that the landlord provides under the tenancy must be in a reasonable state of repair and in proper working order.
- Any furnishings that the landlord provides under the tenancy must be capable of being used safely for the purpose for which they are designed.
- The property must have a satisfactory way of detecting fires and for giving warning in the event of a fire or suspected fire.
- The property must have satisfactory provision for giving warning if carbon monoxide is present in a concentration that is hazardous to health.

The standard details the legal and contractual obligations of private landlords to ensure that a property meets a minimum physical standard.

If, after a landlord has been notified of any problem, it is not resolved satisfactorily, or if there is disagreement about whether or not there is a problem, tenants have the right to refer the matter to the Housing and Property Chamber[4] (HPC) for help with dispute resolution.

All tenants who contact the private sector housing unit regarding their landlord's failure to carry out repairs are provided with information and advice on how to report the matter to the HPC.

Third Party Applications to the Housing & Property Chamber (HPC)

The HPC has the power to accept applications from a third party, specifically the local authority, to determine whether or not a private rented property met the repairing standard.

A policy is being developed by Aberdeen City Council on when and how it will make third party referrals to the HPC and will be implemented in 2018.

[4] The HPC has replaced the functions of the former Private Rented Housing Panel (PRHP) and Homeowner Housing Panel (HOHP). The HPC will also start to hear more private rented sector cases from December 2017 including the new letting agents' regime, transfer of jurisdiction from the sheriff courts and new private tenancies.

Key Actions

As part of our private rented sector strategy to address the condition and standards of the sector we intend to:

1	Submit third party applications to the Housing and Property Chamber where landlords have failed to carry out repairs.
2	Produce a leaflet that details rights and responsibilities in relation to all aspects of private rented sector which will include information relating to property condition and management standards.
3	Send emails to all landlords on our database when there are changes in legislation that affect property condition and management standards.
4	Hold annual information sessions for landlords which will provide information regarding property condition of private rented housing.
5	Continue to provide advice and support to private tenants via the council's Housing Access Service to help to sustain tenancies.

Actions have been developed to improve standards in the private rented sector. Where landlords do not meet their statutory requirements and refuse to engage with the private sector housing team, we will work with our partners to improve standards in the private rented sector.

Further detail on key actions can be found in the Joint Delivery Action Plan at Appendix 1.

Key Indicators

A Health Inequalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken. The indicators and actions will be revised as required.

Improve consumer knowledge, management standards and property condition in the private rented sector.			
Indicator	**Frequency & Source**	**Baseline**	**Target**
Number of PRS properties in disrepair.	Annual Scottish House Condition Survey	90% 2013-2015	Reduce
Landlord Accreditation Scotland training courses.	Landlord Accreditation Scotland Annual	10	10
Third party referrals to Housing & Property Chamber.	Housing and Property Chamber Annual	0	3

Chapter 7 - Fuel Poverty and Climate Change

Strategic Outcome 5

> **Fuel poverty is reduced which contributes to meeting climate change targets.**

Main Issues

28% or 29,400 households in Aberdeen live in fuel poverty, with 9% or 9,000 households living in extreme fuel poverty.
Poor energy performance of housing coupled with hard to treat/expensive to treat housing stock.
The cost of energy is unaffordable for some people.
Welfare reform is not yet fully implemented and its impact on fuel poverty is still unknown.
There is a lack of awareness of the opportunities and potential benefits of cost-effective energy use in the home.
Fuel poverty impacts on a person's physical and mental wellbeing.

Key Actions

Improve energy efficiency of housing across all tenures.
Work with residents to help them obtain the best price for heat and power.
Work with residents to maximise their income.
Work with residents to help them use their energy in the most efficient manner.
Work with residents to encourage a reduction in their carbon footprint.
Work with other agencies and partners, including the Health and Social Care Partnership to deliver the key actions in relation to fuel poverty.
Raise awareness of the issues relating to fuel poverty across all sectors.

Introduction

This chapter sets out the council's approach to tackling fuel poverty across Aberdeen. It also details how this work contributes to meeting energy and climate change targets.

What is 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 on all household fuel use. If over 20% of income is required, then this is termed as being in extreme fuel poverty."

The impact of fuel poverty on society should not be under-estimated; the negative impact of fuel poverty on physical and mental health and wellbeing is well documented. The most common physical health impacts experienced by those living in cold homes are respiratory and circulatory illnesses.

Typically there are around 2,000 unnecessary winter deaths in Scotland and poor living conditions are a major contributing factor. A warm homes scheme in Northern Ireland was estimated to save the NHS £0.42 for every £1 spent on reducing fuel poverty.[1]

National Priorities and Targets

In 2002, the Scottish Government made a commitment to eradicate fuel poverty by November 2016. We have now reached the end of the Scottish Government commitment and the approach taken to eradicate fuel poverty has not achieved the desired outcomes. It was agreed that the issues around fuel poverty, and how to alleviate it, needs to be re-assessed.

Therefore in 2015, the Scottish Government established two short-life, expert groups to provide advice and make recommendations on tackling fuel poverty; the Scottish Fuel Poverty Strategic Working Group and the Scottish Rural Fuel Poverty Task Force.

The Scottish Government has recently published a consultation paper on a new, long-term fuel poverty strategy, including proposals for a new overarching target.

This strategy will feed into the development of a new Warm Homes Bill, which is planned to be introduced in summer 2018.

Regardless of targets or definitions, the reality is that fuel poverty is a continuing problem both within the city and nationally. Many thousands of households in Aberdeen, live in cold homes which they cannot afford to adequately heat. The partners involved in the development of this strategy agree that everyone should be able to live in a warm and comfortable home.

The actions within this local housing strategy will be aligned, where appropriate, with the new fuel poverty strategy and any associated targets.

Key Drivers of Fuel Poverty

There are three outlined key drivers of fuel poverty: energy costs, household income and home energy performance. The Scottish Fuel Poverty Strategic Working Group in its recent report, "A Scotland without fuel poverty is a fairer Scotland," four steps to achieving sustainable, affordable, attainable warmth and energy use for all, suggests there is a fourth driver relating to how energy is used in the home.

Under the current assessment of fuel poverty only the cost of fuel is considered under energy costs. Ongoing maintenance costs and the cost of replacing the heating system are also considerations along with the cost of fuel.

[1] Liddell, C. (2008) The Impact of Fuel Poverty on Children. London: Save the Children

Local Context

According to the latest figures from the Scottish House Condition Survey, 28% or 29,000 households live in fuel poverty in Aberdeen with those living in rented accommodation being most at risk. This compares favourably against Scotland where 34% of households live in fuel poverty but this does not detract from the fact that fuel poverty remains a significant issue in Aberdeen.

Figure 7.1: Fuel Poverty Levels

Source: Scottish House Condition Survey (2013-2015)

Figure 7.2 shows fuel poverty levels by householder type, in Aberdeen and nationally. The published figures indicate that national trends are followed in the city, and that Aberdeen has slightly lower levels of fuel poverty than the national average.

Figure 7.2: Fuel Poverty by Household Type

Source: Scottish House Condition Survey (2013-2015)

Extreme fuel poverty

Of the 29,000 households who are living in fuel poverty, 9,000 households are living in extreme fuel poverty. As can be seen from Figure 7.3, extreme fuel poverty is higher in Aberdeen than the national average for householder living in the social and private rented sectors.

Percentage of households living in extreme fuel poverty

Source: Scottish House Condition Survey (2013-2015)

Housing characteristics in Aberdeen

The largest area of heat loss in the home is typically through the walls, followed by the roof. Wall insulation and loft insulation can reduce heat loss by over 50%. Wall insulation is relatively straightforward if walls are of cavity construction and the dwelling is a house. Blocks of flats, solid wall constructed properties and traditional housing typically built pre-1930, are often referred to as “hard to heat/hard to treat” properties. These are homes that, due to their construction type, often cannot have the simpler energy efficiency measures installed such as loft or cavity wall insulation.

In Aberdeen there are large numbers of “hard to heat/hard to treat” properties. Over half the dwellings in the city are flatted (54%), many of which are mixed tenure. This provides challenges when looking to improve the energy efficiency of the buildings as all the co-owners of a block of flats need to agree to energy efficiency improvement works, and all are liable for a share of the cost of the work.

Insulation

Solid wall insulation, whether internal or external, can be a complex process to install. It is also expensive and very disruptive to the householder, particularly in housing built before 1930. This includes nearly all traditional granite housing, where maintaining the integrity of the dwellings can be challenging and technical solutions are more limited.

Loft insulation is usually a quick and easy way to thermally improve a dwelling, the exception being dwellings which have rooms in the roof (dormer windows), which present a similar challenge to solid wall insulation in order to insulate adequately.

Heating

All urban and suburban areas of the city have access to the gas network and gas central heating is by far the most common heating. Electric is believed to be the next most common heating system, with very few other fossil fuel types or renewable heating systems.

In Aberdeen there is a Combined Heat and Power (CHP) District Heating Network, which supplies heat to over 2,350 dwellings providing low cost low carbon heating.

Under-occupancy

Under occupancy can also contribute to fuel poverty. According to the Scottish House Condition Survey, 17% of all dwellings in Aberdeen are under-occupied which may result in owners not adequately heating or partially heating their property in order to reduce fuel bills.

Root causes of fuel poverty in Aberdeen

Home Energy Performance

Energy efficiency of housing is measured using a methodology known as the Standard Assessment Procedure[2] (SAP). SAP will provide a score of 1-100 on the energy performance of a dwelling. These scores are grouped into seven bandings between A-G, (similar to white goods and cars) with A being the most efficient (92-100) and G the least efficient (0-20). These ratings can be found on dwellings' Energy Performance Certificate (EPC). Legislation requires an EPC to be produced for all homes offered for rent and marketed for sale.

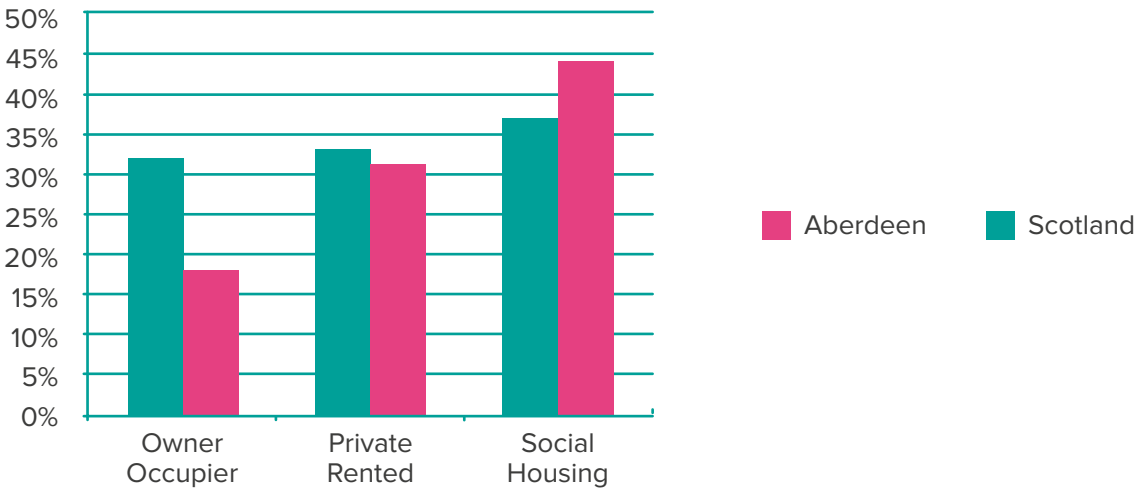
According to the Scottish House Condition Survey, the average SAP rating of all housing in Aberdeen has risen from 62.1 in 2003-2005 to 65 in 2013-2015, which is in line with the Scottish average. This improvement in ratings, whilst partly due to the increased numbers of new build housing (additional 6,000 properties which have improved energy performance), also demonstrates success in improving the energy efficiency of existing dwellings. However, despite these improvements on home energy performance, fuel poverty continues to rise.

The vast majority of social housing in Aberdeen meets the minimum requirements of Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing[3] but as can be seen in Figure 7.4 below, fuel poverty levels in social housing are significantly higher than the private sector. 44% of households live in fuel poverty in the social sector compared to 31% in the private rented sector and 18% of owner occupiers. These figures underline the fact that meeting minimum energy standards alone will not eradicate fuel poverty.

[2] Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) is the methodology used by the Government to assess and compare the energy and environmental performance of dwellings.

[3] The Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESSH) aims to improve the energy efficiency of social housing in Scotland.

Figure 7.4: Fuel Poverty by Tenure



Source: Scottish House Condition Survey (2013-2015)

We therefore need to consider the other key drivers of fuel poverty such as the cost of energy and household income.

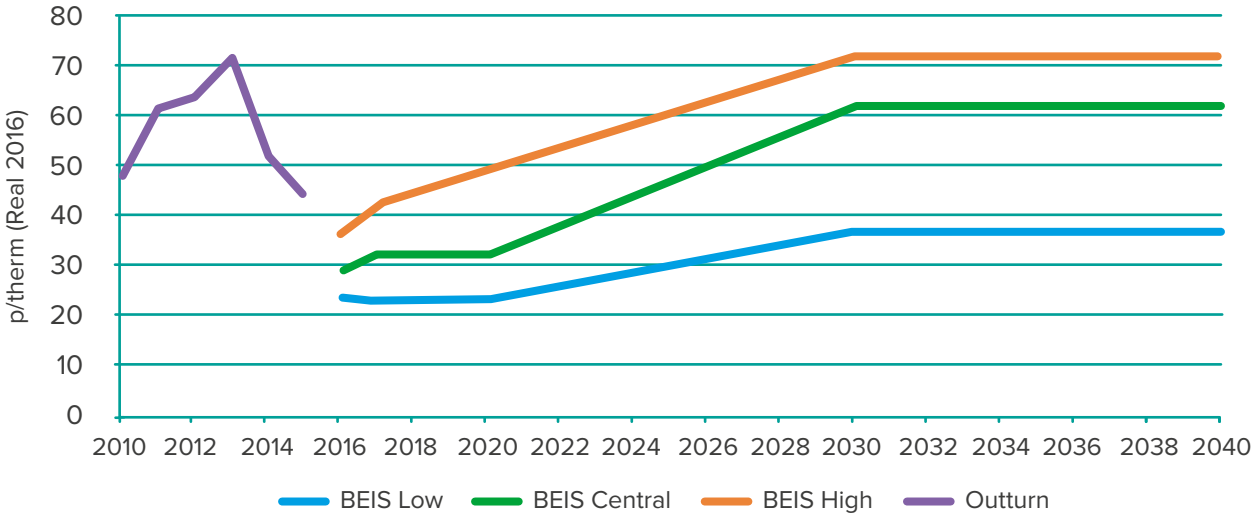
Energy Costs

Fuel prices have almost trebled since fuel poverty targets were introduced by the Scottish Government. Rising fuel prices have negated the anticipated impact of energy efficiency improvements on eradicating fuel poverty. The increase in fuel poverty has broadly mirrored the growth in fuel prices.

Of the traditional common methods of heating homes, mains gas has typically been the lowest cost for heating homes. However at the moment, the lifetime heating costs are not considered when determining fuel poverty, and when these costs (maintenance, safety checks and system lifetime) are considered, gas may not always be the best value, particularly in homes with low heat demand.

While it is impossible to confidently predict future pricing, forecast figures provided by Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy[4] indicate the price of gas is to rise significantly in the short to medium term.

Figure 7.5: Natural Gas Price Assumptions 2016



Source: Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (2016)

Household Income

Figure 7.6 shows average annual cost of providing heat and hot water to a typical sized 3-bedroom house, one with gas heating and one with electric storage heating. The cost for gas was increasing until 2015 when prices fell substantially, however costs have increased this year mainly due to the industry stabilising. According to the International Energy Agency, it is likely that the low price has now bottomed out and prices are likely to rise again. A recent report by the Bank of Scotland states that the industry was more confident and there was evidence that many companies were planning for growth.

Figure 7.6: Space and Water Heating Costs (average 3 bedroom house)

Heating Type	Oct-12	Oct-13	Oct-14	Oct-15	Oct-16	Oct-17
Gas Fired Boiler	£1,255	£1,403	£1,446	£1,266	£1,191	£1,252
Storage Heaters	£1,663	£1,7480	£2,0380	£2,038	£2,038	£2,260

Source: Sutherland (2017)

The annual gross mean and median annual income in Aberdeen is £35,083 and £29,249 respectively. Despite the recent downturn in the oil and gas sector, those who are in employment still have higher mean and median income when compared to the rest of Scotland which is £33,126 and £28,007. However Aberdeen is the most expensive city in Scotland[5], so income won't stretch as far. Households on lower incomes in Aberdeen may face greater financial pressures than those with comparable incomes in other cities.

There are many households who are either unemployed, on state benefits or who have below average incomes. These people may struggle to pay for their energy costs, which is why it is important the council works with partners to reduce fuel poverty.

[4] Formally Department for Energy and Climate Change

[5] The 2016 Mercer Cost of Living Rankings places Aberdeen the 85th most expensive city in the world, the only Scottish City to appear in the top 100.

We also have a significant number of areas within the city that are designated as areas of multiple deprivation with 9 of Aberdeen's 283 data zones being among the most deprived in Scotland in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SMID) 2016.

Whilst the city has 9 data zones in the overall ranking of the most deprived 15% of the population, it also has a further 13 data zones in the most deprived 15-20%. The 22 Aberdeen City data zones in the most deprived 20% have a population of 18,055 which accounts for 7.9% of the city's total population.

Further, there are still significant numbers of low income households who are not receiving the financial support they are entitled to. According to the Scottish Parliament Information Centre, more than £2bn in benefits are going unclaimed each year.

Those on benefits or with low incomes are less likely to pay for their fuel by direct debit and therefore fail to get the best price from their energy supplier.

Fuel poverty is often generally viewed as an issue for the housing sector to tackle, however, as with relative poverty it is an issue that needs to be considered by all council services, as well as public health services, communities, third sector agencies and all relevant partners and stakeholders.

In order to effectively tackle fuel poverty, there needs to be more emphasis on dealing with the causes other than energy efficiency, while still maintaining progress on improving the energy efficiency of our homes.

This will require a co-ordinated approach involving the financial inclusion sector, health and well-being services, local communities and the housing sectors. A strategic working group will be established to take forward these actions.

Links Between Fuel Poverty and Energy Efficiency

There are significant links between fuel poverty and the energy efficiency and characteristics of a dwelling. The less energy efficient a dwelling is, the more energy it will need to use to provide adequate warmth for the occupants, resulting in higher fuel bills, which will increase the risk of fuel poverty.

Figures published in the Scottish House Condition Survey publication 'Fuel Poverty Evidence Review' indicate that householders living in homes with lower energy ratings are much more likely to be fuel poor, than those living in homes with higher ratings.

When the Scottish Government made its commitment in 2002 to eradicate fuel poverty, energy efficiency was generally viewed as the priority element to target with the majority of fuel poverty schemes, both nationally and in Aberdeen, primarily focussing on improving the energy performance of a dwelling. The main external funding routes to tackle fuel poverty have been through Scottish Government funding or through obligations placed on fuel suppliers with a focus on delivering energy efficiency measures.

The limitations of this approach have been recognised with Warmer Homes Scotland[6] and HEEPS: ABS[7] schemes where they are now set up to include income maximisation and energy advice elements as a secondary measure to tackle the other factors of household income and energy costs.

In Aberdeen, we have services which target fuel poverty, energy efficiency and climate change. These have been in place for a number of years where project staff are encouraged to make referrals to income maximisation services.

[6] Warmer Homes Scotland is a Scottish Government scheme to help vulnerable households make their homes warmer and cheaper to heat by installing a range of energy saving measures.

[7] Home Energy Efficiency Programme Scotland; Area Based Scheme. Scottish Government funding given to councils to develop and deliver fuel poverty works in areas with high levels of fuel poverty.

As part of our contribution to meeting these national targets Aberdeen City Council has committed through our Local Outcome Improvement Plan to:

- reduce local carbon emissions per capita.
- increase the amount of energy produced from renewables.
- reduce the number of households living in fuel poverty.

It is important that we make changes in the way we live and work in order to reduce our carbon footprint. Therefore, the council is working with a range of stakeholders to develop initiatives to tackle climate change.

Links Between Fuel Poverty and Climate Change

The Scottish Government has set a national target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 42% by 2020 and by 80% by 2050. Any reductions in energy use through changes in behaviour or improved energy efficiency of housing will help to meet these targets.

The Scottish Government intends to introduce a new Climate Change Bill with even more ambitious targets. Proposals include setting targets based on actual emissions, increasing the 2050 target to 90% emissions reduction, and making provisions for a net-zero greenhouse gas emissions target to be set when a credible and costed pathway can be demonstrated.

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 places a number of public sector duties on the council to:

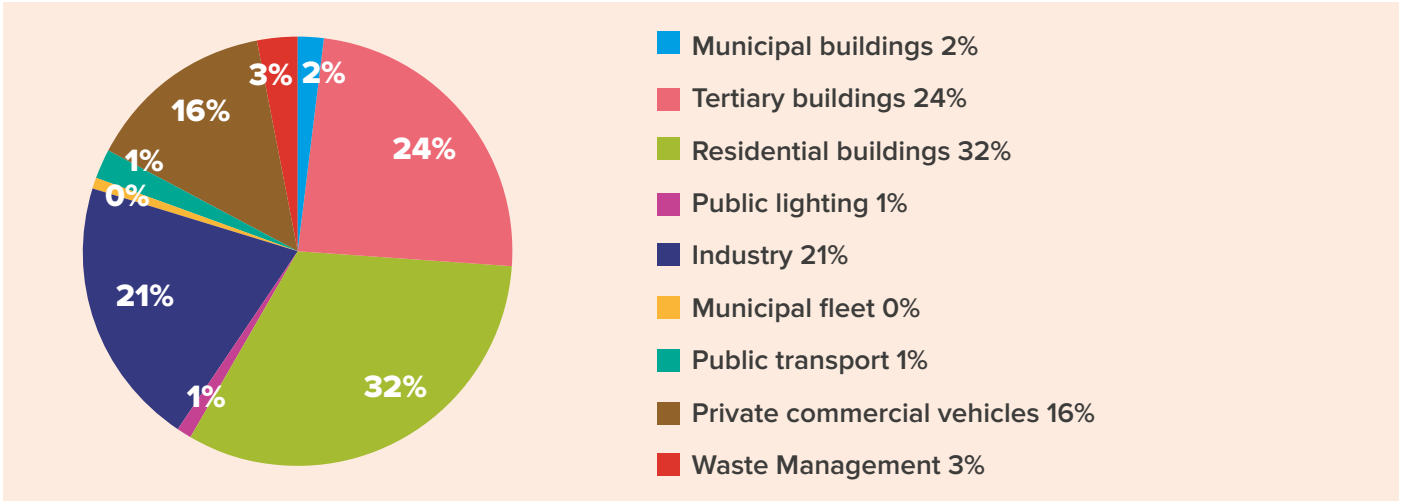
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Put in place measures to adapt to a changing climate.
- Work in a sustainable way.
- Report annually on performance.

Actions and initiatives to date include:

- Powering Aberdeen; the Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP) to reduce emissions and meet the requirements of the Covenant of Mayors.
- Adaptation Plan; Aberdeen, with support from Adaptation Scotland is working to build resilience to the climate challenges and opportunities for the area. The council is also a participant in the Adaptation Learning Exchange.
- Raising awareness in partnership with Aberdeen Climate Action through initiatives such as Earth Hour and Climate Week.

As Figure 7.7 below shows, in 2015, greenhouse gas emissions from housing accounted for 32% of Aberdeen's total emissions. It is clear that housing contributes to climate change in a variety of ways including poor house condition, poor energy performance of housing and the way in which energy is used in the home. In order to address this, we will continue to take action to improve the quality of housing, which includes improving the energy efficiency of homes.

Figure 7.7: Breakdown of CO_2 emissions by sector



Source: Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (2017)

Actions to reduce carbon emissions can impact positively on fuel poverty. Thermal improvements in housing will reduce the volume of heat required to heat a house adequately, leading to reduced carbon emissions and fuel use, thus reducing costs. Advice on using energy in the home more effectively can reduce fuel consumption, which will result in lower bills and less carbon emissions. Providing advice and support to households will be a key action in delivering successful outcomes on fuel poverty, energy efficiency and carbon reduction.

It is recognised that there will be instances where improved energy efficiency will not result in carbon savings, as before and after energy usage may not be like for like. Fuel poor households may take energy efficiency savings in 'comfort' rather than cost saving, where the savings are used to help provide more adequate warmth, rather than reduce costs.

It is clear from Figure 7.8 below that progress has been made with regards to reductions in emissions from housing. Fuel poverty and climate change are inextricably linked, particularly in terms of the carbon footprint left by individual properties and the effect this has on emissions produced across the city. Therefore, energy efficiency of housing is key to tackling fuel poverty and addressing climate change.

Figure 7.8: Carbon Emissions in the Domestic Sector (Aberdeen)

Year	Kilotons of Carbon Dioxide (CO2)
2012	528
2013	506
2014	423
2015	406

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

Private Sector Housing

We have various schemes and projects available to homeowners and private sector tenants which demonstrates our commitment to addressing fuel poverty across all tenures.

Regulation of Energy Efficiency of Private Sector Housing (REEPS)

Regulation is one of the key elements of the on-going development of Scotland's Energy Efficiency Programme which, when implemented, should help improve the energy performance of private sector housing.

In summer 2017, the Scottish Government published a consultation on Energy Efficiency and Condition Standards in Private Rented Housing: A Scotland's Energy Efficiency Programme Consultation.

The consultation sought views on requiring all private rented sector properties to have a minimum EPC[8] rating of 'E' at a change in tenancy from 2019 and rising to EPC level 'D' from 2022. It also proposes dates when all private rented properties would be expected to meet these standards.

Tolerable Standard

Tackling fuel poverty can assist with housing that is below the tolerable standard. To comply with the tolerable standard a house must have satisfactory thermal insulation. This element was added to the tolerable standard by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006.

Thermal insulation relates only to the capacity of the house to retain heat. It does not extend to the performance of the heating system or the interaction between the heating and the building fabric.

For the purpose of the tolerable standard, the presence of roof insulation in a house is the indicator of satisfactory thermal insulation, therefore the installation of loft insulation can directly impact on the tolerable standard.

Existing Fuel Poverty Projects

Education and understanding will be key in meeting meet fuel poverty and climate change targets, and we will continue to promote the issues, effects and potential solutions to reducing fuel poverty and carbon emissions.

There are a number of existing and current schemes and projects developed and supported by Aberdeen City Council to reduce the levels of fuel poverty and reduce greenhouse gas emissions which include:

Energy Efficiency Advice Service

This service provides an advocacy, support and advice service to all householders in the city. Advice is provided in a variety of ways, but the most effective way is by providing bespoke, tailored advice in the home. This free, impartial service carries out around 1,500 home visits per annum to residents in all tenures and provides advice and support on matters such as:

- controlling heating to most effectively heat the home.
- dealing with fuel bill issues.

[8] An Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) shows the energy current and potential energy rating of a property, known as a 'SAP rating'. A 'SAP' rating stands for Standard Assessment Procedure and is the government's recommended system for producing a home energy rating. The SAP charts have been divided into 7 bands ranging from A-G. Each range has a set amount of 'SAP' points. Each chart has a current and a potential energy rating out of a maximum of 100 points (being maximum efficiency.

- identifying practical improvements to reduce energy usage.
- behavioural improvements.
- changing fuel supplier, including 'best deal' fuel bill price comparison search.

Visiting in the home provides a more holistic service and can help identify other energy efficiency issues. It can also lead to referrals to other agencies, such as income maximisation services, who can provide pro-active support, helping to prevent issues or stop problems escalating, and therefore reducing demand on support services.

This service is currently delivered and managed by local charitable organisation SCARF which is funded by the council. This service, through its holistic approach aims to accelerate the rate of improvement in all sectors of housing in the city.

Aberdeen Victorian Tenement Project

This project provides a co-ordination service to support householders and owners of flats within the city's granite tenements to improve the energy efficiency of their building and the flats within it, with focus on trying to organise the installation of loft insulation into communal owned loft space, as well as offering advice on energy efficiency of flat and/or building. This is currently managed and funded by the council's home energy team. This project, through its tenure neutral approach, aims to accelerate the rate of improvement of energy efficiency in these hard to heat/ hard to treat buildings.

Aberdeen Affordable Warmth Loan scheme

Where householders are not eligible for existing grant schemes but are living in fuel poverty, this scheme can offer interest free or low interest loans to carry out energy efficiency improvements. This is currently delivered and managed by Aberdeen Care and Repair and is funded utilising a rolling fund obtained from various sources.

Energy Efficiency Fund

A "hardship" grant of up to £500 is available to homeowners in fuel poverty to contribute towards the cost of an energy efficiency improvement. This may be provided where other grants are not available and the householder would not be able to afford the loan. The most common award is for householders whose heating system has irreparably broken down and who have no savings or insufficient income to replace it. This is currently delivered and managed by Aberdeen Care and Repair and is funded by donations from different sources including the council.

Home Energy Efficiency Programme Scotland: Area Based Schemes

This is a Scottish Government programme aimed at supporting energy efficiency improvements to homes in the private sector. Although the primary focus is solid wall insulation, other measures installed as part of this programme include, solid wall insulation, loft insulation, cavity wall insulation, underfloor insulation and connection to district heating networks. This is funded by the Scottish Government with additional funding sourced from fuel utility commitments through the Energy Company Obligation (ECO).

Combined Heat and Power (CHP) and District Heating

This is a council programme with the original aim to connect all 59 multi-storey buildings in the city to a CHP Network or a District Heating Scheme. This target is expected to be reached in the next five years and consideration is needed on the strategic approach to expanding to other housing types. In addition, two new build council housing schemes are being connected to the network. CHP is managed and delivered on behalf of the council by Aberdeen Heat and Power and is mainly funded by the council.

Energy Efficiency Measures in Social Housing

The council continues to install various measures to improve housing to ensure compliance with Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing and the Scottish Housing Quality Standard. There is a focus on over-cladding of multi-stories and wall insulation of non-traditionally constructed properties. There is also a continuing programme aiming to ensure all loft, cavity and under floor spaces are insulated where viable.

Scotland's Energy Efficiency Programme (SEEP)

In 2015, the Scottish Government agreed to make energy efficiency a national infrastructure priority. Following on from this, consideration is now being given as to how this will be delivered. There have been two competitive funding rounds of the Scottish Energy Efficiency Programme Pathfinders, which are helping to shape future programmes and develop policy. Aberdeen City Council has been successful in securing funding for each round.

For SEEP Pathfinder 1, funding was secured to develop and deliver projects to improve the efficiency and reduce pro rata carbon emissions of the existing Seaton combined heat and power network. This will be achieved by installing:

- External wall insulation to seven multi-storey buildings.
- Thermal storage at the Seaton Energy Centre.
- Air-absorption heat pump within the network.
- CHP Generator.
- Network connections to three non-domestic buildings in the east end of the city centre.

For SEEP pathfinder 2, funding has been secured to be used on developing a Local Heating and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES). This will be piloted in Tillydrone, Old Aberdeen and Seaton.

It is anticipated that the Scottish Government will place a duty on local authorities to develop a LHEES. The work we are doing will help inform the Scottish Government on the requirements of a LHESS.

These projects not only demonstrate what we have previously done, but that they will also continue in 2018 onwards. Further, they show how we aim to achieve the maximum contribution for tackling fuel poverty, improving energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. We will continue to ensure bids for funding are submitted to all available sources which will include funding for private sector housing to ensure that the stock is improved across all tenures.

Key Indicators

A Health Inequalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken. The indicators and actions will be revised as required.

Tackle fuel poverty and contribute to meeting climate change targets.			
Indicator	**Frequency & Source**	**Baseline**	**Target**
Number of households in fuel poverty.	Annual Scottish House Condition Survey	29,400 2013-2015	Scottish Government reviewing definition and targets
Number of households in extreme fuel poverty.	Annual Scottish House Condition Survey	9,450 2013-2015	Scottish Government reviewing definition and targets
Carbon emissions from housing.	Every two years Powering Aberdeen	490,034 tonnes CO_2 2014	Reduce 2% per year to 2020

Chapter 8 - House Condition

Strategic Outcome 6

> **The quality of housing of all tenures is improved across the city.**

Main Issues

- Levels of disrepair across the city which require significant sums of investment.
- Significant proportion of housing stock is tenements which requires owners to work together to carry out common repairs.
- All social housing in the city must meet Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS).
- All social housing in the city must meet Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESSH) by 2020.

Key Actions

- Social housing providers will continue to have rolling programmes of works to ensure compliance with Scottish Housing Quality Standard.
- Social housing providers will continue to have rolling programmes of works to ensure compliance with Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing by 2020.
- Continue to deliver information, advice and practical assistance through Scheme of Assistance[1] to improve the quality of private sector housing.
- Continue to identify and address housing that is sub-standard, which includes housing that is below the tolerable standard[2] with a particular focus on tenements.

Introduction

This chapter sets out the council's approach to house condition across the city.

The quality of housing and the maintenance of its condition can impact on the look and perception of an area as well as the heath and general wellbeing of residents.

[1] The Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 introduced a Scheme of Assistance to replace the previous system of grants for repairs and maintenance to private housing.

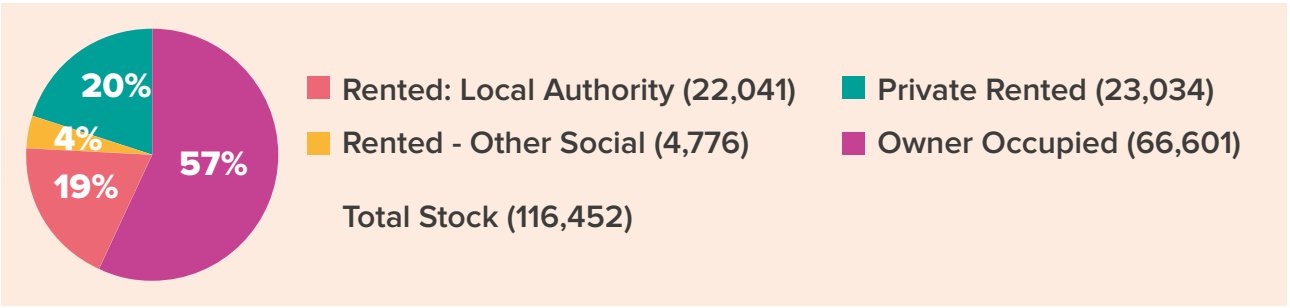
[2] The tolerable standard is a "condemnatory" standard; a house that falls below it is not acceptable as living accommodation.

Housing is one of many personal, social and environmental impacts on health and health inequalities. The complex interaction of these factors means that it can be difficult to identify the specific impact of housing. However, studies have regularly shown impacts on physical health. Poor conditions such as damp and cold have all been shown to be associated with physical illnesses including eczema, hypothermia and heart disease. Respiratory health has been shown to be particularly affected in both adults and children.[3]

Poor housing can also impact on mental health on a persons mental health to try to cope with the stress of living in cold, damp conditions.

Aberdeen City Council data from 2017 shows that the majority of housing is in the private sector. Owner occupied housing accounts for 57% (66,601) and a further 20% (23,034) is the private rented sector. Council housing accounts for 19% (22,041) of housing with a further 4% (4,497) rented from other registered social landlords.

Figure 8.1: Tenure of housing in Aberdeen



Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

House Condition – Private Sector Housing

Whilst local authorities and registered social landlords are required to ensure that their housing meets standards in relation to quality and energy efficiency, it is largely left to individual owners to decide whether to carry out repairs to their properties. This can pose particular challenges in tenements where owners need to jointly agree to carry out repairs and maintenance to common areas of the block.

To help owners with repairs and maintenance, the council has a private sector housing unit who deal with all aspects of private sector housing which includes:

- Delivery of Scheme of Assistance
- Landlord registration
- Licensing of Houses of Multiple Occupation

[3] Scottish Public Health Network: Foundations for well-being: reconnecting public health and housing. A Practical Guide to Improving Health and Reducing Inequalities 2017

Local Context

Disrepair

As can be seen in Figure 8.2 below, the Scottish House Condition Survey for 2013-15 suggests that 79% of the private sector housing in Aberdeen has some level of disrepair, with 55% of all private stock having disrepair to a critical element and 50% with an urgent disrepair. Despite the council's assistance over the last five years, the levels of disrepair has not seen a dramatic improvement, if any improvement at all.

Figure 8.2: Disrepair to Private Sector Housing

	Year	Any (Basic) Disrepair		Disrepair to a critical element include the roof, walls or foundations.	Urgent Disrepair	Extensive Disrepair
		No Disrepair	Some Disrepair			
Aberdeen	2011-13	21%	79%	60%	35%	4%
Scotland		23%	77%	57%	36%	9%
Aberdeen	2012-14	21%	79%	55%	43%	4%
Scotland		26%	74%	55%	34%	6%
Aberdeen	2013-15	21%	79%	55%	50%	5%
Scotland		29%	71%	52%	32%	6%

Source: Scottish House Condition Survey (2013-2015)

The primary aim for the council is to address sub-standard dwellings.

A sub-standard dwelling is any dwelling that:

- Does not meet the tolerable standard; or
- Is in a state of serious disrepair; or
- Is in need of repair and if nothing is done, is likely to:
  - deteriorate rapidly into a state of serious disrepair, or
  - damage any other premises

To help identify sub-standard dwellings, we have a proactive approach whereby the private sector housing unit undertake external visual inspections of traditional granite tenements to identify disrepair. Reports are provided to owners with advice about how best to carry out the repairs.

If disrepair is not addressed then enforcement action through the use of work notices may be used. Enforcement powers will only be used when all other avenues have been explored.

Enforcement Powers

Work Notice

Where an owner of a house, or a majority of owners within a tenement refuse to carry out essential repairs, the council may serve work notices requiring the owners to carry out the necessary works by a given/specific deadline. Where the works aren't carried out, the council may undertake the work and recover the costs from all owners. To date, we have only had to action works on one occasion as homeowners tend to complete the works without any further intervention.

Figure 8.3: Work notices served by Aberdeen City Council

Year	Work Notices issued
2016/2017	49 properties
2015/2016	3 properties
2014/2015	38 properties

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

Missing Shares

Where a majority of owners within a flatted property wish to proceed with a communal repair, but a minority of owners refuse to participate, the council may agree to pay the 'missing share(s)' of the cost of repair into a property maintenance account to allow the works to proceed. The council will then recover the costs from the relevant owners.

Figure 8.4: Number of Missing Shares Paid over the last three years.

Year	Number of Missing Shares Paid
2016/2017	38 properties
2015/2016	33 properties
2014/2015	37 properties

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

Policies for Tackling Disrepair in Private Sector Housing

There are three main policies which focus on addressing disrepair in private sector housing:

- Scheme of Assistance
- Below Tolerable Standard Strategy
- Housing Renewal Area Policy

Scheme of Assistance

In line with Scottish Government policy, our Scheme of Assistance seeks to encourage homeowners to take more responsibility for the condition of their homes, to ensure that private housing is kept in a decent state of repair.

Whilst homeowners are primarily responsible for the repairs and maintenance of their own homes, local authorities have statutory powers to maintain and improve the general condition of private sector housing in their area.

Where a homeowner needs help with repairs and maintenance, the Scheme of Assistance allows local authorities to provide assistance. This assistance is usually provided through information, advice and practical help.

Below Tolerable Standard (BTS)

We have completed a number of local house condition surveys over the years. The last survey was carried out in 2005 which indicated that there was very little BTS housing left in the city. In fact, the extent of BTS housing was so low that none was located within the sample.

With the introduction of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 which redefined the tolerable standard to include insulation and electrical installation, there has been a marked increase in the estimate of BTS properties both in Aberdeen and across Scotland.

As can be seen in Figure 8.5 below, the Scottish House Condition Survey for 2013-15 suggests that 3% of the private sector housing in Aberdeen is BTS.

Figure 8.5: Below Tolerable Standard Housing in Private Sector

Area	2011-13	2012-14	2013-15
Aberdeen	5%	5%	3%
Scotland	3%	3%	2%

Source: Scottish House Condition Survey (2017)

The proactive approach taken by the private sector housing unit to help identify sub-standard dwellings is beneficial because this also identifies dwellings that are BTS. Reports are provided to owners with advice about how best to carry out the repairs with enforcement action being undertaken if necessary. The enforcement action can result in owners having a closing order or demolition order served on the property. These powers would not however be used for failure of the standard for safe electrical systems or lack of insulation. Information and advice would be offered through Scheme of Assistance in these circumstances.

The proactive approach that is taken by the private sector housing unit means that information can be collated on sub-standard housing which can be used to inform and update the strategy.

Housing Renewal Area

Where it is established that an area has a significant number of houses which are sub-standard or that the appearance or state of repair of any houses are adversely affecting the amenity of that area, we may consider declaring a housing renewal area with the purpose of improving that area.

Where a house is defined in a housing renewal area action plan as a house which the local authority considers to be in a state of serious disrepair and ought to be demolished, we may require the owner of the house to demolish it by the serving of a demolition notice.

When considering whether an area is to be declared a housing renewal area, we will consult with the owners and representative groups within that area in order to:

- Advise on how a housing renewal area operates and what it will mean for that particular area.
- Agree on the boundary of the area to be included.
- Agree on an appropriate action plan that will ensure that any agreed works can be carried out.
- Advise on what assistance if any can be provided.

At this stage there is no evidence to suggest there is a substantial number of sub-standard housing in any localised area to warrant the designation of a housing renewal area. Aberdeen, unlike some other local authority areas, does not suffer from housing blight in any areas or streets of the city.

Any individual properties suffering from serious disrepair are issued with a works notice or maintenance order and follow up action is taken if this is not complied with.

This situation is monitored and our position would be reviewed depending on whether it is felt that the situation has changed.

House Condition – Social Housing

Stock Profile of Social Housing in Aberdeen

As at March 2017, Aberdeen City Council has a total housing stock of 22,041 dwellings. Figure 8.6 below shows Aberdeen City Council's housing stock is ageing, with 25% now being built more than 70 years ago (pre 1945). 68% of the stock was built between 1945 and 1982, and 7% of the stock was built after 1982.

Figure 8.6: Age and Type of Housing Stock within Aberdeen

Age	All Types	House	All flats	High rise	Tenement	4 in a block	Other flat
Pre 1919	1,168	4	1,164	0	1,164	0	0
1919 - 1944	4,295	251	4,044	0	2,371	1,673	0
1945 - 1964	6,028	3,036	2,992	250	2,112	425	205
1965 - 1982	8,993	1,812	7,181	3,555	3,163	20	443
Post 1982	1,557	222	1,335	58	465	22	790
Total	**22,041**	**5,325**	**16,716**	**3,863**	**9,275**	**2,140**	**1,438**

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

Figure 8.7 below shows the stock figures broken down by property type. The combination of an ageing stock, a high proportion of tenements (42%) and multi storey blocks (17.5%) can produce challenges in terms of ensuring these properties continue to be well maintained.

Figure 8.7: Aberdeen City Council Housing Stock by Type

House Type	Total	Percentage
4 in a block	2,140	9.7%
Multi-Storey	3,863	17.5%
House	5,325	24.2%
Other Flat/Maisonette	1,438	6.5%
Tenement	9,275	42.1%
Total	**22,041**	**100%**

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

Multi Storey Blocks

As can be seen from Figure 8.8 below, Aberdeen City Council, like some other urban authorities, has a high percentage of multi storey blocks. However, unlike some of the other urban authorities the council has not demolished any multi-storey blocks. Due to the nature of multi-storey housing stock, the council will experience higher expenditure on the maintenance of these types of properties including high cost elements such as replacement of lifts, work to common areas and over-cladding.

Figure 8.8: Multi Storey Housing Stock

Social Housing Provider	Multi Storey Housing Stock
Aberdeen City Council	17.5%
Dundee City Council	8%
City of Edinburgh Council	16%
Glasgow Housing Association	20%

Source: The Scottish Government (2017); Scottish Housing Regulator (2017)

Registered Social Landlord

Figure 8.9 below shows the registered social landlords who operate in the Aberdeen area with a total of 4,776 self- contained units. Scottish Government statistics show that fewer properties in Aberdeen are socially rented from housing associations (4%) compared to the national average (11%).

Figure 8.9: Registered Social Landlord Stock in Aberdeen

Social Housing Provider	Stock
Soroptomists	15
Ark	22
Blackwood	99
Castlehill	993
Grampian	1,290
Hanover	121
Langstane	1,399
Sanctuary	772
Osprey	65
Total Stock	4,776
Total City Housing Supply	**116,452**
Percentage of Total Stock	**4%**

Source: RSLs; Aberdeen City Council (2017)

Capital Programme to Improve the Quality of Social Housing

Social landlords' capital programmes are funded by a package of capital receipts, borrowing and income from rents, service charges and grant funding. It enables the creation and development of the social housing stock.

Typical works within the capital programme include new heating systems, kitchen and bathroom upgrades, new windows, doors, rewiring and major structural works.

In addition to the capital programme of works, it is vital to have a cyclical maintenance programme in place to ensure common areas of properties are well maintained.

It is also vital to ensure that procedures are in place in order to deliver an effective and adaptable repairs service including emergency and non-emergency repairs.

Scottish Housing Quality Standard

The Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) is the Scottish Government's principal measure of housing quality in Scotland. It is a set of five broad housing criteria which must all be met if the property is to meet the standard. These criteria comprise of 55 elements and nine sub-elements against which properties are measured.

The purpose of the housing standard for social housing in Scotland is essentially to provide a minimum level which a property is ideally required not to fall below. Scottish Government previously set a policy target for social sector landlords to bring their stock up to every element of the standard (where applicable) by April 2015.

All social housing providers within Aberdeen achieved SHQS, as far as was reasonably practicable by April 2015. Figure 8.10 below shows the percentage of compliant, non-compliant and those properties with exemptions for all social housing providers within the city. It should however be noted that failure rates can fluctuate year on year as tenancies change and SHQS elements within homes need to be repaired or replaced. The council and RSLs are continually working on a programme of improvements and target void periods to effect SHQS works.

Figure 8.10: Percentage of SHQS Compliances/Non-compliant and Exemptions

Social Housing Provider	Compliant	Non-Compliant	Exemptions
Aberdeen City Council	92.4%	4.2%	3.4%
Castlehill	99.8%	0.2%	0%
Grampian	88.0%	6%	6%
Langstane	94.4%	5.6%	0%
Sanctuary (Tenants First)	95.4%	0.3%	4.3%
Average	**94%**	**3.3%**	**1.9%**

Source: RSLs; Aberdeen City Council (2017)

Social housing providers within Aberdeen are averaging 94% of properties being compliant with SHQS with 3.3% of properties needing to be brought up to SHQS standard and 1.9% being exempt from SHQS.

Significant investment has and will be committed to ensure, as far as possible, that all social housing meets SHQS on an ongoing basis. Funding for this forms part of asset management plans for social housing providers within Aberdeen and includes a rolling programme for dealing with any non-exempt stock.

It should be noted however that the Right to Buy[4] policy has impacted on the way in which social housing providers carry out repairs and improvements to their stock in mixed tenure blocks which can affect their ability to meet SHQS. As each mixed tenure block requires its own decision making process, it fundamentally changes the way that the social landlords programme their asset management strategies in relation to mixed tenure properties. The council has reviewed its engagement procedures with homeowners in mixed tenure blocks in order to progress works in common areas that affect SHQS. This does mean that, in some cases, it takes longer to progress some works than others, with more exemptions being required.

Abeyances

Abeyances are where the works leading to compliance have been offered but the tenant will not allow access to the property or refuses to have the work undertaken. All social landlords within Aberdeen have a procedure in place to deal with such situations. Works can be undertaken when there is a tenancy change; this can either take place during the void period or once the new tenant has moved in.

The abeyances are monitored and statistics are provided to the Scottish Housing Regulator on the council's and registered social landlords performance. They are published by the Scottish Housing Regulator through the Annual Return on the Charter.

Exemptions

Exemptions occur when properties, due to their layout and design cannot comply with the standard. Many of these properties do not meet the standards due to the small size of the kitchen which means that they cannot meet the criteria which relates to inadequate food storage. Social housing providers are not able to put a process in place for these types of property since there is nothing practical that can be done.

All social housing providers have a rolling programme to identify properties which are non-compliant and to make any necessary improvements or repairs in order to meet the standard.

We will continue to monitor non compliant properties and will take action either through the void period and to re-engage with tenants to ensure on going compliance with SHQS.

Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing

Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESSH) is an enhancement to the current SHQS legislation and aims to improve the energy efficiency of social housing in Scotland. It will help to reduce energy consumption, fuel poverty and the emission of greenhouse gases.

In order to comply with EESSH, social landlords in Aberdeen aim to ensure that all housing stock has adequate levels of the 'basic' standard energy efficiency measures of loft, cavity wall and underfloor insulation.

Social housing providers have had a rolling insulation programme for many years and therefore the vast majority of social housing in Aberdeen is adequately insulated, however there are still properties that have not yet benefited from this, due to hard to heat properties and refusals from tenants (see abeyances).

[4] Right to Buy legislation was introduced thirty years ago in the UK which allowed tenants of social housing to purchase their property for a discounted rate. Right to Buy was ended in Scotland in July 2016.

Currently 3,707 council properties and 708 registered social landlord properties do not meet EESSH. It should also be noted that recent changes to Reduced Data Standard Assessment Procedure[5] (RDSAP) has increased the number of properties that do not meet EESSH.

All social housing providers within Aberdeen are in the process of identifying properties which do not meet the standard and to establish what improvements are required to achieve compliance with EESSH. Once complete, works will be planned through the capital programme; some works may already form part of planned ongoing routine life cycle upgrades or will be completed when the property is vacant.

Aberdeen City Council has established the work that needs to be completed in every property in order to achieve EESSH by 2020. This will be financed from current revenue and any grant assistance that may be available.

Social Housing Provider's Strategic Plans for Meeting EESSH

Figure 8.11 below shows the percentage of properties, as of September 2017, that are compliant and non-compliant with EESSH. Social housing providers within Aberdeen are averaging 78% of properties being compliant with EESSH with 22% of properties needing to be brought up to the standard.

Figure 8.11: Percentage of Properties Compliant and Non-Compliant with EESSH.

Social Housing Provider	Compliant	Non-Compliant
Aberdeen City Council	86%	14%
Castlehill	91%	9%
Grampian	76%	24%
Langstane	85%	15%
Sanctuary (Tenants First)	54%	46%
Average	**78%**	**22%**

Aberdeen City Council

Aberdeen City Council have a rolling programme to identify properties and to ensure compliance with EESSH through the capital programme. This will involve the installation of a variety of measures ranging from loft insulation and external wall insulation. The measures will be specific to the individual house type.

Funding for EESSH will be provided in full through the Housing Revenue Account[6] capital programme with funding available through to 2020 and beyond. Additional funding may also be available through the Scottish Government and through Energy Company Obligations. Progress is submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator annually, to show progress towards the 2020 target. Work is ongoing to ensure that the remaining 3,707 properties will meet EESSH by 2020.

[5] The Reduced Data SAP is the government approved survey system used to produce the Energy Performance Certificates required by 2002 European Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD), which came into force in 2006. The EPBD seeks to reduce the amount of CO2 which is emitted as a result of heating, lighting and providing hot water to UK homes.

[6] The Housing Revenue Account records all revenue expenditure and income relating to the provision of council dwellings and related services. The use of this account is heavily prescribed by statute and the Council is not allowed to fund any expenditure for non-housing related services from this account.

Castlehill Housing Association

Castlehill Housing Association will survey 0.2% out of the 9% of properties which do not meet EESSH in order to identify works needed to bring the properties to the standard. Properties that do not meet EESSH will be individually assessed for technical and financial viable options. The measures used to meet EESSH will be dependent on the property and the elements which need upgrading. To fund EESSH measures, Castlehill will use own financial resources and take advantage of any grant funding available. Work is ongoing to ensure that the 9% of properties that do not meet EESSH do meet the requirements by 2020, with progress being submitted annually to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

Grampian Housing Association

The measures that Grampian Housing Association will take to upgrade properties to meet EESSH standard are external insulation measures, internal and cavity wall insulation and the use of solar photovoltaic (PV)[7]. Grampian Housing Association will also undertake the installation of LED energy efficient light bulbs. All of these measures will either be funded within current budgets or from an interest free loan offered by the Scottish Government to help fund EESSH. Progress is ongoing and the planned works will ensure that the non-complaint properties meet EESSH by 2020.

Langstane Housing Association

Langstane Housing Association are in the process of completing a three year programme to upgrade around 300 electric heating systems into gas central heating. Langstane will also carry out work to ensure that all properties with marginal failures meet EESSH. The measures include the replacement of heating controls, topping up loft insulation, installing energy efficient lighting. Those measures should ensure that the 80 properties with marginal failures meet EESSH. However, 'hard to treat' properties such as granite tenements will require extensive work, including internal wall insulation or underfloor insulation.

Funding for EESSH will consist of a combination of grant funding and Langstane Housing Association will use £1 million of their own funds.

Langstane is making progress towards the 2020 target and the number of properties that are compliant have risen every year. Langstane are aiming to improve 100 properties per year until 2020. Langstane are predicting 138 exemptions by 2020, with all other properties being compliant.

Sanctuary Housing

Sanctuary are currently working with Pennington Choices to ensure that their properties meet EESSH. Pennington Choices are currently working through the properties that have been identified as having a perceived EESSH failure and are in the process of carrying out a variety of required works by a planned upgrade programme to ensure those properties in order to meet the target by 2020.

The required works will be carried out using grant funding, where possible. Outwith grant assistance, it is Sanctuary's intention to fund, where possible, the required work from their own funds using a planned programme capital funding which is linked to their spend profiles contained in their business plan until 2020. Sanctuary are still working to cost allocate all required works, and within this area, are discussing all work content to date with consultants to maximise use of available grant funding.

Progress is being made to ensure that the properties that do not currently meet EESSH standards do, through a programme of works. Sanctuary's progress will be submitted annually to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

[7] Photovoltaics (PV) is the name of a method of converting solar energy into direct current electricity.

Key Indicators

A Health Inequalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken. The indicators and actions will be revised as required.

Improve the Quality of Housing of all Tenures Across the City.			
Indicator	**Frequency & Source**	**Baseline**	**Target**
Number of dwellings meeting Scottish Housing Quality Standard.	Annual Scottish Housing Regulator	Aberdeen City Council 92% Castlehill 100% Grampian 88% Langstane 94% Sanctuary 95% All as at March 2017	100%
Number of dwellings meeting Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESSH).	Annual Scottish Housing Regulator	Aberdeen City Council 86% Castlehill 91% Grampian 76% Langstane 85% Sanctuary 54% All as at March 2017	100% by 2020
Number of dwellings in disrepair in private sector housing.	Annual Scottish House Condition Survey	79% 2013/2015	Improve
Number of dwellings with disrepair to critical elements in private sector housing.	Annual Scottish House Condition Survey	55% 2013/2015	Improve
Number of dwellings with urgent disrepair in private sector housing.	Annual Scottish House Condition Survey	50% 2013/2015	Improve

Coming Home Implementation:

A report from the working group on complex care and delayed discharge

COSLA

Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

Vision: The human rights of everybody with complex care needs are respected and protected and they are empowered to live their lives, the same as everyone else.

Vision:

Mission Statement:

By March 2024 we want and need to see real change with out-of-area residential placements and inappropriate hospital stays greatly reduced, to the point that out-of-area residential placements are only made through individual or family choices and people are only in hospital for as long as they require assessment and treatment.

Vision:

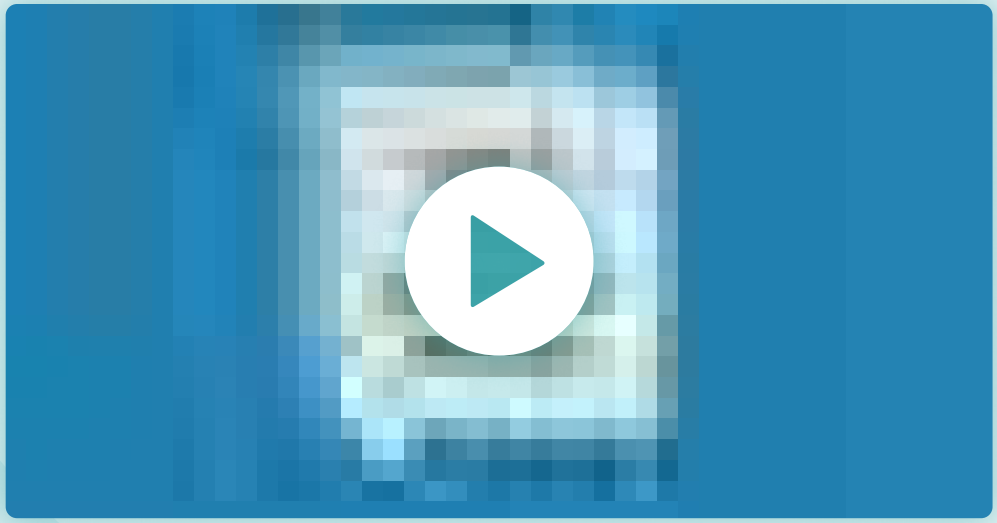
Vision Statement:

Scotland is committed to meeting its Human Rights obligations for people with learning disabilities, which are outlined in the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** (UNCRPD)

This commitment has been set out in the Scottish Government's **National Performance Framework** and as proposed in legislation through the **Human Rights Bill**.

Scotland must provide the best possible services for people with a learning disability to enable them to lead high quality lives within their family and/or their community where they experience personalised support consistent with a Human Rights Based approach.

The current situation must change. It is unacceptable that people are spending large portions of their lives in hospitals or other settings if they are medically fit for discharge. 'Care in the Community' as first mandated in The Same as You (Scottish Executive, 2000) has still not been universally realised and we are failing those who are still delayed in hospital or in inappropriate out-of-area placements through the lack of provision of proactively-planned quality care and housing in community.



Vision:

All people with complex care needs must receive excellent continuity of care. Everybody with a learning disability and complex care need who can should be able to live in their own home, supported by specialist staff. Where there is a genuine therapeutic reason for individuals to stay in hospital they should receive appropriate specialist support in the short term, with a clear plan in place for them to transition out of hospital and back into their community. A nowhere else to go but hospital scenario will be extinguished.

The wishes and needs of the individual must be at the heart of this process. We want to ensure that all adults with complex needs have choice and control over the care and support that they receive. Each individual should be supported and enabled to be included, respected, treated with dignity and protected throughout their life journey.

Professional and expert support through genuine allyship is key, staying true to *nothing about us, without us*. This allyship must aspire to truly know the person, listen to them and their families, be ambitious with them and always act in their best interest. There must be good communication and involvement at all times.

Vision:

To achieve this vision will require a transformational change through committed thinking and planning and genuine collaboration across the entire system. We recommend a new framework, underpinned by strong local and national partnerships, to deliver the innovative and quality services needed to support people with learning disabilities and complex support needs who are placed in unsuitable out-of-area placements, or who are inappropriately admitted to hospital, due to breakdown in their community-based support. This must happen without delay and there must be real visibility and accountability going forward.

P

Participation
People should be involved in decisions that affect their rights.

A

Accountability
There should be monitoring of how people's rights are being affected, as well as remedies when things go wrong.

N

Non-Discrimination and Equality
All forms of discrimination must be prohibited, prevented and eliminated. People who face the biggest barriers to realising their rights should be prioritised.

E

Empowerment
Everyone should understand their rights, and be fully supported to take part in developing policy and practices which affect their lives.

L

Legality
Approaches should be grounded in the legal rights that are set out in domestic and international laws.

Case Study – Louis' Life

The view from a mother: What it is like living in Scotland with a complex and profound learning disability

Louis is in his early 30's and lives with Complex and Profound learning disabilities, and is also autistic. He had enjoyed six years of high quality of life in a care home, with a stable staff team who understood his 'language' and needs, until the home's closure was announced. Ordinary Place of Residence rules meant there could be no continuation of care staff with a change of designation to 'supported living' as the local authority stood to gain responsibility for all 8 additional placements. Residents were therefore to be placed by their own authorities.

"Ordinary Place of Residence rules meant there could be no continuation of care staff"

Louis' mother and social worker searched for an alternative placement however there was nowhere in Scotland. Louis' mother began planning for long-term solutions, but soon found nothing was achievable within the six months' notice period. As Louis faced eviction, a home was identified in England, 250 miles away. It was privately run specialising in 'challenging behaviour.' The facility was far away, institutional, but there was no alternative and so Louis was moved there. Louis' mother had no option but to travel to visit him there.

"The facility was far away, institutional, but there was no alternative"

Vision:

No transition was offered for Louis or his new care team. Instead, Louis' mother drove him there personally, staying overnight at personal cost for days and weeks to offer reassurance and love to Louis. Given her expert knowledge of caring for Louis she was able to assist with training staff and she returned weekly to support this transition for Louis. The primary barrier for Louis and staff was communication. Staff did not understand what Louis was saying and vice versa. This emphasised a power imbalance. Louis needed skilled care that accounted for his fear, bereavement and homesickness. However, staff were relatively inexperienced and unfamiliar with Louis, with no professional support for therapeutic approaches. They were required to do a job that was more skilled than they were equipped for. Louis expressed himself through the only language left to him: destructiveness towards property, and aggression to people.

Louis' challenging behaviour was managed through restraint, which was both pharmacological and physical in nature. Over three months, the cycle of restraint and protest grew. It was traumatic and injurious for Louis, his mother and staff. Professional services within the facility were later engaged including clinical psychology, speech and language therapy and occupational therapy. Louis' desire to return home was identified as a major factor in his distress in reports, along with his need for skilled communication, routines, a mix of activities, and a greater understanding of autism and complex needs. Local authority commissioners noted the consequent rise in costs. Nobody from the commissioning team ever visited.

"a greater understanding of autism and complex needs"

Vision:

As costs rose towards £6,000 per week, the local authority planned to bring Louis back to Scotland. They identified a vacant city centre flat, managed by one of their social care organisations. They proposed care provided by two organisations, one of which had previously been commissioned and another organisation, who had been originally designated for Louis' long-term care. Louis' mother objected, as did managers from the second care organisation. The flat had no garden, no safe access to outdoor spaces. Combining two care organisations created complications in delivery of services. The family and senior managers' objections were overruled.

Louis returned to Scotland to the new care provision, again without transition. Recruitment and retention of staff was a problem, even before Louis arrived. The primary barrier between staff and Louis was communication. There was a lack of skilled care suitable for Louis' complex and profound needs.

After seven weeks, Louis was admitted to the NHS Learning Disability Assessment Unit under non-clinical crisis following service breakdown and challenging behaviour. Louis remains in the unit 3 years later.

"There was a lack of skilled care suitable for Louis' complex and profound needs"

Vision:

Louis has been detained in hospital for three years. He was declared ready for discharge in April 2021 and has been in Transition to his own home since February 2021. His experience of hospital can be characterised as 'containment', with lack of meaningful occupation, poor therapeutic understanding of his verbal communication, who he is as a person (his spiritual needs), resulting in unhappiness and protest behaviours.

Louis continues in transition to his own home. It has taken sixteen months to date. The major constraints are recruitment of care staff and development of systemic management practice to ensure all staff are skilled and confident in supporting Louis. Louis' underlying needs are profound and multiple, requiring flexibility and ongoing learning for individual carers, managers, the care organisation, commissioners, Louis, and his mother, to integrate and use available resources. As Louis' mother I have led the project, motivated by Louis' best interests. I purchased accommodation, as Deputy to the Court of Protection; I also exercise an oversight and integrating role, as Welfare Guardian.

Forewords:

Our NHS in Scotland provides vital enduring support and healthcare. During the pandemic, we have never been clearer about the benefits of our NHS and the skills and dedication of the people who work within the NHS.

However, no matter how we value it, we also know that a hospital is not a home.

No one should be subjected to unnecessary delayed discharge due to incomplete care arrangements. For every day spent unnecessarily in hospital, that person loses part of their connection with their community, their family, and their friends. Stories like Louis' are unacceptable.

We are not protecting the rights of people with learning disabilities and complex needs if we have to keep people in hospital when they should be living at home or in a homely environment with the right support.

We have a collective responsibility to make this happen.

That is why the Scottish Government has already provided over £20 million of funding in 2021 dedicated to helping Integration Authorities fulfil the vision that out-of-area placements and hospital stays are greatly reduced by 2024.

The experts on the group who have produced this report have set out a way forward. We are very grateful for their work.

This isn't an easy task – reports by the Mental Welfare Commission in 2016 and the Coming Home report in 2018 have highlighted this as a long-standing issue. This additional work and funding recognises that we have to do more.

Success will require a high level of collaborative and partnership working, and of innovative thinking. It requires us to commit to solutions for individuals despite the challenges. It requires us to make best use of the successes that have been achieved for some people and to build on that.

We are fully committed to working together to make this happen.

Kevin Stewart MSP
Minister for Mental Wellbeing and Social Care

Forewords:

On behalf of COSLA and Scottish Local Government I welcome the Report and thank the participants of the Short Life Group and its sub-groups for their work in producing the recommendations contained within it.

We recognise and share the frustration that individuals are delayed in hospitals or accommodated inappropriately out-of-area and are fully committed to ensuring that local community services and accommodation are developed, are available and are sustainable.

It is important to acknowledge that this won't be easy and undoubtedly there will be challenges in different areas of the country in developing new places and attracting and retaining support staff and engaging and maintaining a mix of service providers and in house support services.

The Change Fund to support the development and establishment of those local solutions is welcomed, as is the Reports recognition that we need to see resource transfer from inappropriate settings to ensure local support is sustainable.

The proposals around the development of a Dynamic Support Register, to review, maintain focus and achieve positive outcomes for those currently delayed or at risk of requiring support are welcome, and COSLA look forward to assisting in developing these proposals fully.

We share, with the Scottish Government, the view that success will require a high level of collaboration, partnership working and innovative thinking, and that we all have responsibility to make this happen.

Thank you.

Councillor Stuart Currie
COSLA Spokesperson for Health and Social Care

Forewords:

I believe that people with learning disabilities should be given the right support so that they can live fulfilling lives in the community. This support should always be person centred, supportive, flexible and responsive.

People should only be admitted to inpatient assessment and treatment services when there is a clear clinical need which will benefit from in-patient based intervention.

Behaviours perceived as challenging can describe a range of behaviours people may display when their needs are not met. Expressions of this behaviour, with no identified clinical need, is not an appropriate reason to admit people to inpatient assessment and treatment services.

Professor Sir Gregor Smith
Chief Medical Officer, Scottish Government

High-quality care and support that is flexible to meet the needs of the individual is central to our social care values. Every day we work to meet these aspirations for everyone living in Scotland, with human rights central to our approach. We are committed to ensuring a right to family life for everyone. However, when people are inappropriately placed far from their communities, or are delayed in hospital settings, we are not delivering on the high standard of care we set ourselves.

People deserve the services around them to be delivered in a person-centred and enabling way.

Collaborative and innovative working across the sector, which puts people with learning disabilities at the heart of co-design, will be necessary to create and develop solutions for people with the most complex needs so they can be supported into their own home. We must overcome the structural barriers which prevent us currently delivering the best care for each individual, so that people with learning disabilities and complex care needs are effectively supported to live in their home communities.

Iona Colvin
Chief Social Work Advisor, Scottish Government

Introduction

1

1. Introduction

The same as you? published by the Scottish Executive in 2000 was the catalyst for Scotland's long stay Learning Disability hospital closure programme. The need for deinstitutionalisation, and alternative care in the community was made clear and backed with significant financial support. The aspiration was clear, all long-stay hospitals were to close by 2005.

However, for a small number of Scottish citizens – namely people with complex care needs, hospital has still taken the place of a home. These people are facing lengthy delayed discharges from modern-day clinical settings and some have been sent to places far away from their homes. Hospital wards, including Assessment and Treatment Units, or out-of-area care facilities are often institutional in nature. They are not a home.

The Scottish Government and COSLA's **Keys to Life** (2013) referenced the long standing issue of delayed discharge and out-of-area placements as a result of wider system failure. The **Mental Welfare Commission's No Through Road** report (2016) and Dr Anne MacDonald's **Coming Home** report (2018), commissioned by the Scottish Government, both highlighted the significant number of people with learning disabilities who are delayed in hospitals in Scotland, sometimes for many years, despite being clinically assessed as ready for discharge into community settings.

A short life working group[1] (SLWG) was set up at the instruction of the Scottish Government and COSLA by the then Cabinet Secretary for Health & Sport and the COSLA Spokesperson for Health & Social Care. The remit was to undertake a joint focused piece of work in relation to delayed discharge for people with learning disabilities and/or enduring mental health conditions.

1 Details regarding membership of the SLWG and of the sub-group are listed in Appendix Five.

1. Introduction

The SLWG met during 2020 and heard from various experts and stakeholders in the field to understand the challenges with the current system and how solutions were being found. It quickly became evident that **whilst there was a range of reports on the issues of delayed discharge for people with learning disabilities, there was a lack of available evidence for people with enduring mental health conditions.**

The expertise of the group was primarily made up of learning disability sector specialists and family carers of people with learning disabilities. **The discussions therefore focused mainly on issues for people with learning disabilities and are the focus of this report.** The group agreed early on that further work would be required to address the issues specific to those with enduring mental health conditions, recognising that the solutions may not be the same.

This report describes the groups findings and recommendations.

Contents/Navigation

Within this report we describe why a refreshed approach is needed, what work has already been done in this area, and the collaborative working that is needed to achieve a modern and human rights based approach to care for people with learning disabilities.

1) Action Summary 18

2) Definitions 20

3) Underpinning principles 22

4) Background 25

5) Dynamic Support Register 40

6) Framework to support Register 44

   a. Complex Needs Pathway 45

   b. Peer Support Network 46

   c. National Support Panel 47

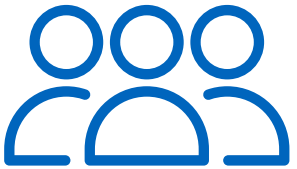
7) Community Living Change Fund 49

8) Summary and recommendations 55

Action Summary

The SLWG previously made two main recommendations to Scottish Government and COSLA to:

- Establish a **Community Living Change Fund** over the next three years to be used to design local community-based solutions to bring home those placed outside Scotland and to discharge those whose discharge from hospital was delayed. **This was implemented as an early priority in 2021 with £20 million distributed**.



- Develop a national **Dynamic Support Register**, owned and maintained locally in order to create greater visibility of people with learning disabilities in terms of strategic planning and to allow for performance monitoring of admission to hospital and inappropriate out-of-area placements. Supported by a **National Support Panel** that can provide support and expertise to HSCPs and checks and balances for the local management of the Dynamic Support Register. The Panel will bring sector expertise together to provide an open collaborative forum that can troubleshoot individual cases in partnership with local areas. **This was accepted in principle with a need for further work**.

Action Summary

Other recommendations for the Scottish Government and COSLA included:

- Supporting Integration Authorities and local areas in their work on disinvestment planning to run alongside the change fund. NB: Scottish Government has allowed the change fund to be held in reserve for up to 3 years if necessary while local plans are progressed.
- Develop the supporting arrangements and build capacity for local areas to adopt a programme budgeting approach;
- Establish a detailed understanding of the revenue cost of different care packages to aid Integration Authorities on resource planning;
- Establish a greater understanding of the experiences of people with learning disabilities in specially adapted housing provision and understand how to better influence planning for new housing and adaption of existing properties;
- Explore and develop guidance, if necessary, on considerations of housing benefit rules for supported accommodation; and
- Produce a guide to support commissioning and procurement of complex care packages.

The recommendations to undertake further work in these areas were accepted by the Cabinet Secretary and by COSLA Leaders in November 2020. A sub-group of the SLWG then worked to develop the proposal for the Register, including how it would be used and maintained, and who it was for. This sub-group was led by Dr Anne MacDonald, author of the Coming Home report, and included representatives from the health and social care sector, as well as data experts from the Scottish Learning Disability Observatory. This report brings together all of this work.

Definitions:

Complex Care Needs:

The term used in this report when describing the care required around the person with learning disabilities in order to ensure that they can live as independently as possible in a more appropriate setting.

Therefore complex care needs may include those who in addition to having a learning disability:

- are also autistic;
- have a mental health diagnosis;
- Have a forensic need, and/or who are described as demonstrating challenging behaviour.

2 Challenging Behaviour: A Unified Approach' Royal College of Psychiatrists, British Psychological Society & Royal College of SALT 2007

Challenging Behaviour:

Behaviour can be described as challenging when it is of such an intensity, frequency or duration as to threaten the quality of life and/or the physical safety of the individual or others and is likely to lead to responses that are restrictive, aversive or result in exclusion[2]

It is a communication from the individual and a product of the environment they live in and of the support they receive. It refers to behaviour which challenges services and support providers, rather than implying that the person is themselves challenging.

Challenging Behaviour is not a diagnosis and although such behaviour is a challenge to services, family members or carers it may serve a purpose for the person with a learning disability.[3]

Delayed Discharge:

A delayed discharge refers to a situation where a person in hospital is clinically ready for discharge from inpatient hospital care and who continues to occupy a hospital bed beyond the ready for discharge date.[4]

3 Defined in **Challenging behaviour and learning disabilities: prevention and interventions for people with learning disabilities whose behaviour challenges** NICE guideline 11, 2015

4 Delayed discharge was defined as per the **NHS Scotland Delayed Discharge Definitions Manual** (NHS National Services, 2016) See also Appendix 4.

Definitions:

Family:

This report takes a wide definition of family, recognising that this term is often rooted in love and affection for an individual. It is right that it includes biological relatives: parents, grandparents, siblings; but also includes welfare guardians, partners, friends and supportive and paid carers in the definition.

Institution:

While not formally defined, the Care Inspectorate states: all care services provided in Scotland must be in keeping with nationally recognised guidance, good practice, and Scottish Government strategy. It must support living, citizenship and inclusion in the community and operation must be underpinned by a human rights based approach, particularly the right to live independently and be included in the community under the UNCRPD. This means consideration of the service design, size and location, and proposed operation must be assessed against Scottish policy, irrespective of the location of the provider.

Scotland's Care Inspectorate remains responsible for the registration and monitoring of Care Providers in Scotland and is currently consulting on a policy position on Accommodation-based Care and Support for Adults with Learning Disabilities and/or Autistic Adults.

Out-of-area:

For the purposes of this report, out-of-area is defined as living within a placement not within the individual's funding authority. This could include living in either an NHS or a private hospital or care home. It is important to stress that being out-of-area itself is not problematic when this is through the choice of the individual and/or their family. This report describes "inappropriate out-of-area placements" as those which do not reflect the individual's choice of community they want to live in.

Underpinning Principles

2

2. Underpinning Principles

All of the recommendations in this report are based upon the foundation that people with learning disabilities have the same human rights and should have the same opportunities as anyone else to live satisfying and valued lives and to be treated with the same dignity and respect. This by definition is irrespective of any complex care need or behaviour that challenges, either present or historic. Everyone living in Scotland has a right to a home within their local community, to be able to develop and maintain relationships, and to get the support they need to live a healthy, safe and fulfilling life.

Being placed in an inappropriate out-of-area placement, in a poor-quality institutional setting, or being admitted to hospital for an inappropriate reason (e.g. due to behaviour that challenges) is an excessive restriction on liberty and the right to home life.

The core commitment made here is a zero-tolerance approach to inappropriate placements for people with learning disabilities.

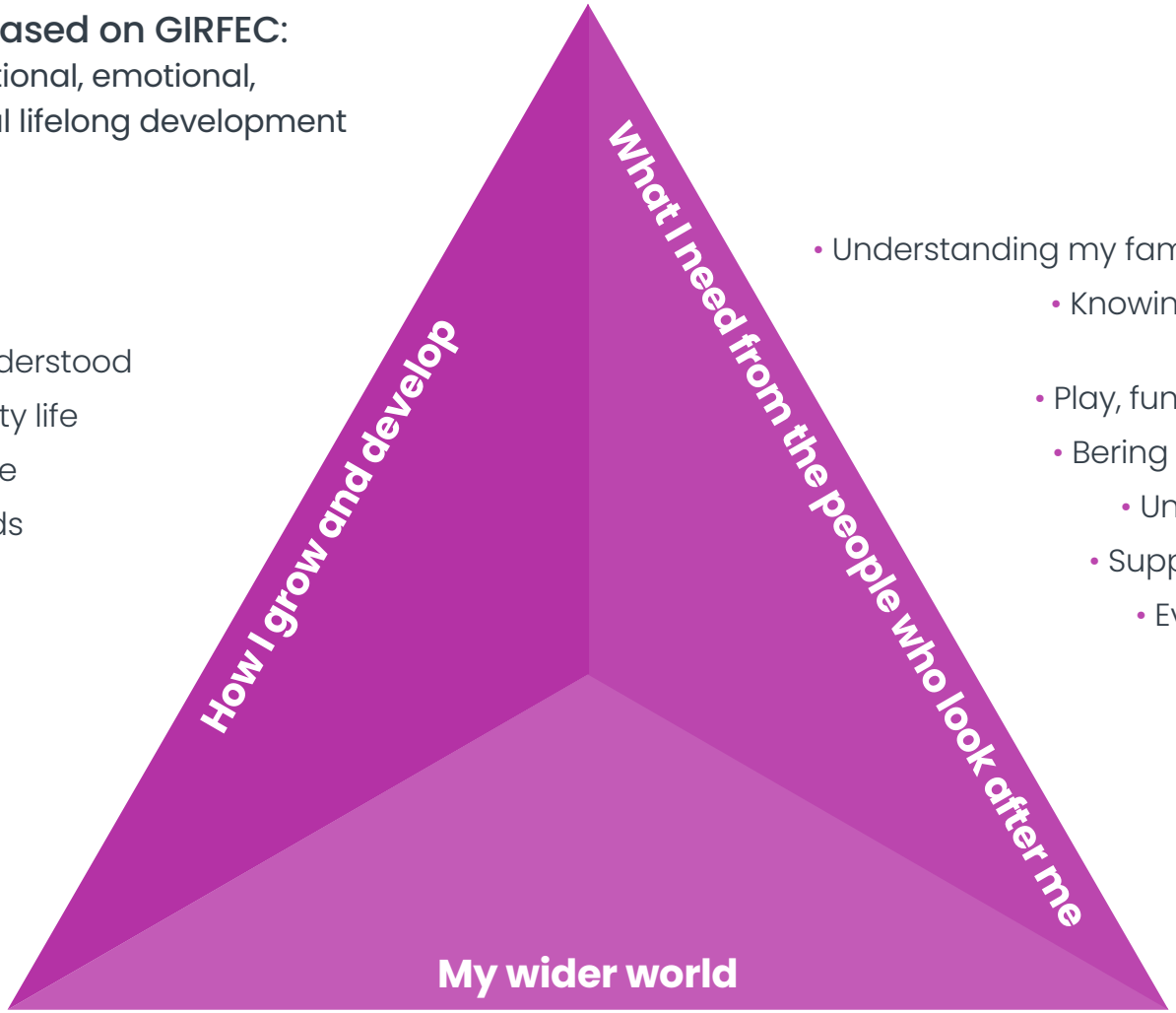
This report recognises that although progress has been made in many local areas, more could be done to prevent delayed discharge and inappropriate out-of-area placements for people with learning disabilities. Many people with learning disabilities continue to be failed by the current system, and for people with complex care needs these failures often begin early in life, with a lack of early intervention and minimal support around communication needs or behavioural challenges.

The framework outlined in this report is an indication of the fact that change is required for people with learning disabilities and complex support needs. The range of reports written on this issue, the concerns raised over many years about inappropriate and institutional placements, and a number of scandals in relation to the treatment of people with learning disabilities in institutions, provide a wealth of evidence to support the need for change and for additional mechanisms to achieve it.

2. Underpinning Principles

A Well-being model, based on GIRFEC:
for physical, social, educational, emotional, spiritual and psychological lifelong development

- Communicting/being understood
- Participating in community life
- Learning to be responsible
- Enjoying family and friends
- Confidence in who I am
- Lifelong learning
- Being healthy



- Understanding my family's history, culture, beliefs
- Knowing what is going to happen and when, to reassure me
- Play, fun, encouragement, exercise
- Bering there for me: commitment
- Understanding my language
- Support to make good choices
- Everyday expert care & help
- Keeping me safe

- Support from family, friends, wider community
- Comfortable, suitable housing
- Belonging
- Committed, skilled carers
- Enough money
- Local resources

Background

3

3. Background

Previous Reports

In recent years there have been several reports highlighting people with learning disabilities living in hospitals. The Mental Welfare Commission's report *No Through Road* (2016) and the Scottish Government commissioned *Coming Home* report (2018) have highlighted the significant number of people with learning disabilities who are delayed in hospitals in Scotland, sometimes for many years, despite being clinically assessed as ready for discharge into community settings.

Out-of-area:

Coming Home reported delayed discharge and out-of-area placements from all but one (large) HSCP. As of 2017 data, there were 705 people out-of-area in Scotland from 30 Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCPs)[5]. Of these individuals, there were 109 people who had not chosen their current placement and were identified as being priority to return. There were also 79 people placed outside of Scotland, in either England or Wales. Many of these placements would have been agreed with families but more than half of these people were placed in the rest of the UK because of a lack of local alternatives.

Delayed Discharges:

The report evidenced unacceptably long delays to discharge. That same dataset showed 67 people experienced a delayed discharge and therefore resident in a hospital. At the time, more than 22% had been in hospital for more than ten years, and another 9% for five to ten years. Only 12% had been admitted less than a year, albeit this data does have limitations as explained in the full report. The majority of those placed out-of-area or delayed in hospital had behaviour that staff found challenging and this was often a reason for service breakdown.

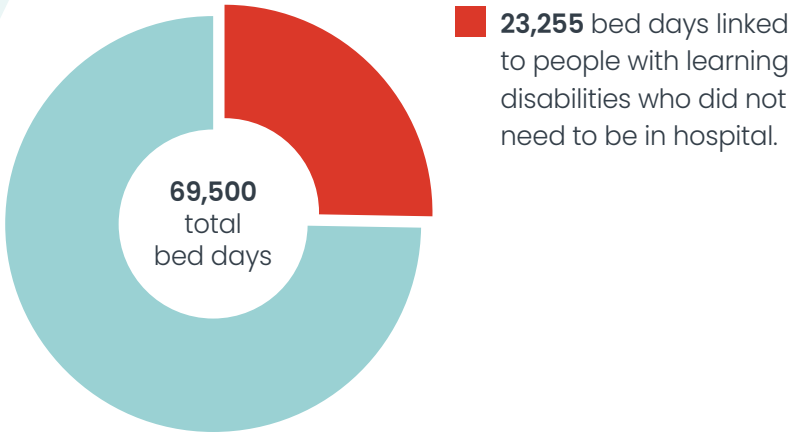
5 This does not include one HSCP which did not provide data.

3. Background

The Mental Welfare Commission's *No Through Road* report 2016, referred to 58 delayed discharges. This followed visits to all 18 hospital units in Scotland for people with learning disabilities. It reported the main reasons for delayed discharges to be a lack of funding; accommodation; or an appropriate care provider. In many cases, a combination of all three existed.

The latest **Mental Health and Learning Disabilities Inpatient Bed Census 2019** showed 54 delayed discharges in learning disability specialties, with an average length of delay totalling just under four years. The overall length of stay for these people in hospital was 1,451 days, suggesting a period of about four weeks where assessment and treatment occurred followed by a further 4 years of delay before they could be discharged. Both the *Coming Home* and *No Through Road* reports refer to little discharge planning actually happening during this prolonged period.

From the Public Health Scotland data, in 2018/19 (the latest complete year of costed data), there were 23,255 hospital bed days linked to people with learning disabilities who did not need to be in hospital (10,336 code 9[6] and 12,899 code 100[7]). The bed days were used by a total of 108 people but average out at 63 hospital beds in use per day. There were a total of 69,500 overall bed days in learning disability specialties, therefore around a third were taken by people who shouldn't be in hospital.



6 See Appendix 3
7 See Appendix 3

3. Background

Most of the inpatient beds are provided for assessment and rehabilitation, yet the data demonstrates we have people spending their lives in these hospital beds as a result of delayed discharge. In looking at the overall provision, if we could reduce the overall lengths of stay and remove the delayed discharge element, overall capacity should reduce by about half.

Data on delayed discharge for people with learning disabilities is not routinely collected. There is no mechanism to track re-admission data and there is a lack of evidence to know what types of care and accommodation are required regionally and nationally. This makes medium and long term planning almost impossible. These reports are the best evidence of the situation in Scotland and it is clear that the recommendations of past reports have not yet been fully implemented.

These reports highlight that people living in hospital, or in inappropriate out-of-area placements, have restricted life opportunities, including their use of the community, access to work or meaningful day activities, personal relationships, and autonomy. This is a clear failure to uphold their human rights. It is not suitable for people with learning disabilities awaiting discharge to be living alongside people requiring therapeutic clinical care. This provides unnecessary challenges for staff in the delivery of safe and effective care.

3. Background

There is evidence from a number of facilities in England of the risk of human rights abuses when people are unnecessarily homed out-of-area or in multi-bed institutions. A BBC Panorama investigation broadcast in 2011 exposed physical and psychological abuse suffered by people with learning disabilities at Winterbourne View. Eight years later undercover BBC filming showed staff intimidating, mocking and restraining autistic people and/or people with learning disabilities at Whorlton Hall. The Muckamore Abbey scandal evidenced a 1 in 4 chance of being abused and is currently the subject of a public inquiry. The tragic deaths of three people (Joanna, Nicholas and Ben) with learning disabilities at Cawston Park show the worst possible consequences of poor care. An independent safeguarding review into their deaths uncovered "excessive use of restraint and seclusion by unqualified staff, "overmedication," or the Hospital's high tolerance of inactivity – all of which presented risks of further harm. The review made a number of recommendations including a review of the current legal position concerning private companies, their corporate governance and conduct by the Law Commission.

3. Background

Cost

Out-of-area placements and delayed discharges come at a high cost, not just in terms of the human cost to the individual and their families but also financial cost to the commissioning authority. There are also issues around effective scrutiny and monitoring of individuals who have been placed outside of Scotland.

NHS data showed that the cost of all learning disability inpatient stays was estimated at £48m in 2018/19, with the cost of beds for people with learning disabilities and/or enduring mental health conditions who are subject to an unnecessary delayed discharge estimated at £16m (or averaging £252,000[8] per person).

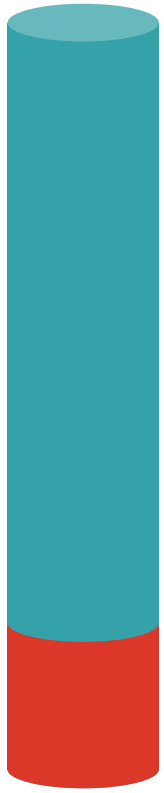
Delayed Discharge

£48 million
total cost on learning disability inpatient stays

- **£32 million** clinical learning disability inpatient stays
- **£16 million** unnecessary delayed discharge

In terms of out-of-area placements, a survey of all Health and Social Care Partnerships carried out by the SLWG in 2020 received 22 responses. These showed 47 people placed outside of Scotland at a cost of £7.748m, which would scale up to approximately 70 people across Scotland at a cost of £11m[9]. A further 469 people were placed within Scotland but outside of their own local authority at a cost of £48m.

Out-of-area



£59 million
total cost of out-of-area placements

- **£48 million** 'placed within Scotland but outside own local authority'
- **£11 million** 'placed outside of Scotland by Local Authority'

8 Public Health Scotland data (2018/19)
9 Calculated on a population share basis

When adding in NHS out of Scotland placements, we can assume on average 90 individuals are placed out-of-area in community placements in the rest of the UK at an annual cost of £15m (or an average of £167,000 per person).

Scotland Excel has estimated the average annual cost of a complex package of care in the community for people with a learning disability at £172,000 (taking in to account only packages that were valued at over £100,000 – there are likely to be far smaller packages of care where family members provide most support). These packages ranged from £108,000 to £201,000.

Housing

Due to the invisibility of many people with learning disabilities it is not possible to quantify how many people should be living in their own home rather than a care facility. However, Scotland's ambition is that as many people as possible are cared for in a domestic setting. It is very unlikely that a suitable house already exists or will become available within a reasonable or predictable time period. As a consequence, for those for whom housing is the appropriate outcome, it is likely that a bespoke solution in the form of an individual dwelling or some arrangement of shared accommodation or core and cluster provision is likely to be most appropriate. For a small number it may be possible to secure the appropriate house in the private sector. In most situations where housing is required the only deliverable solution will be in the social rented sector provided by either a local authority or a housing association.

"Scotland's ambition is that as many people as possible are cared for in a domestic setting"

3. Background

New homes for social rent and to meet particular needs are delivered though the local strategic housing planning system. **Local Authorities prepare a local housing strategy (LHS) every five years and a Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) every year.** The LHS provides an analysis of housing needs and identifies medium term priorities for service development and investment. The SHIP sets out the specific investment projects to be delivered in the current year and the following four years based on local needs, the resources available through the Scottish Government's Affordable Housing Supply Programme, and individual landlords' own investment plans. Grant rates are set nationally but allow for a degree of flexibility in the case of homes designed to meet particular needs.

The delivery of specific projects is driven through joint working arrangements between the council as Strategic Housing Authority and social landlords (including the council as landlord) and other partners.

Local Housing Authorities also prepare a Housing Contribution Statement (HCS) as part of the Integration Joint Board's (IJB) commissioning plan. The HCS sets out how housing related services including new supply will contribute to meeting the IJB's heath and care priorities including the provision adaptations and the supply of housing designed to meet particular needs.

For this system to be effective all three planning documents (LHS, SHIP and HCS) need be consistent in identifying the full range of needs, establishing relative priorities and identifying the necessary resources to support delivery. In the case of specialist and supported housing the IJB's commissioning plan also needs to identify people with learning disabilities; the nature and scale of provision and the revenue resources available to provide the care and support required.

The LHS/SHIP process can also help identify alternative or innovative funding options including private sector investment, home ownership options and the use of alternative funding including, for example loan finance where these are appropriate.

3. Background

Accurate data on the needs and requirements of people with learning disabilities is the first necessary step to ensure that those involved in assessing local housing needs are aware of the specific needs of people with learning disabilities.

There are mechanisms in place for this that have been successfully used in local areas to develop specialist housing for complex need such as core and cluster models. This would require the appropriate data at a local level to support planning and the alignment of strategic commissioning and housing plans with appropriate links to Housing Contribution Statements.

"This would require the appropriate data at a local level to support planning and the alignment of strategic commissioning and housing plans with appropriate links to Housing Contribution Statements."

For Adults who lack capacity, the **Joint statement by the Scottish Government and The Mental Welfare Commission on supporting discharges from hospital for adults with incapacity** was published in October 2021 and references the additional guidance published to navigate discharge planning in the **Adults who lack capacity - discharge process: key actions** (November 2020). However the statement is clear:

When people are clinically well enough to leave hospital, they should receive all necessary information and support to return to their home, whether that is their own house or an alternative community setting which is their home. It is not in anyone's interests to stay in hospital when there is no clinical reason to do so.

For those people who do not have the capacity to fully participate in discharge planning processes, legal frameworks must be considered to ensure appropriate lawful authority and respect for the person's rights.

3. Background

It is important to acknowledge that there are examples of good planning, commissioning and experience across Scotland in achieving sustainable discharge and in avoiding inappropriate hospital admission in the first place; however it is also clear that more can be done to ensure better outcomes for this group of people.

Although hospital discharge and commissioning are the remit of local HSCPs, the risk of human rights abuses is an urgent issue which needs to be addressed at a national, strategic, and system-wide level in order to find innovative, resourced, and sustainable solutions.

"The risk of human rights abuses is an urgent issue which needs to be addressed"

Case Study – ENABLE

In partnership with one HSCP, ENABLE Scotland has worked on a successful plan to support a young man, aged 27 who had been delayed in hospital for 3 years, out of an acute setting and into a home of his own.

This required development beyond the 'traditional' provider approach and required an 'all in' approach across the whole organisation to do whatever it takes. As a provider, ENABLE took a lead role in advocating for the rights of the young man to fully direct his own support; delivered a salary rate in excess of the Scottish Living Wage rate to attract and retain a committed, skilled and sustainable staff team; allocated a dedicated service manager to oversee the development of the service from design to recruitment to delivery of support, including the design of the property; and invested in an organisation wide practice development team, led by a registered Learning Disability Nurse to lead the training and development of the team.

Following a significant process of integrated planning, clinical governance, targeted recruitment of a larger 5:1 support team, (matched with the young man's preferences, for example to have a greater ratio of male Personal Assistants), the provision of specialist input and training for that team, and work with local housing services to procure and design an appropriate and safe home setting, the HSCP and ENABLE have now successfully enabled this young man to move out of hospital into his own home. He is supported by his bespoke team, and currently enjoys time outdoors in his garden, which has emerged as one of his favourite things to do. On his first night at home, he sat on his own sofa for the first time in 3 years.

3. Background

Barriers to Change

The SLWG heard from a range of professionals from different sectors around the current challenges and barriers faced. While not an exhaustive list nor derived from a consultation, the themes discussed can be helpful in understanding the context in which different sectors are working.

Providers:

- Social care packages inadequate as limited non-contact time to allow for planning, staff support, debriefing, on-the-job coaching, team meetings, supervision and training.
- Suitable accommodation, or accommodation that can be adapted, or is flexible, is not available and will need longer lead time for development and planning phases as well as access to capital funding.
- Recruitment and retention of staff with the necessary specialist skills.
- Support from specialist services and integrated team experts does not often include direct support and is not quickly and easily accessible.
- High risk of financial loss to providers if they have vacancies in their accommodation, so the need to fill voids often rushes placements without proper funding and time for adequate pre-admission planning and visits.
- No true assessments at the start of the process leading to lack of knowledge when identifying triggers, behaviours, and analysis of this.
- Delays can be caused due to practical issues around buildings and property, handovers from hospital to providers and due to neighbour relations.

3. Background

HSCPs:

- Hospital admissions can be the fall-back position as a result of a breakdown in care packages, usually related to behaviours that challenge. Admission is seen as a response to risk rather than a clinical decision.
- Difficulty in finding providers who are able to provide the right level of specialist support that may be required.
- Small numbers of individuals in each HSCP.
- Lack of agreement about who can live in the community and what level of risk is acceptable in the community, which can vary across partnerships.
- Some individuals have a history of failed placements, are increasingly traumatised and therefore find it more difficult to settle in any new environment.
- Historic funding arrangements for those effectively living in hospital may de-incentivise HSCPs to work towards discharge. Integration was established to resolve this. The process is there it is just not being followed.
- The current use of and interpretation of exclusion codes within the Delayed Discharge recording system does not motivate or place any urgency on finding a community placement.

3. Background

Commissioners and commissioning Process:

- Competitive tendering is unhelpful in terms of engaging social care providers in a frank and person-centred discussion of the good support requirements, challenges for people with complex care needs and compatibility between the provider and the individual.
- Often an individual package of care will be in excess of £250,000 per annum requiring a very long term commitment from social care budgets.
- Commissioning is rarely co-produced and families often have very little say in how services are developed for their family member. People with learning disabilities and their families should be involved in commissioning, however it often doesn't happen. There can also be a disconnect between Integration Authorities as the commissioners of care and local authority housing departments.
- Quality of assessments are variable and in some cases poor and too generic with little detailed understanding of the complexity of people's needs.
- Commissioners feel limited in what they can provide due to lack of specialist providers within their areas, and they feel constrained by available funding, and/or ability to cultivate the experience locally.

3. Background

Commissioners and commissioning Process:

- Ordinary Residence regulations act as a disincentive to HSCPs to commit to building or acquiring group accommodation that could be deemed to be housing. It is also a barrier more generally, for example there is a lack of incentive to find a care package in their locality if they are in a hospital in another authority or to take over the care package for individuals who have moved to their area.
- Commissioning of accommodation including the challenges of finding a site in a suitable location for everyone; the design and specification challenges in the case of very high support needs accommodation; issues of capacity when it comes to signing a tenancy; the perceived risks on the part of housing providers around the subsequent occupation of a highly adapted dwelling and the likely concerns about void and re-let processes including rent loss and the likely ability to identify subsequent occupant.
- Unrealistic expectations leading to the process being rushed and the placement breaking down.
- Changing needs of the person requiring accommodation due to a change in their health. Events such as a stroke may render their current accommodation no longer suitable.

Dynamic Support Register

4

4. Dynamic Support Register

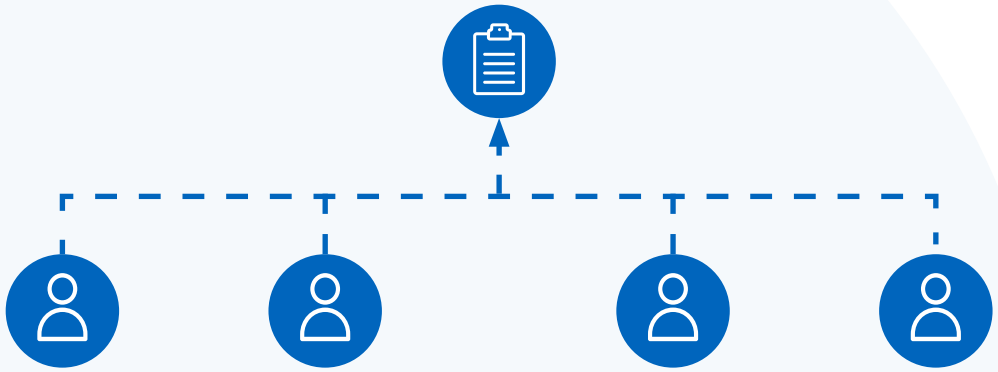
4.1 Purpose of the Register

The purpose of the Dynamic Support Register (referred to as the Register) is ultimately to avoid people with learning disabilities living in hospitals, or in out-of-area placements which they/their family have not chosen. It has been designed to help professionals working with people with learning disabilities to better respond to situations where there is a need for a more intensive level of care management.

It aims to:

- Identify and address risks of admission to hospital or out-of-area placement
- Support the development of local community placements

The Register is a tool that should be key to supporting local planning and decision making. It will be utilised and maintained by each local area, however will be owned nationally so that there is consistency and uniformity in data recorded across all areas. This should help local areas overcome the challenges in fully articulating the nature of individual needs, care requirements and risk assessments when collaborating across both health and social care. It will improve the visibility of this group of people both at a local strategic level and nationally, and allow local areas to monitor their own progress against reducing delayed discharges and out-of-area placements. It will also embed anticipatory care into practice via proactive and preventative measures, to enhance support when people are most at risk.



The Register will be applicable to adults with learning disabilities who are regarded as having complex support needs. While formally undefined, complex support needs may include those, who in addition to having a learning disability:

- Are also autistic
- Have a mental health diagnosis
- Have a forensic need, and/or who are described as demonstrating behaviour that challenges.

4.2 Who the Register is for

The Register will be used for adults with a learning disability whose support is funded by a Scottish Local Authority or Health Board, who are within one of the following groups:

- **Currently admitted to hospital-based assessment and treatment units.**
  This will apply to anyone within these units, whether they are formally regarded as delayed or not. It will apply to those in either NHS or private hospitals, either within Scotland or elsewhere in the UK. Those recently (within the last 6 months) discharged from an assessment and treatment unit will also be included in this group in order to monitor readmission risk. Given that some areas use Mental Health beds when Learning Disability units are full, it will also apply to anyone using an NHS inpatient bed in an inpatient setting.

- **Living in an unsuitable/inappropriate out-of-area placement.**
  This is defined as a placement which the person and/or their family did not choose, and which has been used because of a lack of suitable local resources, or a placement defined as poor quality, or that meets the risk criteria[10].

  This applies to placements either in Scotland or elsewhere in the UK.

  It does not apply to those living out-of-area if they/their family have chosen for them to be there and if they/their family approve the placement (unless there are serious, legitimate concerns about the placement raised by the HSCP or others).

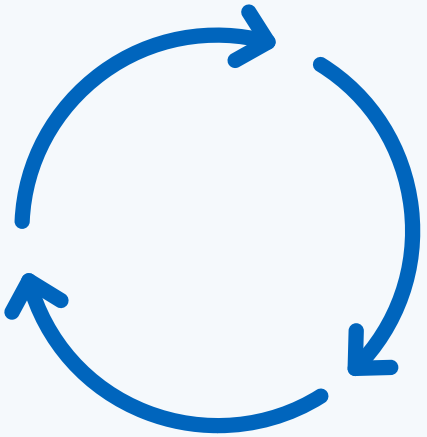
10 Noted in appendix 2, section 2

4. Dynamic Support Register

- **At risk of placement breakdown - current living situation is becoming unsustainable.**

  This may be for those living within a family setting or those who receive support from a care provider. The individual may be at risk of either admission to hospital or having to move to an out-of-area placement. This may be for any of the following reasons:

- Significant increase in severity and frequency of behaviour that challenges over a sustained period, resulting in service providers or family carers who are no longer able to support the person safely or effectively.
- HSCP concerns about the suitability, stability, or sustainability of a placement (e.g. a young person coming near to the end of their school placement).
- Family carers who are becoming unable to continue caring for their family member, or death/illness of family carers.



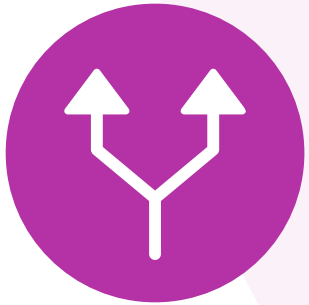
Framework to Support Register

5. Framework to Support Register

Without a framework to support the use of the Register, it may be ineffective in facilitating the broad systemic change required to address this long-term and challenging issue. The following framework will support the purpose of the Register and will consist of:

5.1 Complex Support Needs Pathway

A Complex Support Needs Pathway will contain guidance and a set of standards which will provide a context for the use of the Register. This will include the person-centred steps to avoid service breakdown and subsequent admission to hospital or being placed out-of-area, as well as the steps to plan for discharge from hospital or from out-of-area placement in order to help facilitate a return home.



A person-centred pathway for achieving discharge or return from out-of-area will provide timescales and milestones. It will incorporate the various standards from a range of already existing legislation, guidance documents and good practice reports, including from NICE, the Care Inspectorate, SSSC, the Royal College of Psychiatrists, and the Mental Welfare Commission, into one pathway.

5. Framework to Support Register

5.2 Peer Support Network

It is acknowledged that many clinicians and practitioners for people with learning disabilities and complex support needs may not have contact with others nationally who are doing similar roles, or who are working through similar challenges. Recognising how uniquely complex some of the care circumstances can be, this can only be solved by bringing people together to help each other and to provide peer support. Working more closely together as a sector can help us to provide better services across Scotland for people with complex care needs. A process of peer support will help give guidance and advice to HSCPs for people with particularly complex care needs whose support has been challenging to get right.

A Peer Support Network should be established to facilitate people coming together to learn and share best practice, and to get support when planning services for individuals with particularly complex care needs.

This support and advice will be provided from clinicians, commissioners, social care providers and family members from around Scotland who have expertise and experience in developing and delivering services to people with learning disabilities and very complex support needs. The purpose is primarily to put HSCPs in touch with peers who have expertise in particular areas, so that local teams can learn from others who have already done what they are working towards, and to provide a safe space to share experiences, pool resources (staff/buildings) and learn from each other.

Local areas may wish to consider appointing a dedicated "change champion." This person will have expert knowledge of the needs of people with learning disabilities and an understanding of the challenges faced in their area. By having ownership, this individual is then best placed to collaborate regionally and nationally and utilise the support offered through the Peer Support Network.

5. Framework to Support Register

5.3 National Support Panel

A National Support Panel should be established as a national body who will work on behalf of the Scottish Government and Local Authorities to ensure that the Register is achieving positive outcomes for people with learning disabilities who are currently in hospital or living in out-of-area placements. The primary purposes of the Panel are:

- To work with HSCPs and partner organisations by providing support and expertise for their decision making and solutions for individuals in a collaborative forum.
- To provide checks and balances to ensure that people with learning disabilities are receiving the best care in the most suitable environment.
- To understand and hear from families and individuals about their individual circumstances.

The Panel will work with and support nominated HSCP leads and hold regular reviews for anyone on the Register, monitoring progress towards discharge or out-of-area return against the Complex Support Needs Pathway. The Panel will work with HSCPs to assess if the milestones within the Pathway are being met. This will include requiring information from the responsible HSCP in order for the panel to work with commissioners to provide person-centred assistance such as:

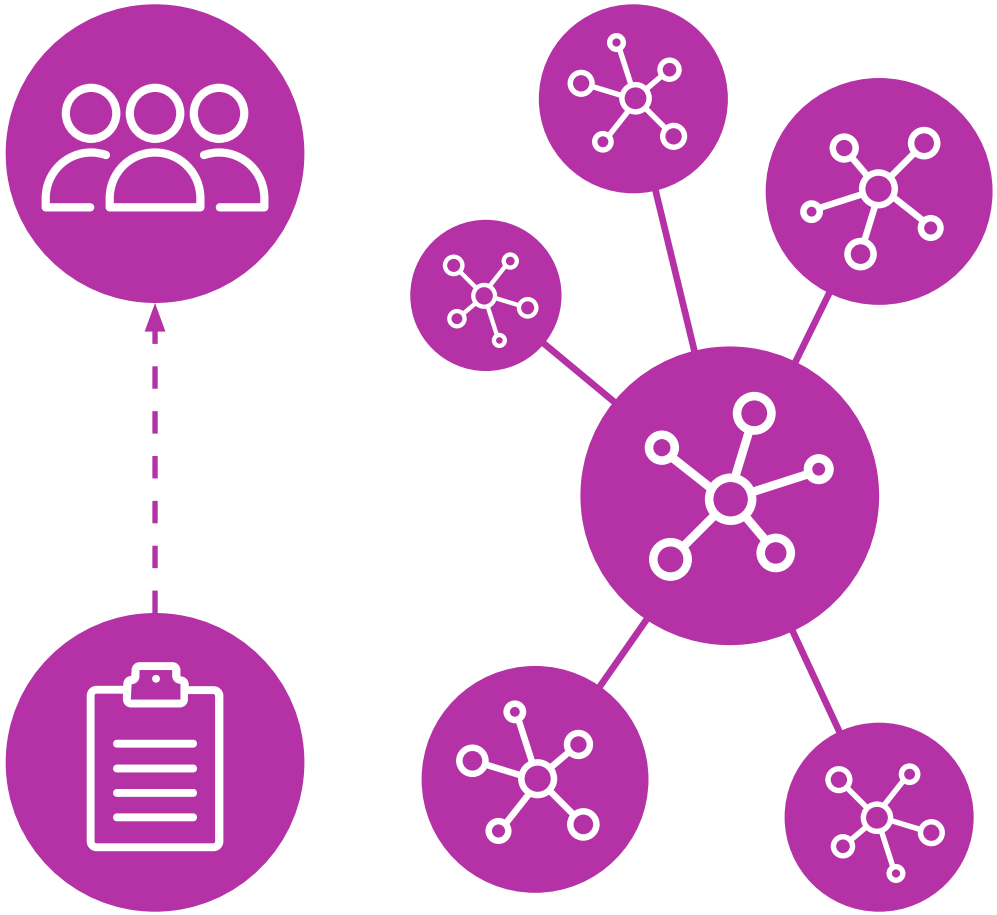
- Progress towards accessing suitable accommodation
- Progress in relation to financing the support package
- Identification of a suitable provider
- The support plan in the person's current placement
- Any issues or concerns, e.g. use of restraint, high levels of challenging behaviour or serious risk factors.

5. Framework to Support Register

The expertise available via the panel will, for example, help to match HSCPs with other areas who may be looking to pool resources, share existing good practice that has led to sustainable solutions and provide additional advice about staffing, training and suitable providers. This is designed to help address the barriers recognised earlier in this report.

Recognising that call for expert support and expertise the Scottish Government should establish the panel urgently.

The SLWG view is that the panel should be backed with statutory powers in order to support their function, including the authority to require any information that enables the panel to carry out their role, as well as powers to make placements and/or require funding of a support package.



Community Change Fund

6. Community Change Fund

6.1 Purpose of the Community Change Fund

It was the view of the members of the SLWG that most people with learning disabilities and complex care needs require a radical redesign of services in their local community. In order to facilitate this, the group proposed a short-term Community Living Change Fund which was accepted as an early and priority need and distributed by the Scottish Government following receipt of Barnett consequentials for similar work by UK Government.

£20m was allocated to Integration Authorities in February 2021 and can be held in reserve for up to 3 years. The Scottish Government is working with local areas to monitor the use of this funding.

The purpose of the Community Living Change Fund (referred to as the Fund) is to drive the redesign of services for people with learning disabilities and complex care needs. The goal is to provide high-quality, local, community-based services where, regardless of complexity of need or behavioural challenge, people's right to live a full and purposeful life, free of unnecessary restrictions can be realised.

The Fund is available to accommodate the re-provisioning of long-term hospital and inappropriate out-of-area care and to create a powerful lever to a longer-term shift from institutional care. The Fund is not intended to replicate current inappropriate arrangements but rather act as a facilitating mechanism to bring about change.

Specifically, the purpose of the Fund is to help people with learning disabilities although this could be extended to support people with enduring mental health conditions where this was deemed appropriate. The Fund should be used to support people to:

- Be discharged from hospital quicker, and not face any unnecessary delays to their discharge;
- Come home back to their local area if they have been inappropriately placed out of Scotland;
- Feel better connected to their communities through an increase in local community service provision for when they have been placed in inappropriate or institutional out-of-area placements;
- Receive better services through redesign of existing provision that is better tailored to the specific needs of the person.

6. Community Change Fund

6.2 Use of the Fund

The Fund should be broadly used to improve community-based support to people with complex care needs with the aim that by March 2024 out-of-area placements are only made through individual family choice and people are only in hospital for genuine short-term assessment and treatment.

This includes ensuring that no one is admitted to hospital because of behaviour that challenges, and that where individuals are admitted to hospital, this is short-term and for a clear clinical purpose of assessment and treatment, rather than due to lack of appropriate community placements. The Fund should also be used to ensure that out-of-area placements are only made based on the choice of the individual and/or their family.

It is recognised that this has been a long-term challenge for the sector in Scotland and across the UK, and that service redesign requires whole system change. This may be a lengthy process and will need local leadership and vision for the changes required in local areas. The challenges facing each HSCP may be slightly different, depending on a range of factors such as current local services, geographical challenges, and/or workforce issues. The specific solutions may also therefore be slightly different and as such guidance for use of the Fund has not been specifically prescriptive.

However, it is clear that the overall aim of the Fund is to support redesign of services in order to achieve the above objectives. It is therefore important that the Fund is used in this way, rather than to simply make up for a shortfall in local services.

> *"This has been a long-term challenge for the sector in Scotland and across the UK, and service redesign requires whole system change."*

Equally, the Fund should not be used to develop institutional services which lack connection with the community and do not allow for people to live a full and rewarding life.

6. Community Change Fund

Some of the suggestions for how the Fund could be spent in order to achieve the overall objectives are noted below. These are supplied in order to help local areas think through how best to achieve the overall objectives of the Fund. It is recognised that HSCPs remain best placed to decide how best the Fund should be spent:

- Use the money from the Fund collaboratively, for example linking with other HSCPs with similar challenges (remote, rural, or island communities may have similar needs).
- Take a board-wide approach to use of the Fund, in order to achieve more fundamental and systemic change, i.e., local HSCPs within the same board area may find it more useful to take a board-wide approach.
- Provide bridging finance in order to support the closure of inpatient beds.
- Invest in collaborative local commissioning solutions, bringing together third sector partnerships.
- Develop a 'place of safety' or crisis service to provide short-term accommodation options for people experiencing significant challenges or approaching crisis in their current service.
- Consult with social care providers to determine their workforce development needs, with an aim to achieve a wider range of providers able to develop successful community-based services for people with challenging behaviours and complex needs.
- Provide specialist training to commissioners to enable them to feel more confident in commissioning services for people with the most complex and challenging needs.
- Develop a local complex needs 'Change Champion' role, with responsibility to oversee the Fund's objectives.
- Develop local expertise and resource in Positive Behaviour Support or other similar person-centred approaches, recognised as effective evidence-based approaches to supporting people with learning disabilities and behavioural challenges.

Case Study – Teviot Court, Midlothian

Midlothian is one of the fastest growing Local Authorities in Scotland with a rapidly increasing population. It is fairly small geographically, covering the 9 miles from Dalkeith to Penicuik. Therefore one housing development is local for everybody. Midlothian has land, and a well-established local authority house building programme. It is close to Edinburgh, and therefore issues around recruitment and retention are not as acute as other areas.

Early discussions took place about a cross-HSCP regional approach but ultimately it was easier to build alone.

The first step was to build the houses. It took five years until the properties were completed. Without the properties everything else was felt to be compensating for the wrong environment. The appropriate houses cost twice as much as a usual council house but can be used variously and independently as design allows for differing needs. The design is 12 council tenancies in a cluster of four flats around three courtyards. This allows for efficiencies of support, provided in a town centre location. Properties are twice the size of standard housing and a pleasant place for people to live in a high quality environment. These properties were suitable to support people who may have been at risk of having to live out of the local area or of being admitted to hospital. The design is safe, comfortable and a homely environment. The designs are physically robust, single storey, barrier free and non-institutional. The layout is designed in a simple clear manner so that, intuitively, it requires less effort for people with complex needs to use and inhabit the environment.

Various capital approaches were considered but Midlothian ultimately settled on utilising the Housing Revenue Account. This was supported by Phase 2 of the Housing Build Programme plus 50% from the General Fund. Placements are supported through rent charges. Complementary properties in Phase 3 are currently being built as part of the house building programme.

6. Community Change Fund

6.3 Monitoring of the Fund

The Scottish Government should actively monitor spending from the Community Change Fund to ensure that the Fund is being used to meet the objectives noted above.

Informal monitoring will be carried out collaboratively and co-operatively through partners such as the Social Work Scotland Learning Disability Network.

However, the use of each Integration Authority's share of the £20m must be recorded in their annual financial statement and the outcomes delivered detailed in their annual performance report.

7

Summary & Recommendations

7. Summary & Recommendations

This report sets out a new framework for people with learning disabilities and complex support needs who are placed in unsuitable out-of-area placements, or who are inappropriately admitted to hospital, due to breakdown in their community-based support.

This is the group who were the subject of the Scottish Government's *Coming Home* report of 2018, and recognising that implementation of the recommendations of this report have not been fully realised at the scale or pace required to meet the national ambition, many of the recommendations within this paper echo the findings and recommendations of *Coming Home*.

It is therefore recommended that the new framework be referred to as the ***Coming Home Implementation Framework***.

7.1 Summary

It has long been Scottish Government and Local Government policy that people with learning disabilities are supported to live well in their local communities, and that people are not unnecessarily delayed in hospital. The £20m Community Living Change Fund has been issued to Integration Authorities and can be held in reserve to be used over a three year period from 2020/21. This framework will support local and national government to meet their policy commitments in relation to people with learning disabilities, as outlined in the **Keys to Life**. It will also support meeting the obligations contained within the UNCRPD[11].

It is recognised that there are inherent risks in living within institutional settings, and that there has been documented abuse linked with these types of services. People with learning disabilities in Scotland should feel assured that this report and framework give an indication of the serious commitment in Scotland to respect the human rights of people with learning disabilities and complex support needs. The positive use of the framework has the potential to support the development of greater public trust in services provided to people with learning disabilities.

11 Obligations listed at Annex 5

7. Summary & Recommendations

For people with learning disabilities, particularly those with complex support needs, there are many benefits of the framework set out here.

The framework will set a foundation that will help people to live well in their local communities, to have fulfilling lives, and to have their needs met. This includes ensuring that people are only admitted to hospital for appropriate reasons. Behavioural challenge and the service breakdown which often accompanies it, are no longer a reasonable reason for admission to hospital. The framework also aims to ensure that those who are admitted to hospital do not become stuck there, and have to wait for long periods of time until they can be discharged to a suitable community setting.

If we can establish local placements/homes and source, recruit and retain adequate staffing then people would no longer be placed in out-of-area placements due to lack of suitable local resources or not through individual choice, which often results in fractured relationships with friends and family and loss of connection with their local community. Locally, resource transfer should be considered to ensure that community placements are sustainable. The framework also seeks to ensure that people are no longer placed in unsuitable or poor quality out-of-area placements, which do not meet their needs, i.e. which are large, institutional, provide an inadequate level of care, and/or are disconnected from the local community.

The framework is also designed to ensure that the needs of people with learning disabilities and their families drive the local commissioning strategy, which is there to support them, and enable better planning.

Essentially, the framework aims to provide greater local visibility for people with learning disabilities and complex support needs, and to ensure people do not get forgotten about, or lost in the system.

7. Summary & Recommendations

In addition to directly impacting people with learning disabilities, the framework will also impact on services and how these are planned and commissioned. It will support better local long-term planning to meet the housing and support needs of individuals with complex needs. This should include proactive development of specialist multidisciplinary teams that are focused on providing the necessary services and support in the community to prevent admission to hospital. It should also include proactive development of appropriate housing.

"The framework will provide national oversight and a set of principles and standards"

"The National Support Panel will bring together expert advice available to help HSCPs to deliver"

The framework will provide national oversight and a set of principles and standards to support HSCPs to improve their performance for this group of people and to receive support and expert help to do so. This will include promoting accountability for delivery through a named local lead, helping to identify people at risk of placement breakdown and allowing risks to be proactively managed to prevent admission. There is also a clear emphasis on providing a collaborative and solutions focussed approach, developing local positive community alternatives to hospital and helping HSCPs to develop their skills and share their approaches. The National Support Panel will bring together expert advice available to help HSCPs to deliver.

The use of the framework will provide accurate national information in relation to the support required for people with learning disabilities and complex needs. This will provide useful data-driven planning information about the current and future needs of this group and lead to opportunities to adopt a more evidence-informed and strategic approach to addressing barriers on a national basis.

7. Summary & Recommendations

"Scotland will provide the best possible services that are consistent with a Human Rights Based approach"

Louis' Story, which opened this report, is an example of how Scotland has failed people with complex care needs. It is an aspiration that Scotland will provide the best possible services that are consistent with a Human Rights Based approach, as set out in the Scottish Government's National Outcomes Framework and as proposed in legislation through the Human Rights Bill.

The successful implementation of this framework should promote the development of good quality local support services, monitored through appropriate quality assurance systems and reverse the trend of developing large, institutional services. This is the route to upholding the Human Rights of people with learning disabilities and complex needs.

7. Summary & Recommendations

7.2 Recommendations

1) **Scottish Government and COSLA should make a policy commitment to take forward the proposed framework.** There may be a financial implication for Scottish Government and Local Government, e.g. to set up the Register and to support the Panel, in addition to administrative and civil service support. The framework may also require legislative support and will sit alongside other relevant ongoing work such as the National Care Service and Mental Health Reviews.

2) **The current sample Dynamic Support Register should be developed into a tool for national use.** This will require digital and information management expertise and resource to produce a secure and useful electronic database that gives visibility to this hidden population on both a local and national scale.

   Detailed operational guidance should be developed for the use of the Dynamic Support Register, co-produced with HSCPs. (Initial draft guidance is attached at Appendix One).

3) **A National Support Panel should be established in order to provide support and oversight of the Dynamic Support Register.** The National Support Panel will bring sector expertise together to provide an open collaborative forum that can troubleshoot individual cases in partnership with local areas. Scottish Government should consult on the precise role and remit in order that the panel provides value and achieves the objectives of reducing inappropriate hospital admissions and out-of-area placements. (Scoping work is included in Appendix Two).

7. Summary & Recommendations

4) **A National Peer Support Network should be established to facilitate people coming together to learn and share best practice**, and to get support when planning services for individuals with particularly complex care needs. This network should offer support and advice informally to allow cases to be discussed openly and frankly, with input from clinicians, commissioners, social care providers, social workers and family members from around Scotland who have expertise and experience in developing and delivering services to people with learning disabilities and very complex support needs.

5) Recognising the lack of available evidence for people with enduring mental health conditions and the expertise of the contributors to the SLWG, **further work should be undertaken to explore the issues in relation to people with enduring mental health conditions who are subject to delayed discharge from hospital.** This should include sector experts in mental health and social work, as well as people with lived experience.

7. Summary & Recommendations

What does good look like?

Building on the content of this report, success will be measured against the mission statement: **By March 2024 we expect to have seen out-of-area residential placements and inappropriate hospital stays greatly reduced, to the point that residential out-of-area placements are only made through individual or family choice and people are only in hospital for as long as they require assessment and treatment.**

Work is already underway against this objective both nationally and locally as a result of the long term ambition to reduce delayed discharges.

The **Mental Welfare Commission's** *No Through Road* report (2016) suggested that the Scottish Government in partnership with integrated joint boards, should develop a plan to end delayed discharges, in the context of health and social care integration, and ensure that the monitoring and reporting of delayed discharge was robust.

The Scottish Government's *Coming Home* report (2018) recommended that a more proactive approach was taken to planning and commissioning services and to identify suitable housing options. The need to provide Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) training was also highlighted.

The Scottish Government and COSLA's *Keys to life implementation Framework* (2019) also recommended investment in the development of positive behavioural support through the creation of a university post and provide direct support to Health and Social Care Partnerships to consider the findings, including the need for different models of care to bring home people identified as priority to return.

The route to achieving this will require multi-sector multi-disciplinary collaboration at a number of levels, and the decisions taken will be variable across the country to account for local need.

Case Study – The Richmond Fellowship Scotland: Colin's Story

Colin grew up in a rural area with a close extended family nearby, receiving local community support. He has complex brittle diabetes type 1 and organic personality disorder. His diabetes required blood tests up to six times daily, including during the night.

In 2009 Colin's diabetes became unstable and resulted in an Acquired Brain Injury (ABI). Following initial treatment, he was admitted to a specialist unit in Glasgow. The result of the ABI included a range of behavioural concerns including:

- Impulsiveness
- Physical aggression
- Absconding behaviour
- Difficulty understanding when things will happen,
- Difficulty with problem solving and reasoning skills.

A behaviour management plan included daily use of physical interventions to manage his behaviour. Colin had limited community access due to absconding behaviour and the ratio of staff required and he had limited opportunity for independence and developing active support skills and developing skills of daily living. His family were keen for him to return to his home area to be near family and live within his local community.

Colin's family spent the next 10 years campaigning to access the right support in the community to allow him to return home however it was suggested there were insurmountable barriers to achieving this goal. These included:

- The behavioural challenges that he displayed
- The risk of physical aggression to a District Nurse who would require twice daily visits to manage Colin's diabetes.

7. Summary & Recommendations

In 2017 after over 10 years out-of-area an individual tenancy was identified in his home area with 24 hour support provided by The Richmond Fellowship. It was recognized that a transition would need to be fully coordinated and a true collaborative approach taken. The transition team included the views of family, Occupational Therapist, specialist diabetes nurse and the District Nurse who would be attending twice a day. Overseen by a Team Manager competent in PBS (he had previously completed a six-month placement in the PBS team, completed his Professional Development Award, has many years' experience of working in complex services and designing new packages of support).

All frontline staff received PBS and Active Support training and a suite of bespoke training was developed including; comprehensive support planning and developing proactive plans. A programme of alternative communication systems was implemented including teaching Colin to use a social story outline why the district nurse takes blood and what to do as well as a visual keyring to help plan and structure the day.

How are Colin's Human Right now being upheld?

- Regular quality contact with him family
- Part of his local community and uses a bus pass with staff to access the community every day
- Has choice, control and independence in his life
- Has a job – supported 2 days per week at the local foodbank
- Developed a social network – attends a drama club and has a girlfriend
- Wants to develop his skills and is supported once a week to attend a skill building course at the collage.

"My life has changed so much for the better."

- Colin

7. Summary & Recommendations

Next Steps

In this final section we have given an indication of the kind of actions required nationally and locally to implement the key recommendations in this report.

True partnership working, in a meaningfully collaborative way, is necessary to meet the vision aspiration – this includes but is by no means limited to: those with lived experience of complex care needs including individuals and their families and welfare guardians; clinicians working with people with learning disabilities and complex support needs; those with experience of both commissioning and providing services.

In addition, the collaboration of stakeholders such as the Mental Welfare Commission, Care Inspectorate, People First, Social Work Scotland, SOLACE, IJB chief officers, NHS chief executives, housing sector professionals, SCLD, Scottish Learning Disability Nurse Leads Group advocacy and carers' organisations is essential to achieving this aspiration.

One of the main barriers is a lack of visibility of the population of people with learning disabilities. Success can be evidenced with an increased visibility of both data and actions to address the needs of this neglected population. Whether through data publication, Commissioning Plans, Strategic Housing Investment Plans, or the National Care Service, collaborative working to ensure this population is no longer ignored is critical.

7. Summary & Recommendations

What should happen nationally?

National Government has a role in providing the leadership and direction to support nationwide systemic and cultural change. National Government should:

- Progress development of a national system that will host the Dynamic Support Register to identify those currently and at risk of admission, so that local areas can provide a dynamic and flexible response for these individuals.
- Establish an expert National Support Panel to assist HSCPs with delayed discharges and to provide leadership and sharing of good practice in order to problem-solve any barrier to repatriation or discharge.
- Comprehensively invest in social care to support skilling up of the sector and to fund services at the level needed for the particular needs of people with learning disabilities. This potentially includes increased pay or direct provision on a national level for those working with those with the most complex needs.
  The Independent Review of Adult Social Care has a specific recommendation (recommendation 10) that *"packages of care and support plans must be made more portable and supported people should not have to fight to retain support because they have moved home"* and the Scottish Governments National Care Service was their response to the Review.
- Develop alternative methods of commissioning that address the specific challenges facing people with learning disabilities who require the most complex care needs, considering legislative changes where necessary. This includes supporting local areas with an evidenced piece of work on accurate revenue cost of care packages.

7. Summary & Recommendations

What should happen nationally?

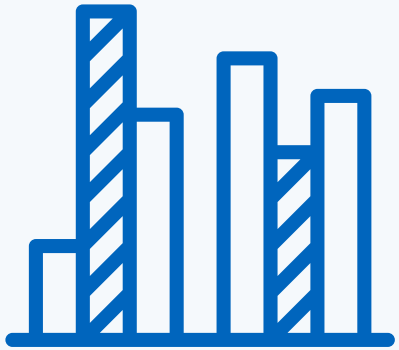
- Foster greater engagement and collaboration with the Scottish housing sector nationally and local strategic housing planning with a view to supporting publication of guidance in relation to housing specifications for complex care. The Scottish Federation of Housing Associations ***"Future Models of Housing, Care and Support"*** report summarises a number of "asks" the cross over with the issues identified in the delayed discharge of people with learning disabilities and/or complex care needs. There is significant good practice in local areas that demonstrate how housing and care and support services can be developed by reconfiguring hospital and community budgets and staff.

- Encourage Programme Budgeting. Programme budgeting is an approach that collects resource allocation by "programme" groupings, enabling the analysis of historic total expenditure on each programme; programmes may be defined in terms of client or care groups; or diseases; or service categories. It looks at resource utilisation within a certain programme rather than resource allocation between programmes. Programme Budgeting Marginal Analysis (PBMA) is an approach to commissioning and redesign of services that can accommodate care professional, service user and management perspectives within a single, transparent decision making framework. It is a practical health economics tool for prioritising investment and disinvestment decisions within the programme budget that allows for the complexities of health and social care provision to be examined alongside the economic concepts of opportunity cost and the margin. Adoption of a programme budgeting approach should include the totality of the resources available, which must include the hospital budget, and agree via collaborative commissioning how it could be used more effectively to provide better outcomes.

7. Summary & Recommendations

What should happen nationally?

- Consider the problems associated with Ordinary Residence and support local authorities, health boards and Integration Authorities on how to manage these challenges, with consideration for legislative changes where necessary.
- Publish analysis based on the Census 2022 returns, when available, that allows local areas to benchmark performance and need for people with complex care needs, e.g. number of inpatient beds.
- Recognise and understand the legal status of Welfare Guardianship as a court-conferred power with formal procedures for accountability and ensure Welfare Guardians are incorporated into national and local policy frameworks and practice.



7. Summary & Recommendations

What should happen locally?

Local Government, NHS Boards, Integration Authorities and the Third Sector are key to providing the services and supports for people with learning disabilities alongside their family and welfare guardians. Their decisions and actions are pivotal to achieving the vision and ultimately reducing the number of delayed discharges and out-of-area placements:

- There should be collaborative work between health, social care and housing and NHS Boards to consider whether opportunities for resource transfer exist to better utilise the current spend on complex care. Local areas may wish to consider adopting a programme budgeting approach. This will enable areas to explore whether there is potential to re-profile out-of-area spend to be reinvested in a better way to meet an individual's needs more locally. It is acknowledged that in some areas, closure of one or two inpatient beds may not result in any substantial resource. However, in other areas, ward closure could have the potential to provide significant resource to re-profile.

- Integration Authorities should actively plan the use of the community change fund in accordance with this report.
- All bodies should support better planning at transition age to identify those at future risk of admission and consider early interventions in order to mitigate crisis placements:
  - Provide support for challenging behaviour at an earlier age, particularly PBS or similar rights based approaches and support for alternative communication.
  - Improved joint working between children's services and adult services for people with learning disabilities.
  - Greater support for family carers, including access to specialist training and respite.
- Develop multi-agency contingency planning for crisis: clarify roles and responsibilities if a placement begins to fail, including what additional support can be offered, governance issues, changes to working conditions etc.

7. Summary & Recommendations

What should happen locally?

- Consider intensive support for existing placements as they start to fail, thereby preventing closure and eviction that can trigger this process.
- Ensure mechanisms for quality assurance and evaluation are incorporated into the commissioning of care packages for complex cases.
- Ensure potential for mediation is incorporated into commissioning care packages for complex cases.

- Ensure there is appropriate available housing – the key to ensuring a person can remain in the community. Areas may wish to refresh their policies around the housing needs assessment and strategic planning process. When a person is admitted to hospital in a crisis, they may be at risk of losing their tenancy and then become delayed if they have nowhere to return to. Bespoke homes are expensive, need to be carefully designed and subsequent uses need to be thought through with effective joint working and planning. This must also include close working with individuals, families, carers and other service providers.

7. Summary & Recommendations

What should people with learning disabilities, their families and Welfare Guardians do?

People with learning disabilities, their families and welfare guardians are experts and an incredibly valuable resource. They may be the allies and advocates for people who are unable to advocate for themselves and have been pivotal in seeking change. People with lived experience and their families can:

- Continue to advocate for themselves and their loved ones. This could be through contributing to local processes, e.g. via Care & Treatment Reviews. Families are vital in ensuring that the voice and choices of their loved one with a learning disability are at the centre of the process and their choices are properly taken into account.
- Seek support from advocacy experts such as **People First**, who have expertise in advocating for people with learning disabilities who are delayed discharge in hospital.
- Obtain Welfare Guardianship through the courts to ensure voice has legal force.
- Use legal mechanisms open under civil law, invoke Human Rights frameworks and Scottish legislation to make a case for change where it is needed.
- Collaborate with MSPs and local councillors, social workers, commissioners, and health managers in work to improve care.
- Hold the life story of the person.
- Work with care staff on the history and language of the person being cared for.
- Contribute to and seek support from charities such as **ENABLE Scotland** and **PAMIS** who can provide advice and support to people with learning disabilities and their families.

7. Summary & Recommendations

What should clinicians do?

- Refocus local policies and procedures to ensure criteria for admission to hospital does not include challenging behaviour and is clinically justified.

Appendices

Appendix One

Dynamic Support Register: Draft Guidance

1. Including Someone on the Register

To decide whether a person should be added to the Register, discussions should take place across the HSCP Learning Disability Team at a multidisciplinary team meeting. Using risk screening criteria, the team will agree if the person should be added to the Register and at what level of priority.

Local procedures may differ, but these meetings should be chaired by a senior member of the HSCP Learning Disability Team and should typically include all relevant disciplines from the Learning Disability Team including social workers. Senior representatives from the HSCP commissioning team and from local housing may also be required.

Once a person has been placed on the Register, a lead must be allocated to the case if there is not already one allocated, and a multidisciplinary discussion must be held within 2 weeks. The group should agree on the lead worker; this should be the professional best placed to support the overall co-ordination of the resulting action plan.

2. Levels of Priority on the Register

There are two levels within the Register; red, which is high risk, and amber, which is moderate risk, but still requires monitoring. Individuals can be moved between levels if their circumstances change or there is progression in the planning process.

Red: High Risk

People who will be included in the red section of the Register are as follows:

- Anyone with a learning disability in a NHS learning disability or mental health bed, whether delayed or not
- Anyone in an unsuitable out-of-area placement, defined as one where any of the following applies:
  - The person and/or their family did not choose to be there
  - Very poor inspection grades in the most recent report, indicating concerns at quality standards within the service
  - Where Adult Support and Protection or safeguarding issues have been raised in relation to the service as a whole
  - Where there is escalating use of restrictive practices, particularly physical restraint, seclusion or any use of prone/supine restraint or intramuscular medication

Appendix One

- Where there are concerns about the person's human rights
- Where the individual, their family members, or the HSCP have significant concerns about the placement

- Anyone who is at risk of their support breaking down or ending, either support provided by family carers, or by a social care service provider, or a school placement.

For those who are in the red section, there must be a multidisciplinary discussion, every two weeks. These meetings will focus on reviewing and updating a detailed personal action plan. For those in hospital, or unsuitable out-of-area placements, or whose residential school placement is within 12 months of ending, this review will address the following:

- Progress towards accessing suitable accommodation
- Progress in relation to financing the support package
- Identification of a suitable provider
- Timescales for the above
- The support plan in the person's current placement
- Any issues or concerns, e.g. use of restraint, high levels of challenging behaviour, serious risk factors.

For those at risk of service breakdown, this will address changes needed to the support plan to sustain their support. This may include the following:

- Crisis plan, particularly around high levels of behavioural challenges
- Potential for use of out-of-hours support
- Referral to specialist support teams, e.g. Positive Behaviour Support Team/Additional Support Team/inpatient services (depending on operational procedures locally)
- Contract compliance conversations with social care provider if appropriate
- Additional short-term financial support agreed if required, e.g. for respite care for family carers, for additional staff into a provider, for specialist training for staff teams etc.

Amber: Moderate Risk

The amber level of the Register is a monitoring phase, which ensures that people are not lost sight of once immediate crises are past. The information from those in the amber level should be of benefit to HSCPs to aid strategic planning and to inform commissioning. These cases require less intensive input from the support team and will be discussed monthly by the HSCP Learning Disability Team.

People who will be included in the amber section are as follows:

- Those who have left hospital or an out-of-area placement within the last 6 months.
- Those at risk of placement breakdown, but where their action plan has been implemented to the extent that their risk has reduced to amber.
- Those in poor placements, but where there has been sufficient reassurance that quality issues are being addressed.
- Those who mental or physical health is declining to an extent that their placement may begin to be under threat.
- Those who are placed out-of-area, anywhere, whose support has not been reviewed within the past 6 months.

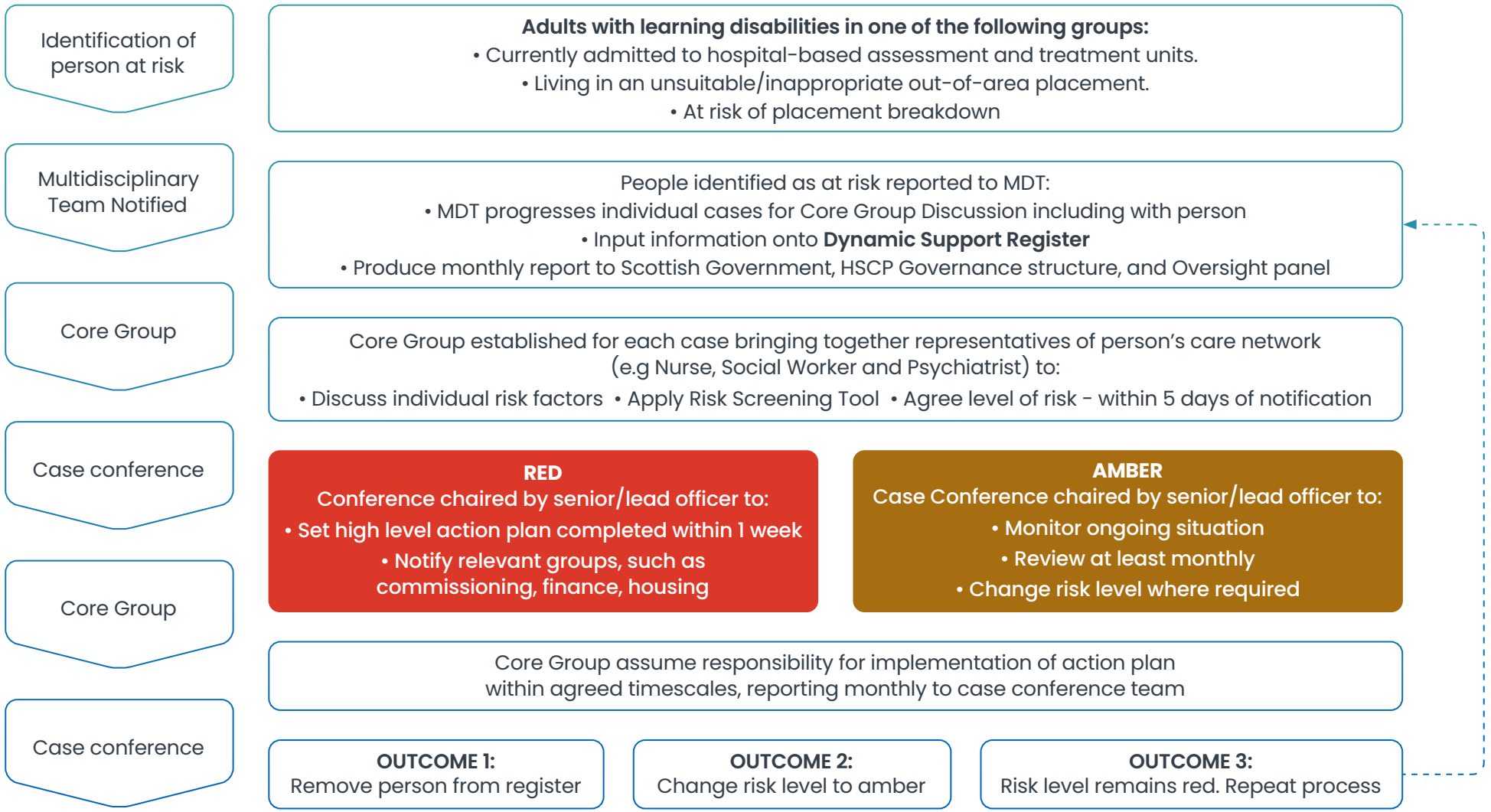
3. Coming off the Register

Individuals will be judged able to come off the Register when one of the following standards can be met:

- The individual is more than 6 months discharged from hospital or other placement and is judged to be settled and no longer at risk.
- The service where the person is living has improved considerably and would no longer be considered a poor, inappropriate or institutionalised service.

Appendix One

Flowchart for the Dynamic Support Register



Appendix Two

National Support Panel: Initiation Paper

Data from the red section of the Dynamic Support Register in each HSCP will be integrated into a national dataset, to allow national overview and long-term monitoring by the Panel of anyone within the red section throughout Scotland.

The Panel will meet regularly (including virtually) and each HSCP will report progress in relation to meeting the milestones within the Complex Support Needs Pathway, for every individual flagged as red on the Register. The Panel will monitor and support progress towards meeting milestones.

The Panel will assess and monitor progress of HSCPs' plans to develop suitable support for people with learning disabilities who are in hospital or inappropriately out-of-area. They will monitor progress against the milestones and timescales laid out in the Complex Support Needs Pathway and will provide support with action plans. The recommendations made by the panel must be informed by the wishes and desires of the individual.

The Panel will require reports, pathway updates, individual support plans, commissioning plans, and any other relevant information to assist with the primary aim of enabling people who are inappropriately placed to get the suitable support package that meets their needs within their own community. They will make recommendations to HSCPs in relation to this issue.

The Panel will report to Scottish Ministers on outcomes, themes, issues, and recommendations. This will be shared with the individual and their family, as well as the relevant Health Board, Integration Authority, HSCP and Local Authority where appropriate. The Panel will also report to communities of interest and associated partners such as the Mental Welfare Commission and the Care Inspectorate. Reports will focus on trends in local areas, such as numbers and use of inpatient bed, as well as on national trends.

Appendix Two

It is proposed that the Panel will have a chair who will take national responsibility to lead and drive the work of the Panel, and who will lead on developing the initial implementation.

In addition, the Panel will consist of:

- Expert by experience, probably a family member with lived experience, or a representative from a carers' organisation, e.g. PAMIS
- Expert clinician with expertise and experience in relation to people with learning disabilities and complex support needs
- An expert with experience of commissioning and/or developing services for this group
- A social worker
- Individuals with lived experience, including family members.

For each person whose action plan is being reviewed by the Panel, the following should attend:

- Senior representative from the responsible HSCP
- The person's Care Manager
- The person and/or their family member, and/or their advocate, and/or their legal proxy, or other preferred person
- Responsible clinician from the person's current place of residence
- Others, as required, e.g. Chief Officer from the HSCP.

Appendix Three

What is delayed discharge?

A delayed discharge refers to the process when a person who is clinically ready for discharge from inpatient hospital care continues to occupy a hospital bed beyond the ready for discharge date.

Put simply, when someone has been in hospital for a period of treatment or diagnosis, and have been determined as ready for discharge, if they are unable to leave hospital for a more appropriate setting then they will be considered to be delayed in their discharge.

The ready for discharge date is essentially a clinical decision, ideally taken in collaboration with the wider multi-disciplinary team, and is the point at which the person no longer requires treatment in a hospital setting. If that person is then still in hospital after midnight at the end of the ready for discharge date then the person is classed as a delayed discharge.

What we count

Adults, aged over 18, who have been delayed in their discharge from inpatient hospital care are counted in the statistics on delayed discharges. For the purposes of the delayed discharge census, hospital is defined as any inpatient bed provided in a substantial NHS facility. Information is collected by NHS Board of treatment, hospital and specialty (but not diagnosis), and also by the local authority of residence. The data is further broken down by age, sex and duration of delay. It is published in two sections – the first a snapshot of delays on the last Thursday of each month, which is shown by principle reason for delay on that day, and second by the overall bed days associated with the delays for that calendar month.

How we count

Data is collected from NHS Boards by Public Health Scotland and generally published on the second Tuesday of the month, approximately five weeks after the relevant monthly period.

Appendix Three

Reasons for delay

The data is broken down by three broad headings – 'health and social care reasons', 'patient/carer/family related reasons' and 'code 9 cases'. Health and social care reasons are where the delays is in the hands of the NHS or local authority, whether undergoing an assessment or waiting for care arrangements, a care home place, funding or transport. Patient, carer or family related reasons are where the delay is mainly within the hands of the person themselves or their carer or family are the cause of the delay. This may include withholding of information, legal interventions or simply refusing to leave. It should be noted that people have the right to appeal the ready for discharge decision and that while that process in underway the person is not deemed as ready for discharge and therefore cannot be considered a delayed discharge. The third broad category is known as 'code 9'.

Code 9 – complex delays

All code 9 delays should have a "secondary reason code" that essentially provides the underlying reason for delay, despite its complexity.

These codes are:

24DX – People awaiting place availability in a specialist facility for high level younger age groups (<65) where no such facility exists in the partnership area and no interim option is appropriate (not to be used where a facility exists but has limited availability).

24EX - People awaiting place availability in a specialist facility for high level older age groups (65+) where no such facility exists in the partnership area and no interim option is appropriate (not to be used where a facility exists but has limited availability).

25X – People awaiting completion of complex care arrangements in order to live in their own home.

Appendix Three

51X – People delayed due to the requirements of the Adults with Incapacity legislation (This code should be applied after it has been agreed that the person lacks capacity; the use of S13za of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 to discharge the person has been ruled out; and an application for Guardianship or Intervention Order is to be progressed through the Courts. Once the process has been completed the person will revert to another reason code and the delay will be calculated from a new ready for discharge date.)

71X – People exercising their statutory right of choice where no interim placement is possible or reasonable. (This code should only be used where long travel distances or limited transport infrastructures restrict the ability of families and friends to visit and where the placement may isolate the individual from a vital family and social network. This code should only be applied where remaining in a hospital setting is a more appropriate outcome and is the only viable alternative to an interim move.)

Code 100

In addition to the delayed discharge codes there is a further set of people, not classed as delayed under the definitions, but who are going through a planned, phased commissioning process to develop alternatives to hospital in the community. Although not formally recorded as delayed discharge, data on these people is collected under “code 100”.

Some concerns were raised in the group that there is inconsistency across Scotland as to how these codes are applied to people with learning disabilities. It is anticipated a national Register would address data inconsistencies.

Appendix Four

Obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Article 19 – Living independently and being included in the community

States Parties to the present Convention recognize the equal right of all persons with disabilities to live in the community, with choices equal to others, and shall take effective and appropriate measures to facilitate full enjoyment by persons with disabilities of this right and their full inclusion and participation in the community, including by ensuring that:

a) Persons with disabilities have the opportunity to choose their place of residence and where and with whom they live on an equal basis with others and are not obliged to live in a particular living arrangement;

b) Persons with disabilities have access to a range of in-home, residential and other community support services, including personal assistance necessary to support living and inclusion in the community, and to prevent isolation or segregation from the community;

c) Community services and facilities for the general population are available on an equal basis to persons with disabilities and are responsive to their needs.

Appendix Five

Membership SLWG

Jane O'Donnell, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) (Joint Chair of SLWG)

David Williams, Scottish Government (Joint Chair)

Cleland Sneddon, Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE)

Hugh McAloon, Scottish Government

Julie Murray, Chief Officer East Renfrewshire & member of Integration Joint Board Chief Officers (IJB CO) Network group

Duncan McIntyre, Midlothian Council, on behalf of Social Work Scotland

Clare Thomas, COSLA (Co-chair workstream 1)

Brian Slater, Scottish Government, (Co-chair workstream 1)

Gillian Barclay, Scottish Government, (Chair workstream 2)

COSLA and Scottish Government Officials

Workstream 1

Clare Thomas, COSLA (Co-chair)

Brain Slater, Scottish Government (Co-chair)

Joyce Campbell, Scotland Excel

Alex Stephen, Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP)

COSLA and Scottish Government Officials

Appendix Five

Workstream 2

Gillian Barclay, Scottish Government (Chair)

Dr Anne MacDonald, University of Glasgow

Charlie MacMillan, Scottish Commission for people with Learning Disabilities (SCLD)

Andy Kerr (Piper Group)

Austen Smyth, Richmond Fellowship

Dr Ron Culley, Quarriers

Kate Sainsbury, Parent carer

Dr Eleanor Brewster, Royal College Psychiatrists

Tony Cain, Association of Local Authority Chief Housing Officers (ALACHO)

Dr Elita Smiley, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde/East Renfrewshire HSCP

Tom Kelly, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde/East Renfrewshire HSCP

Jane Mackie, Moray HSCP

Isla McGlade, NHS Grampian

Anne Armstrong, Scottish Government

Arlene Johnstone, NHS Highland

Clare Thomas, COSLA

Brain Slater, Scottish Government

COSLA and Scottish Government Officials

Membership of Register Subgroup

Angela Henderson, Scottish Learning Disabilities Observatory

Dr Anne MacDonald, University of Glasgow

Arlene Johnstone, NHS Highland

Austen Smyth, The Richmond Fellowship Scotland

Tom Kelly, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde
Scottish Government Official

Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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Notice of Review Appendices

Due to size of documents links are provided to the ACC website planning applications page. You may be directed to the Planning Search page, if so, enter reference number 250202/DPP and find the appendices within the list of documents.

Appendix 6A –

https://publicaccess.aberdeencity.gov.uk/online-applications/files/157D1FE0ADE009333B49EBBDFC116F50/pdf/250202_DPP-Notice_of_Review_-_Appendix_6A-2463418.pdf

• Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership's Independent Living and Specialist Housing Market Position Statement (2024-2034)

• Aberdeen Local Housing Strategy 2025 – 2030 – Evidence base

• Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Housing Needs & Demand Assessment: 2023-2028

• National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes: Framework (2015)

Appendix 6B –

https://publicaccess.aberdeencity.gov.uk/online-applications/files/62F1CC0EA29FBE33742D56DDC9BE67E6/pdf/250202_DPP-Notice_of_Review_-_Appendix_6B-2463419.pdf

• Aberdeen City Council Local Housing Strategy 2018-2032

• Coming Home Implementation Report 2022

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL	**Strategic Place Planning**
	Report of Handling by Development Management Manager

Site Address:	Borrowstone Bothy, Borrowstone Road, Kingswells Aberdeen AB15 8RR
Application Description:	Change of use from agricultural land to domestic garden ground and erection of 1.5 and single storey extensions to side
Application Ref:	250377/DPP
Application Type:	Detailed Planning Permission
Application Date:	11 April 2025
Applicant:	Ms Nicola Webster
Ward:	Kingswells/Sheddocksley/Summerhill
Community Council:	Kingswells

DECISION

Refuse

APPLICATION BACKGROUND

Site Description

The application site relates to a small granite bothy, which has been previously converted into a dwelling and extended to incorporate a 1½ storey extension to the south of the western room, introducing a living, dining, kitchen space and a bathroom and utility room as part of the conversion of the original building. The dwelling has a north-facing principal elevation and the original bothy contained two main rooms and a smaller third room to the west side. The bothy was part of an existing farm grouping, containing a farm house and agricultural buildings sitting to the north. Access is off a private road, which leads to Borrowstone Road and the A944 Westhill-Aberdeen road beyond, past some other residential properties. A farm track runs on a north-south axis, adjacent to the western boundary of the site, with an open field beyond, which connects the agricultural building to the north and the fields to the south of the application site.

Relevant Planning History

- 150183 – Detailed planning permission was refused for the refurbishment and extension of the existing bothy in June 2015.

- 160109 – Detailed planning permission was refused for the conversion and extension of existing bothy to create one dwelling in March 2016. The principle of the conversion to a residential dwelling was supported, however, the extension was refused as it was not subservient to the scale and massing of the original bothy. The decision was subject to review by Local Review Body and was overturned in June 2016. This permission was implemented, with the resultant house subject of this application.

APPLICATION DESCRIPTION

Description of Proposal

Detailed planning permission is sought for the erection of a 1½ storey pitched-roof extension to the existing dwelling, extending into agricultural land proposed to be incorporated in the residential curtilage. The extension would introduce a second addition to the original bothy, of a similar scale and form as the existing extension, with a 73.5sqm footprint and height of 6m, connected to the existing extension with a 3m long hallway link (81sqm in total footprint). The extension would align with the existing to form a second, separate gable end on the south elevation and the resulting extensions to the bothy would measure a combined width of 17.4m and length of 11m. It would be finished with a stone basecourse, black-painted timber cladding and a zinc standing seam roof, fitted with aluminium-clad black-grey windows and doors and a 2m tall stove flue.

The proposal includes a change of use of agricultural land to be incorporated into the existing residential curtilage, to accommodate the proposed extension, currently comprising the 4.6m wide unsurfaced farm track running along the western boundary of the site and section of the driveway, forming an area measuring 220sqm.

Amendments

None.

Supporting Documents

All drawings and supporting documents listed below can be viewed on the Council's website at – https://publicaccess.aberdeencity.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=SUJVXNBZHUL00

- Design Statement
- Drainage Report
- Supporting Statement

CONSULTATIONS

Aberdeen City Council (ACC) Internal Consultees

- **ACC - Roads Development Management Team** – The site is located in the outer city, outwith any controlled parking zone.

External Consultees

- **Kingswells Community Council** – No comments received.

REPRESENTATIONS

None

MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Legislative Requirements

Sections 25 and 37(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 require that where making any determination under the planning acts, regard is to be had to the provisions of the Development Plan; and, that any determination shall be made in accordance with the plan, so far as material to the application, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Development Plan

National Planning Framework 4

- Policy 1 (Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises)
- Policy 2 (Climate Mitigation and Adaptation)
- Policy 8 (Green Belts)
- Policy 14 (Design, Quality and Place)
- Policy 16 (Quality Homes)
- Policy 22 (Flood Risk and Water Management)

Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 (ALDP)

- Policy D1 (Quality Placemaking)
- Policy D2 (Amenity)
- Policy D4 (Landscape)
- Policy NE1 (Green Belt)
- Policy R5 (Waste management Requirements for New Development)
- Policy T3 (Parking)

Aberdeen Planning Guidance

- Householder Development Guide
- Transport and Accessibility

EVALUATION

Key Determining Factors

The key determining factors in the assessment of this application relate to the scale and design of the extension and the change of use of agricultural land to residential curtilage, and whether there is compliance with green belt policy.

Policy Context

The application site comprises a converted and extended traditional bothy, now a residential dwelling, within the Green Belt. Policy 8 (Green Belts) of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and Policy NE1 (Green Belt) of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 (ALDP) requires the character, landscape, natural setting and identity of the green belt to be protected and enhanced. Development should also minimise visual harm to the green belt, not undermine the purpose of the green belt and not present any harm to the environmental quality of the green belt. Development which is associated within the boundary of an existing activity will only be supported provided it is small-scale, does not significantly increase the intensity of the activity and the proposed built construction is subordinate and ancillary to what already exists (including

extensions to existing dwellings). Section ii) requires development to be designed to ensure it is of an appropriate scale, massing and external appearance, and uses materials that minimise visual impact on the green belt as far as possible.

Design, Scale and Impact on the Green Belt and its Character

Alongside the green belt policy context of the site, falling under Policy 8 (Green Belts) of NPF4 and Policy NE1 (Green Belt) of ALDP, Policy 14 (Design, Quality and Place) of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and Policy D1 (Quality Placemaking) of the ALDP both expect development to be designed to be consistent with the six qualities of successful places, to be of an appropriate design for the context, and to not have an adverse impact on the amenity of the surrounding area. Policy D4 (Landscape) requires development not to adversely affect those existing elements of landscape character which contribute towards a distinct sense of place. Policy 16 (Quality Homes) of NPF4 notes that the development must not impact on the character, environmental quality of the home and the surrounding area.

The Householder Development Guide Aberdeen Planning Guidance (HDG) requires development to be architecturally compatible in design and scale with the host building and surrounding area and for the materials used to be complementary. Additional guidance in considering the design and scale of house extensions is also given in that the general principles of the APG outline that extensions should not overwhelm or dominate the dwelling and should be visually subservient in terms of height, mass and scale. Furthermore, the built footprint of the dwellinghouse should not exceed twice that of the original dwelling, and no more than 50% of the front or rear curtilage should be covered by development.

Consideration to the development and an assessment of the aforementioned policies will be given below under the relevant headings.

Built footprint

In this case, the proposed 81sqm extension and link, combined with the existing extension, would be substantially larger than the original building on the site. The footprint of the original bothy is approximately 60sqm and as extended, the dwelling would have a footprint of approximately 215sqm, making it more than 3.5 times larger than the original building. Paragraph 6.3 of the submitted Supporting Statement states that the proposed is significantly less than twice the size of the existing building. The original building on the site relates to the bothy, which was previously extended, and this statement is therefore inaccurate and misleading. The proposal therefore does not comply with the general principles of the HDG as it would more than triple the footprint of the original building, nor would it be small-scale or subordinate and ancillary to what already exists.

This Supporting Statement also applies the principles of the HDG to conclude that the extension meets the requirements of NPF4 Policy 8 and NE1 of the ALDP. The principles set out in the overarching policy however, require development in the green belt to be small-scale, not significantly increase the intensity of the activity and the proposed built construction is subordinate and ancillary to what already exists (including extensions to existing dwellings).

In light of this, the extension does not present a subordinate or small scale addition to the modest bothy and is thus contrary to Policy NE1 of the ALDP. While the development would technically be ancillary, in terms of its use, to the dwelling, a structure of this footprint, which contributes to more than tripling of the original footprint, cannot be deemed ancillary or subordinate in terms of scale, thus the proposal fails to adhere to the requirements of Policy 8 of NPF4 and Policies NE1 and D1 of the ALDP as well as the general principles for overdevelopment outlined in the HDG.

Scale, design and siting

The proposal would introduce a 1½ storey extension, matching the existing extension in form and scale, separated from the existing with a 3m long link which is set back 5.5m from the south elevation. This extension would thus have the appearance of a new, separate building on the site, which would be longer and wider than the original stone bothy. The submitted Design Statement makes the argument that the existing extension offers a precedent for an additional extension, which mirrors its scale and form. The existing extension forms an addition to the original bothy and the application proposal is similarly assessed as an extension to the bothy, which forms the host building for which an extension is required to be of an appropriate scale, massing and external appearance, as well as subservient. As such, the suggestion that this existing extension sets the precedent for another structure of a similar form and scale is not relevant. In addition, this argument is undermined by the proposal to extend this existing example further, and using the existing extended dwelling as 'precedent' further alludes to the proposal creating a visually separate building, as opposed to a subservient addition to the dwelling, even noting in the statement that this would be a 'clear, legible and distinctive building'.

This additional structure and separation from the existing dwelling as extended would significantly add to the dwelling's massing. The existing extension has a south-facing gable which measures 7.2m in width, which is already dominant in scale in relation to the original bothy's width (5.5m). The proposed extension would result in an overall width of 17.4m, presenting two gable-end structures on the south elevation, with the proposed addition having little visual relation to the original bothy. The resulting extension measuring 11m in length and 17.4m in width would thus be substantially greater in scale and massing than the original 5.5m by 12m bothy. With respect to height, the original bothy comprises a single-storey building, which is set at a higher ground level than the proposed extension (by c.600mm). Therefore, while the ridge of the proposed extension would be at the same level as the existing bothy, the proposal would be for a 1½ storey addition which would be taller than the original bothy. As a result, the scale and massing of the proposed extension, combined with the existing extension, would be significantly larger than, and thus not suitably subservient to, the scale and form of the original bothy in length, width, height and overall massing.

In assessing the impact of this large scale addition, when considering the level of development on this site, if approved, there would be very little evidence of the original bothy, particularly as seen from the public road (Borrowstone Road) as far back as 400m to the south which presents an adverse impact on the distinctive landscape character and setting of this area within the green belt. As noted in the Design Statement, the site benefits from long range views over open fields. The proposal would thus introduce the most dominant element (two gable-end structures measuring 17.4m in total width) to the south, making them visible and dominant from long views over this flat, open landscape, which allows it to be easily viewed from the Borrowstone Road and the surrounding area.

The proposal to incorporate the adjacent farm track from green belt land into the residential curtilage further demonstrates the excessive scale and dominant nature of the extension. The requirement to extend into additional ground outwith the existing residential curtilage clearly indicates that the development is not subordinate or ancillary to the existing residential activity contained within the existing boundary, or to the scale of the original bothy and site context. The submitted Design Statement states that the extension proposed 'works within the context of the site', however, this cannot be the case where the site needs to be enlarged and extended into the adjacent agricultural land to accommodate an extension of this size. The submitted Supporting Statement (section 6.4) notes that the area to be changed to garden ground would not be used for the extension and will remain as garden ground, to not impact the wider green belt. The proposed site plan however, clearly shows the extension extending to be 1.5m from the new boundary and

sited where the track currently sits. The extension would therefore significantly increase the intensity of the existing residential activity and comprise development outwith the boundary of the existing activity, in direct conflict with ALDP Policy NE1 and its presence would harmfully impact the landscape character of this area of green belt.

Paragraph 6.1 of the submitted Supporting Statement rightly outlines that applications must be considered on their own merits. Paragraph 6.3 makes reference to the neighbouring farmhouse. The main consideration of this application relates to the scale of the development in relation to the original bothy and the context of its site. As such, the footprint of neighbouring farmhouse is not a relevant planning matter.

It was suggested through the application process, by the Planning Authority that the existing extension could potentially be extended to the north, maintaining the general L-shape of the existing extended dwelling, while introducing additional floorspace over two floors in a more compact form to avoid substantially increasing the massing of the development and confine it to the private side of the site, screening it from public views. A proposal to extend the dwelling in this way would also avoid the need to extend into the surrounding green belt, presenting a proposal which is within the boundary of the existing activity. However, no amendments were made to address the massing of the proposal. The submitted Design Statement notes that the proposed design has gone through various iterations to achieve the desired needs and account for future needs, however, the applicant has not provided any information or details on these nor demonstrated or explained why any of them could not be taken forward. Design Statements would normally include this information as part of the narrative on why a specific proposal is ultimately taken forward. In addition, pre-application advice was previously given for this proposal which highlighted the issues with the scale and massing of the development and no material changes were made by the applicant to address any of these concerns. As such, while the principle of adapting the dwelling to present needs is accepted, it is not accepted that the most appropriate proposal has been considered which would increase the footprint of the dwelling and allow for the continued use of the dwelling, while preserving the character of the original bothy and surrounding green belt. The six qualities of successful places are further, required to be applied to ensure the pleasant and distinctive character of the surrounding green belt is preserved and not harmed by unsuitable development, which has been assessed in the foregoing report.

In assessing the design and layout of the extension, it would introduce a new entrance door being placed between the existing and proposed extensions, designed with a glazed panel forming a double-door appearance with an adjacent covered porch area, sitting directly in front of the driveway. This design would draw attention to this as a focal entrance point to the dwelling on the principal elevation, which would be completely separate to the original bothy. The bothy would become visually subservient to the later additions, appearing as a separate outbuilding to the side of these two dominant extensions which would form the main part of the dwelling, further failing to introduce a subservient addition to the original bothy.

In terms of materials, the proposed use of stone and timber for the external walls and metal cladding for the roof is considered to be high quality and suitable for the context of the green belt. With respect to the design and appearance of the extension in isolation, there is no concern with the architecture and form of the extension itself; the concern arises from the additional structure on the site which introduces an unacceptable overall massing and additional dominant structure to the original bothy, which is not small scale and subordinate.

Summary

The proposal would introduce an extension with the appearance of an additional building on the site which would not be subservient to the original building and combined with the existing

extension, would result in an extension which is 3.5 times larger in footprint than the original bothy, as well as substantially greater in length, width, height and overall massing. The proposed entrance within the link of the extension pulls the focus of the main section of the dwelling away from the original bothy, making it visually subservient to the later additions. The requirement to introduce additional green belt land into residential curtilage to introduce this additional extension demonstrates the excessive scale of the extension, particularly in relation to the original bothy and site context. The proposal therefore fails to meet the criteria for extensions to existing dwellings within the green belt as set out in Policy 8 of NPF4 and Policy NE1 of the ALDP, as it would not be subservient or small-scale in relation to the original building and would intensify the existing residential activity outwith its existing boundary. The design and massing of the proposed extension would also have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the property and the landscape character in the context of its siting within the green belt, contrary to Policies 14 and 16 of NPF4 and Policies D1 and D4 of the ALDP and the relevant APG.

Principle of Proposed Change of Use from Agricultural Land to Residential Curtilage

The area of land proposed to be included in the residential curtilage comprises a section of a gravelled driveway / access area associated with the agricultural buildings on the site and an unsurfaced single which connects the farm yard to a field to the south of the application site. The gravelled area is proposed to remain as an open gravelled area for turning cars, while the path to the west is proposed to be incorporated into the garden of the house. The change of use of this farm track and hardstanding in the green belt would not comply with ALDP policy NE1 as it would extend the existing residential activity outwith the existing boundary, intensifying this activity. In assessing the impact of this departure from the development plan, the change of use would not impact on the neighbouring agricultural use or result in the loss of any of the adjacent field, as it would be limited to the farm track between the neighbouring fields boundary fence and the existing residential curtilage. As there is another entrance into this field from Borrowstone Road, which appears to be the main access for agricultural use, the removal of this path is not considered to impact on the operation of this existing use.

Therefore, while the proposal is contrary to Policy 8 of NPF4 and Policy NE1 of the ALDP, the principle of incorporating the farm track and area of gravelled hardstanding into the residential curtilage would be acceptable, as this aspect of the proposal in itself would be small-scale and not undermine the function or character of the green belt.

Amenity

The only immediate neighbouring dwelling is the farmhouse, immediately to the east and within the same ownership. The proposed development would be confined to the west of the existing building as extended, and as such, would not introduce amenity harm to this farmhouse, or to any other properties.

Parking

Policy T3 (Parking) of the ALDP expects development to comply with the Transport and Accessibility APG. The Transport and Accessibility Aberdeen Planning Guidance would typically expect three allocated parking spaces for a four-bedroom dwelling. The proposed site plan shows suitable parking accommodation for the site and is therefore acceptable.

Drainage

Policy 22 (Flood Risk and Water Management) of NPF4 requires development to manage surface water through sustainable urban drainage systems and not worsen flood risk for surrounding sites

and Policy NE4 (Our Water Environment) of the ALDP 2023 would not support development where it would increase flood risk and expects new development to incorporate SuDS to manage surface water. The proposal seeks to introduce a new surface water soakaway within the garden to accommodate water run off caused by the new extension. This would be acceptable and there are no concerns with drainage within the site and the proposal would comply with Policy 22 of NPF4 and Policy NE4 of the ALDP 2023.

Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises, Climate Mitigation and Biodiversity

Policy 1 (Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises) of NPF4 requires planning authorities when considering all development proposals to give significant weight to encouraging, promoting and facilitating development that addresses the global climate emergency and nature crisis. Similarly, Policy 2 (Climate Mitigation and Adaptation) of NPF4 encourages, promotes and facilitates development that minimises emissions and adapts to the current and future impacts of climate change. Policy 3 (Biodiversity) seeks the enhancement of biodiversity.

Due to the nature of the development, comprising a change of use of a small section of green belt land confined to a farm track and an addition to the residential property, it is sufficiently small scale and does not offer the opportunity to address the global climate emergency and nature crisis, minimise emission or to enhance biodiversity.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

None

DECISION

Refuse

REASON FOR DECISION

The proposed extension would not be a small-scale, subordinate or ancillary extension owing to its built footprint and, combined with the existing extension, would more than triple the footprint of the original bothy and be substantially greater in width and length than the original building, as well as greater in height. The requirement to introduce additional green belt land into residential curtilage to introduce this additional extension demonstrates its excessive scale and would intensify the existing residential activity outwith its existing boundary. The design and siting of the proposal would introduce a second gable-end extension which would be visibly separate to the existing extended bothy, appearing as a separate building on the site, lacking a positive or complementary relationship with the original building and have a form and massing which would appear dominant on the site, compared to the existing extended dwelling, particularly from the south elevation which is visible from long views along the road due to the open setting of the surrounding agricultural land. Thus, the extended dwelling would not be of an appropriate scale, massing and external appearance and would not enhance the green belt, rather it would cause harm to the character, landscape and natural setting of the green belt, including from public views. Thus the proposal conflicts with Policy D1 (Quality Placemaking), Policy D4 (Landscape) and Policy NE1 (Green Belt) of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 and Policy 8 (Green Belts), Policy 14 (Design, Quality and Place) and Policy 16 (Quality Homes) of National Planning Framework 4 and the Householder Development Guide Aberdeen Planning Guidance.

Marischal College Planning & Sustainable Development Business Hub 4, Ground Floor North Broad Street Aberdeen AB10 1AB Tel: 01224 523 470 Fax: 01224 636 181 Email: pi@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Applications cannot be validated until all the necessary documentation has been submitted and the required fee has been paid.

Thank you for completing this application form:

ONLINE REFERENCE 100708244-001

The online reference is the unique reference for your online form only. The Planning Authority will allocate an Application Number when your form is validated. Please quote this reference if you need to contact the planning Authority about this application.

Type of Application

What is this application for? Please select one of the following: *

T Application for planning permission (including changes of use and surface mineral working).

≤ Application for planning permission in principle.

≤ Further application, (including renewal of planning permission, modification, variation or removal of a planning condition etc)

≤ Application for Approval of Matters specified in conditions.

Description of Proposal

Please describe the proposal including any change of use: * (Max 500 characters)

Alterations and Extension to Dwellinghouse and Change of Use of Agricultural Ground to Garden Ground

Is this a temporary permission? * ≤ Yes T No

If a change of use is to be included in the proposal has it already taken place? (Answer 'No' if there is no change of use.) * ≤ Yes T No

Has the work already been started and/or completed? *

T No ≤ Yes – Started ≤ Yes - Completed

Applicant or Agent Details

Are you an applicant or an agent? * (An agent is an architect, consultant or someone else acting on behalf of the applicant in connection with this application) ≤ Applicant T Agent

Agent Details

Please enter Agent details

Company/Organisation:	Rachael Walker Architects Ltd		
Ref. Number:		You must enter a Building Name or Number, or both: *	
First Name: *	Rachael	Building Name:	Mill of Braco Croft
Last Name: *	Walker	Building Number:	
Telephone Number: *	01467 681536	Address 1 (Street): *	Pitcaple
Extension Number:		Address 2:	
Mobile Number:		Town/City: *	Inverurie
Fax Number:		Country: *	Aberdeenshire, Scotland
		Postcode: *	AB51 5JA
Email Address: *	rachael@rwalkerarchitects.com		

Is the applicant an individual or an organisation/corporate entity? *

T Individual ≤ Organisation/Corporate entity

Applicant Details

Please enter Applicant details

Title:	Ms	You must enter a Building Name or Number, or both: *	
Other Title:		Building Name:	Borrowstone Bothy
First Name: *	Nicola	Building Number:	
Last Name: *	Webster	Address 1 (Street): *	Kingswells
Company/Organisation		Address 2:	
Telephone Number: *		Town/City: *	Aberdeen
Extension Number:		Country: *	Scotland
Mobile Number:		Postcode: *	AB15 8RR
Fax Number:			
Email Address: *	[redacted]		

Site Address Details

Planning Authority: Aberdeen City Council

Full postal address of the site (including postcode where available):

Address 1: BORROWSTONE BOTHY

Address 2:

Address 3:

Address 4:

Address 5:

Town/City/Settlement: ABERDEEN

Post Code: AB15 8RR

Please identify/describe the location of the site or sites

Northing 807725 Easting 384883

Pre-Application Discussion

Have you discussed your proposal with the planning authority? * T Yes ≤ No

Pre-Application Discussion Details Cont.

In what format was the feedback given? *

≤ Meeting ≤ Telephone T Letter T Email

Please provide a description of the feedback you were given and the name of the officer who provided this feedback. If a processing agreement [note 1] is currently in place or if you are currently discussing a processing agreement with the planning authority, please provide details of this. (This will help the authority to deal with this application more efficiently.) * (max 500 characters)

Concerns raised about the size of the extension relative to the existing building, which are addressed in the Supporting Statement. Also that the application should include a Change of Use.

Title: Mr Other title:

First Name: Sam Last Name: Smith

Correspondence Reference Number: 240824/PREAPP Date (dd/mm/yyyy): 01/08/2024

Note 1. A Processing agreement involves setting out the key stages involved in determining a planning application, identifying what information is required and from whom and setting timescales for the delivery of various stages of the process.

Site Area

Please state the site area: 1048.00

Please state the measurement type used: ≤ Hectares (ha) T Square Metres (sq.m)

Existing Use

Please describe the current or most recent use: * (Max 500 characters)

Part Residential / Part Agricultural

Access and Parking

Are you proposing a new altered vehicle access to or from a public road? * ≤ Yes T No

If Yes please describe and show on your drawings the position of any existing. Altered or new access points, highlighting the changes you propose to make. You should also show existing footpaths and note if there will be any impact on these.

Are you proposing any change to public paths, public rights of way or affecting any public right of access? * ≤ Yes T No

If Yes please show on your drawings the position of any affected areas highlighting the changes you propose to make, including arrangements for continuing or alternative public access.

How many vehicle parking spaces (garaging and open parking) currently exist on the application Site? 2

How many vehicle parking spaces (garaging and open parking) do you propose on the site (i.e. the Total of existing and any new spaces or a reduced number of spaces)? * 3

Please show on your drawings the position of existing and proposed parking spaces and identify if these are for the use of particular types of vehicles (e.g. parking for disabled people, coaches, HGV vehicles, cycles spaces).

Water Supply and Drainage Arrangements

Will your proposal require new or altered water supply or drainage arrangements? * T Yes ≤ No

Are you proposing to connect to the public drainage network (eg. to an existing sewer)? *

T Yes – connecting to public drainage network

≤ No – proposing to make private drainage arrangements

≤ Not Applicable – only arrangements for water supply required

Do your proposals make provision for sustainable drainage of surface water?? * (e.g. SUDS arrangements) * ≤ Yes T No

Note:-

Please include details of SUDS arrangements on your plans

Selecting ‘No’ to the above question means that you could be in breach of Environmental legislation.

Are you proposing to connect to the public water supply network? *

T Yes

≤ No, using a private water supply

≤ No connection required

If No, using a private water supply, please show on plans the supply and all works needed to provide it (on or off site).

Assessment of Flood Risk

Is the site within an area of known risk of flooding? * ≤ Yes T No ≤ Don't Know

If the site is within an area of known risk of flooding you may need to submit a Flood Risk Assessment before your application can be determined. You may wish to contact your Planning Authority or SEPA for advice on what information may be required.

Do you think your proposal may increase the flood risk elsewhere? * ≤ Yes T No ≤ Don't Know

Trees

Are there any trees on or adjacent to the application site? * ≤ Yes T No

If Yes, please mark on your drawings any trees, known protected trees and their canopy spread close to the proposal site and indicate if any are to be cut back or felled.

Waste Storage and Collection

Do the plans incorporate areas to store and aid the collection of waste (including recycling)? * T Yes ≤ No

If Yes or No, please provide further details: * (Max 500 characters)

Utility Room and areas of hard standing externally provides space for collection of waste and recycling.

Residential Units Including Conversion

Does your proposal include new or additional houses and/or flats? * ≤ Yes T No

All Types of Non Housing Development – Proposed New Floorspace

Does your proposal alter or create non-residential floorspace? * ≤ Yes T No

Schedule 3 Development

Does the proposal involve a form of development listed in Schedule 3 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure (Scotland) Regulations 2013 * ≤ Yes ≤ No T Don't Know

If yes, your proposal will additionally have to be advertised in a newspaper circulating in the area of the development. Your planning authority will do this on your behalf but will charge you a fee. Please check the planning authority's website for advice on the additional fee and add this to your planning fee.

If you are unsure whether your proposal involves a form of development listed in Schedule 3, please check the Help Text and Guidance notes before contacting your planning authority.

Planning Service Employee/Elected Member Interest

Is the applicant, or the applicant's spouse/partner, either a member of staff within the planning service or an elected member of the planning authority? * ≤ Yes T No

Certificates and Notices

CERTIFICATE AND NOTICE UNDER REGULATION 15 – TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (SCOTLAND) REGULATION 2013

One Certificate must be completed and submitted along with the application form. This is most usually Certificate A, Form 1, Certificate B, Certificate C or Certificate E.

Are you/the applicant the sole owner of ALL the land? * T Yes ≤ No

Is any of the land part of an agricultural holding? * ≤ Yes T No

Certificate Required

The following Land Ownership Certificate is required to complete this section of the proposal:

Certificate A

Land Ownership Certificate

Certificate and Notice under Regulation 15 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013

Certificate A

I hereby certify that –

(1) - No person other than myself/the applicant was an owner (Any person who, in respect of any part of the land, is the owner or is the lessee under a lease thereof of which not less than 7 years remain unexpired.) of any part of the land to which the application relates at the beginning of the period of 21 days ending with the date of the accompanying application.

(2) - None of the land to which the application relates constitutes or forms part of an agricultural holding

Signed: Rachael Walker

On behalf of: Ms Nicola Webster

Date: 11/04/2025

T Please tick here to certify this Certificate. *

Checklist – Application for Planning Permission

Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997

The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013

Please take a few moments to complete the following checklist in order to ensure that you have provided all the necessary information in support of your application. Failure to submit sufficient information with your application may result in your application being deemed invalid. The planning authority will not start processing your application until it is valid.

a) If this is a further application where there is a variation of conditions attached to a previous consent, have you provided a statement to that effect? *

≤ Yes ≤ No T Not applicable to this application

b) If this is an application for planning permission or planning permission in principal where there is a crown interest in the land, have you provided a statement to that effect? *

≤ Yes ≤ No T Not applicable to this application

c) If this is an application for planning permission, planning permission in principle or a further application and the application is for development belonging to the categories of national or major development (other than one under Section 42 of the planning Act), have you provided a Pre-Application Consultation Report? *

≤ Yes ≤ No T Not applicable to this application

Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997

The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013

d) If this is an application for planning permission and the application relates to development belonging to the categories of national or major developments and you do not benefit from exemption under Regulation 13 of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013, have you provided a Design and Access Statement? *

≤ Yes ≤ No T Not applicable to this application

e) If this is an application for planning permission and relates to development belonging to the category of local developments (subject to regulation 13. (2) and (3) of the Development Management Procedure (Scotland) Regulations 2013) have you provided a Design Statement? *

≤ Yes ≤ No T Not applicable to this application

f) If your application relates to installation of an antenna to be employed in an electronic communication network, have you provided an ICNIRP Declaration? *

≤ Yes ≤ No T Not applicable to this application

g) If this is an application for planning permission, planning permission in principle, an application for approval of matters specified in conditions or an application for mineral development, have you provided any other plans or drawings as necessary:

T Site Layout Plan or Block plan.
T Elevations.
T Floor plans.
T Cross sections.
T Roof plan.
≤ Master Plan/Framework Plan.
≤ Landscape plan.
T Photographs and/or photomontages.
≤ Other.

If Other, please specify: * (Max 500 characters)

Provide copies of the following documents if applicable:

A copy of an Environmental Statement. *	≤ Yes	T N/A
A Design Statement or Design and Access Statement. *	T Yes	≤ N/A
A Flood Risk Assessment. *	≤ Yes	T N/A
A Drainage Impact Assessment (including proposals for Sustainable Drainage Systems). *	T Yes	≤ N/A
Drainage/SUDS layout. *	T Yes	≤ N/A
A Transport Assessment or Travel Plan	≤ Yes	T N/A
Contaminated Land Assessment. *	≤ Yes	T N/A
Habitat Survey. *	≤ Yes	T N/A
A Processing Agreement. *	≤ Yes	T N/A

Other Statements (please specify). (Max 500 characters)

Supporting Statement

Declare – For Application to Planning Authority

I, the applicant/agent certify that this is an application to the planning authority as described in this form. The accompanying Plans/drawings and additional information are provided as a part of this application.

Declaration Name: Mrs Rachael Walker

Declaration Date: 11/04/2025

Payment Details

Pay Direct

Created: 11/04/2025 11:05

DECISION NOTICE

The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997

Detailed Planning Permission

Rachael Walker
Rachael Walker Architects Ltd
Mill Of Braco Croft
Pitcaple
Inverurie
Aberdeenshire
AB51 5JA

on behalf of **Ms Nicola Webster**

Aberdeen City Council in exercise of its powers under the above mentioned Act hereby **refuses planning permission** for the development specified below and shown in the plans and drawings listed.

Application Reference Number	250377/DPP
Address of Development	Borrowstone Bothy Borrowstone Road Kingswells Aberdeen AB15 8RR
Description of Development	Change of use from agricultural land to domestic garden ground and erection of 1.5 and single storey extensions to side
Date of Decision	12 June 2025

DETAILS OF ANY VARIATION MADE TO THE APPLICATION

None.

REASON FOR DECISION

The reasons on which the Council has based this decision are as follows –

The proposed extension would not be a small-scale, subordinate or ancillary extension owing to its built footprint and, combined with the existing extension, would more than triple the footprint of the original bothy and be substantially greater in width and length than the original building, as well as greater in height. The requirement to introduce additional green belt land into residential curtilage to introduce this additional extension demonstrates its excessive scale and would intensify the existing residential activity outwith its existing boundary. The design and siting of the proposal would introduce a second gable-end extension which would be visibly separate to the existing extended bothy, appearing as a separate building on the site, lacking a positive or complementary relationship with the original building and have a form and massing which would appear dominant on the site, compared to the existing extended dwelling, particularly from the south elevation which is visible from long views along the road due to the open setting of the surrounding agricultural land. Thus, the extended dwelling would not be of an appropriate scale, massing and external appearance and would not enhance the green belt, rather it would cause harm to the character, landscape and natural setting of the green belt, including from public views. Thus the proposal conflicts with Policy D1 (Quality Placemaking), Policy D4 (Landscape) and Policy NE1 (Green Belt) of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 and Policy 8 (Green Belts), Policy 14 (Design, Quality and Place) and Policy 16 (Quality Homes) of National Planning Framework 4 and the Householder Development Guide Aberdeen Planning Guidance.

A full evaluation and account of the processing of the application is contained in the report of handling, which is available by entering the application reference number at https://publicaccess.aberdeencity.gov.uk/.

PLANS AND DRAWINGS

PL-01	Location Plan
PL-07	Site Layout (Proposed)
PL-10	Multiple Elevations (Proposed)
PL-11	Multiple Elevations (Proposed)
PL-12	Multiple Elevations (Proposed)
PL-08	Ground Floor Plan (Proposed)
PL-09	First Floor Plan (Proposed)
	Other Supporting Statement
	Drainage Assessment
	Design Statement

Signed on behalf of the planning authority

Daniel Lewis

Daniel Lewis
Development Management Manager

IMPORTANT INFORMATION RELATED TO THIS DECISION

RIGHT OF APPEAL

If the applicant is aggrieved by the decision of the planning authority –

a) to refuse planning permission;
b) to refuse approval, consent or agreement requried by a condition imposed on a grant of planning permission;
c) to grant planning permission or any approval, consent or agreement subject to conditions,

the applicant may require the planning authority to review the case under section 43A of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 within three months from the date of this notice. A review request must be made using the'Notice of Review' form available from https://www.eplanning.scot/.

SERVICE OF PURCHASE NOTICE

If permission to develop land is refused and the owner of the land claims that the land has become incapable of reasonably beneficial use in its existing state and cannot be rendered capable of reasonably beneficial use by the carrying out of any development that would be permitted, the owners of the land may serve on the planning authority a purchase notice requiring the purchase of the owner of the land's interest in the land in accordance with Part 5 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

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Consultee Comments for Planning Application 250377/DPP

Application Summary

Application Number: 250377/DPP
Address: Borrowstone Bothy Borrowstone Road Kingswells Aberdeen AB15 8RR
Proposal: Change of use from agricultural land to domestic garden ground and erection of 1.5 and single storey extensions to side
Case Officer: Sam Smith

Consultee Details

Name: Scott Lynch
Address: Marischal College, Gallowgate, Aberdeen AB10 1YS
Email: Not Available
On Behalf Of: ACC - Roads Development Management Team

Comments

I note that this application is for the Change of use from agricultural land to domestic garden ground and erection of 1.5 and single storey extensions to side. The site is located in the outer city, outwith any controlled parking zone.

There is an adequate provision of parking (which is 6m in length, and therefore acceptable), bin storage and collection will remain as is, and the site is suitably far away from any adopted surface that there are no drainage concerns.

There are no Roads concerns with this proposal.

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Policy List

250377/DPP: Change of use of agricultural land to residential and 1.5 storey extension at Borrowstone Bothy, Borrowstone Road, Kingswells

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)

Policy 1 (Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises)

Policy 2 (Climate Mitigation and Adaptation)

Policy 8 (Green Belts)

Policy 14 (Design, Quality and Place)

Policy 16 (Quality Homes)

Policy 22 (Flood Risk and Water Management)

Aberdeen Local Development Plan (2023)

Policy NE1 (Green Belt)

Policy D1 (Quality Placemaking)

Policy D2 (Amenity)

Policy D4 (Landscape)

Policy R5 (Waste Management for new developments)

Policy T3 (Parking)

Aberdeen Planning Guidance

Transport and Accessibility

Householder Development Guide

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ABERDEEN
CITY COUNCIL

Marischal College Planning & Sustainable Development Business Hub 4, Ground Floor North Broad Street Aberdeen AB10 1AB Tel: 01224 523 470 Fax: 01224 636 181 Email: pi@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Applications cannot be validated until all the necessary documentation has been submitted and the required fee has been paid.

Thank you for completing this application form:

ONLINE REFERENCE 100708244-003

The online reference is the unique reference for your online form only. The Planning Authority will allocate an Application Number when your form is validated. Please quote this reference if you need to contact the planning Authority about this application.

Applicant or Agent Details

Are you an applicant or an agent? * (An agent is an architect, consultant or someone else acting on behalf of the applicant in connection with this application) ☐ Applicant ☒ Agent

Agent Details

Please enter Agent details

Company/Organisation:	Berryhill Land and Planning Ltd		
Ref. Number:		You must enter a Building Name or Number, or both: *	
First Name: *	Marianne	Building Name:	
Last Name: *	Evans	Building Number:	12
Telephone Number: *	07919921193	Address 1 (Street): *	12 Berryhill Circle
Extension Number:		Address 2:	Skene
Mobile Number:		Town/City: *	Westhill
Fax Number:		Country: *	United Kingdom
		Postcode: *	AB32 6BE
Email Address: *	marianne@berryhilllandandplanning.co.uk		

Is the applicant an individual or an organisation/corporate entity? *

☒ Individual ☐ Organisation/Corporate entity

Applicant Details

Please enter Applicant details

Title:	Ms	You must enter a Building Name or Number, or both: *	
Other Title:		Building Name:	Borrowstone Bothy
First Name: *	Nicola	Building Number:	
Last Name: *	Webster	Address 1 (Street): *	Kingswells
Company/Organisation		Address 2:	
Telephone Number: *		Town/City: *	Aberdeen
Extension Number:		Country: *	Aberdeen
Mobile Number:		Postcode: *	AB15 8RR
Fax Number:			
Email Address: *	[redacted]		

Site Address Details

Planning Authority:	Aberdeen City Council

Full postal address of the site (including postcode where available):

Address 1:	BORROWSTONE BOTHY
Address 2:	
Address 3:	
Address 4:	
Address 5:	
Town/City/Settlement:	ABERDEEN
Post Code:	AB15 8RR

Please identify/describe the location of the site or sites

Northing	807725	Easting	384883

Description of Proposal

Please provide a description of your proposal to which your review relates. The description should be the same as given in the application form, or as amended with the agreement of the planning authority: *
(Max 500 characters)

Change of Use from Agricultural Land to Domestic Garden Ground and Erection of 1.5 and Single Storey Extensions to the Side

Type of Application

What type of application did you submit to the planning authority? *

☒ Application for planning permission (including householder application but excluding application to work minerals).

☐ Application for planning permission in principle.

☐ Further application.

☐ Application for approval of matters specified in conditions.

What does your review relate to? *

☒ Refusal Notice.

☐ Grant of permission with Conditions imposed.

☐ No decision reached within the prescribed period (two months after validation date or any agreed extension) – deemed refusal.

Statement of reasons for seeking review

You must state in full, why you are a seeking a review of the planning authority's decision (or failure to make a decision). Your statement must set out all matters you consider require to be taken into account in determining your review. If necessary this can be provided as a separate document in the 'Supporting Documents' section: * (Max 500 characters)

Note: you are unlikely to have a further opportunity to add to your statement of appeal at a later date, so it is essential that you produce all of the information you want the decision-maker to take into account.

You should not however raise any new matter which was not before the planning authority at the time it decided your application (or at the time expiry of the period of determination), unless you can demonstrate that the new matter could not have been raised before that time or that it not being raised before that time is a consequence of exceptional circumstances.

Please refer to attached Grounds of Review statement

Have you raised any matters which were not before the appointed officer at the time the Determination on your application was made? * ☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, you should explain in the box below, why you are raising the new matter, why it was not raised with the appointed officer before your application was determined and why you consider it should be considered in your review: * (Max 500 characters)

Please provide a list of all supporting documents, materials and evidence which you wish to submit with your notice of review and intend to rely on in support of your review. You can attach these documents electronically later in the process: * (Max 500 characters)

Grounds of Review statement Planning Supporting Statement Design Statement Report of Handing Decision notice

Application Details

Please provide the application reference no. given to you by your planning authority for your previous application. 250377/DPP

What date was the application submitted to the planning authority? * 11/04/2025

What date was the decision issued by the planning authority? * 12/06/2025

Review Procedure

The Local Review Body will decide on the procedure to be used to determine your review and may at any time during the review process require that further information or representations be made to enable them to determine the review. Further information may be required by one or a combination of procedures, such as: written submissions; the holding of one or more hearing sessions and/or inspecting the land which is the subject of the review case.

Can this review continue to a conclusion, in your opinion, based on a review of the relevant information provided by yourself and other parties only, without any further procedures? For example, written submission, hearing session, site inspection. *

☒ Yes ☐ No

In the event that the Local Review Body appointed to consider your application decides to inspect the site, in your opinion:

Can the site be clearly seen from a road or public land? * ☒ Yes ☐ No

Is it possible for the site to be accessed safely and without barriers to entry? * ☒ Yes ☐ No

Checklist – Application for Notice of Review

Please complete the following checklist to make sure you have provided all the necessary information in support of your appeal. Failure to submit all this information may result in your appeal being deemed invalid.

Have you provided the name and address of the applicant?. * ☒ Yes ☐ No

Have you provided the date and reference number of the application which is the subject of this review? * ☒ Yes ☐ No

If you are the agent, acting on behalf of the applicant, have you provided details of your name and address and indicated whether any notice or correspondence required in connection with the review should be sent to you or the applicant? * ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

Have you provided a statement setting out your reasons for requiring a review and by what procedure (or combination of procedures) you wish the review to be conducted? * ☒ Yes ☐ No

Note: You must state, in full, why you are seeking a review on your application. Your statement must set out all matters you consider require to be taken into account in determining your review. You may not have a further opportunity to add to your statement of review at a later date. It is therefore essential that you submit with your notice of review, all necessary information and evidence that you rely on and wish the Local Review Body to consider as part of your review.

Please attach a copy of all documents, material and evidence which you intend to rely on (e.g. plans and Drawings) which are now the subject of this review * ☒ Yes ☐ No

Note: Where the review relates to a further application e.g. renewal of planning permission or modification, variation or removal of a planning condition or where it relates to an application for approval of matters specified in conditions, it is advisable to provide the application reference number, approved plans and decision notice (if any) from the earlier consent.

Declare – Notice of Review

I/We the applicant/agent certify that this is an application for review on the grounds stated.

Declaration Name: Mrs Marianne Evans

Declaration Date: 30/06/2025

Payment Details

Pay Direct

Created: 01/07/2025 11:52

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GROUNDS FOR REVIEW STATEMENT

ON BEHALF OF MS NICOLA WEBSTER

Change of Use from Agricultural Land to Domestic Garden Ground and Erection of 1.5 and Single Storey Extensions to the Side

At Borrowstone Bothy, Borrowstone Road, Kingswells, Aberdeen AB15 8RR

Application Reference: 250377/DPP

June 2025

LIST OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	3
Introduction	4
The Site, Proposals and Planning History	5
Development Plan and Material Considerations	6
Assessment of Application	7
Reason for Refusal	7
Conclusions and Recommendations	12
Documents	13

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Planning application reference 250377/DPP for the Change of Use from Agricultural Land to Domestic Garden Ground and Erection of 1.5 and Single Storey Extensions to the Side at Borrowstone Bothy, Borrowstone Road, Kingswells, Aberdeen AB15 8RR was refused by Aberdeen City Council on 12 June 2025. The applicant is seeking a review of that decision.

It is noted and welcomed that the requirement to extend the existing house is recognised by planning officers. It is also recognised that the design and proposed materials of the extension are acceptable. The key matters for determination of this application is whether the proposed extension is ancillary and subservient to the existing house. The impact of the proposal on the original bothy carries reduced weight by virtue of the previous consent to change its use to a home. The impact must be assessed in the context of the existing home. This Grounds of Review Statement demonstrates that the extension is smaller than the existing home both in terms of size and scale and is therefore ancillary and subservient to that existing home. There is no impact on the wider Green Belt and as such planning permission should be granted.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This statement has been prepared on behalf of Ms Nicola Webster (the applicant) in support of the request for a review of the decision to refuse planning application reference 250377/DPP for the Change of Use from Agricultural Land to Domestic Garden Ground and Erection of 1.5 and Single Storey Extensions to the Side at Borrowstone Bothy, Borrowstone Road, Kingswells, Aberdeen AB15 8RR

1.2 The planning application was lodged on 11 April 2025. The decision notice (Document 1) was issued on 12 June 2025 and provided the reason for the refusal as being:

The proposed extension would not be a small-scale, subordinate or ancillary extension owing to its built footprint and, combined with the existing extension, would more than triple the footprint of the original bothy and be substantially greater in width and length than the original building, as well as greater in height. The requirement to introduce additional green belt land into residential curtilage to introduce this additional extension demonstrates its excessive scale and would intensify the existing residential activity outwith its existing boundary. The design and siting of the proposal would introduce a second gable-end extension which would be visibly separate to the existing extended bothy, appearing as a separate building on the site, lacking a positive or complementary relationship with the original building and have a form and massing which would appear dominant on the site, compared to the existing extended dwelling, particularly from the south elevation which is visible from long views along the road due to the open setting of the surrounding agricultural land. Thus, the extended dwelling would not be of an appropriate scale, massing and external appearance and would not enhance the green belt, rather it would cause harm to the character, landscape and natural setting of the green belt, including from public views. Thus the proposal conflicts with Policy D1 (Quality Placemaking), Policy D4 (Landscape) and Policy NE1 (Green Belt) of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 and Policy 8 (Green Belts), Policy 14 (Design, Quality and Place) and Policy 16 (Quality Homes) of National Planning Framework 4 and the Householder Development Guide Aberdeen Planning Guidance.

1.3 The purpose of this statement is to set out the applicant's reasons for seeking a review and to demonstrate that planning permission should in fact be granted for the proposed development.

1.4 A Planning Supporting Statement and Design and Access Statement were submitted with the planning application. Both of these documents are referred to in the

Officer's Report of Handling. These are both critical to the determination of this application and are appended as Documents 2 and 3 respectively to ensure brevity and prevent duplication.

1.5 It is requested that Members of the Local Review Body visit the site and the surrounding area as part of their consideration of the planning application in order to see the existing context of the site and its surroundings. In the event that this is not possible, we have provided a number of images within this statement in order to provide additional context of the site.

2. THE SITE, PROPOSALS AND PLANNING HISTORY

2.1 Borrowstone Bothy is located within Borrowstone Farm to the west of Aberdeen. The area is characterised by agricultural land with scattered farms. There are also clusters of housing scattered throughout the area. These houses vary in age, size and form.

2.2 The site is part of a group of farm buildings and houses accessed from a farm track from the unclassified road which runs from the A944 at its junction with the A90 to Clinterty. Two single storey modern bungalows "The Spinney" and "The Beeches" are located on the north side of the farm track. Borrowstone Bothy is located to the west of the farmyard adjacent to Borrowstone Farmhouse and steadings. The steadings are arranged in a U shape and range in height from 1½ storey to 2 storeys with the Borrowstone Bothy and Borrowstone Farmhouse to the south of the courtyard. The house is shown in context of its setting as viewed from Borrowstone Road in the image below.

Fig 1: View to Borrowstone Bothy from Borrowstone Road (Image credit: Google)

2.3 The site itself comprises an existing dwellinghouse comprising of a single storey granite building with a modern gable wing which is 1½ storey. Consent was granted for this dwellinghouse by planning consent P160109. The house includes a

kitchen/dining room and a mezzanine which a provides a master bedroom and ensuite. The house has a large south facing garden.

2.4 The house sits to the north of its plot and the garden slopes gently to the south and west. To the north of the site are the steadings and farm courtyard, to the east the farmhouse (owned by the applicant's sister), agricultural land is located to the south and west. The farm is owned by the applicant's family.

2.5 The applicant requires a larger home to accommodate a growing family. They have explored with their architect the potential to reconfigure the layout of their existing home to provide more bedrooms, but this has proven not to be possible without the need to demolish the existing gable wing. This is not a sustainable option and is therefore not being progressed. The applicant is also keen to stay on the farm with their family and extended family as they provide a support network for childcare and such like. There are no other buildings within the farm or the farm cluster that are vacant or suitable for conversion to meet their needs.

2.6 The proposal is to extend the dwelling by mirroring the existing gable. On the ground floor will be a sitting/dining room and a bedroom and shower room. The upstairs will provide a further two modest bedrooms. The form and massing of the existing extension have been replicated on a slightly smaller scale and linked by a flat roof corridor providing a secondary entrance. The building will be built have a stone basecourse to match the existing building. The extension will have dark/black vertical and horizontal timber cladding. This will be complemented by dark grey aluminium rainwater goods and alu-clad windows and doors. The patio will be extended across the existing house and extension on the southern elevation. No external changes are proposed to the existing dwelling.

2.7 The application also includes the change the use of an area of agricultural land to create additional garden space. This has historically been used as a farm track but is no longer required for operational farming purposes. The area extends to 0.02 ha.

3. DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 The Development Plan for area comprises National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 (ALDP). The relevant policies of these are set out in Section 4 of the Planning Supporting Statement.

3.2 There are various material considerations are relevant to the planning application. The Aberdeen Planning Guidance (APG) is non-statutory planning advice. Aberdeen City Council's website advises that the suite of documents sit alongside the ALDP "and provide more detailed information on its policies…they will be used as material considerations in the determination of planning applications." The key point to note is the APG provides additional information but is not policy and cannot be directly applied to every proposal. The detail of the Householder Development

Guide (HDG) and the Transport and Accessibility parts of the APG are detail at Section 5 of the Planning Supporting Statement.

4. ASSESSMENT OF THE PLANNING APPLICATION

4.1 The application requires to be assessed against the development plan and other material considerations as per s25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended). This has been carried out in the Justification Section of the Planning Supporting Statement and we rely on this here.

5. REASON FOR REFUSAL

5.1 We note and welcome that the Planning Officers accept on page 6 of the Report of Handling, the need to adapt the existing home to meet present needs. We also welcome that they have no concerns with the architecture and form of the extension and the materials used. The reason for refusal is based purely on the massing and perceived dominance of the proposed extension. The reason for refusal can be split into two key components (Built Footprint and Scale, Design and Siting) as set out in the Report of Handling. However, prior to considering the reasons for refusal, it is relevant to consider the detail of the proposal.

5.2 *Existing Building*

5.2.1 The application is for the extension of an existing home. Change of use consent was granted in 2017 for the change of use of a farm building and adding an extension to form a home. This proposal is for an extension to that existing home. That home is the existing building.

5.2.2 In reaching their decision, the planning officer, in the report of handling, makes reference to the original building i.e. the bothy. The test in terms of original building is not relevant in this instance as the bothy has been, by virtue of the earlier consent, subsumed into the existing home. Both NPF4 and Policy 1 of ALDP permit extensions to "existing buildings" in Green Belts. Specifically, Policy 8 (Green Belts) of NPF4 permits "the intensification of established uses, including extensions to an existing building where that is ancillary to the main use". In this case, the existing use is residential. The purpose of the consent is to extend that existing use and therefore this use is ancillary and complies with this policy. NE1 (Green Belt) under sub-section d) permits development which is associated with d) development which is associated with existing activities in the green belt and is within the boundary of that activity, is small scale and does not significantly increase the intensity of the activity. Again, the existing activity is residential use, and an extension will not significantly increase the intensity of that existing use especially as the home will be used by the same household.

5.2.3 The policy reference to an original building is in subclause i) of Policy NE1 of ALDP and relates to the conversion/rehabilitation of a historic building. The change that

was permitted the change of use and the regeneration of the bothy by consent P160109 has been carried out and therefore no longer applies and therefore the original building test is no longer relevant. To confirm, the existing building in this instance is the existing house as granted consent in 2017 to form a house. This existing house is the combined bothy and the additional living area as shown in Figure 2 below. It is clear that the proposed development has to be accepted in principle on the basis of an extension to an existing building.

Fig 2: Existing House Floor Plan and Photograph

5.3 *Built Footprint*

5.3.1 The reason for refusal advises that the proposed development would not be small scale, subordinate or ancillary as "owing to its built footprint and, combined with the existing extension, would more than triple the footprint of the original bothy and be substantially greater in width and length than the original building". This is discussed in the report of handling under the "Built Footprint" section. The Planning Officer concludes that the proposed extension is substantially larger than the original building, the original building being the bothy. This is not disputed. However, as outlined above, the policy test which is set out in NPF4 and NE1 relates this scale to the existing building and requires the proposed extension to be subordinate and ancillary to the existing building. The existing building has a footprint of 137 sqm. The proposed extension has a footprint of 75.4 sqm. The extension is therefore subordinate and ancillary to the existing building. This is also applicable in terms of the internal floor areas with the existing building being 132.7 sqm and the extension being 97.7 sqm and therefore the space to be added is less than the existing house.

5.3.2 The reason for refusal also suggests that the change of use of a farm track into residential curtilage demonstrates the "excessive scale" and would intensify the

existing residential activity outwith its existing boundary. The extension will sit for most part on the current gravel parking area which is part of the existing curtilage. Part of the extension will sit on an existing farm track that is no longer used. The farm track can be argued to be brownfield and its incorporation into the curtilage of the home will enhance the landscape character of the wider site. It is not considered to be excessive and provides a logical rounding off the curtilage. The image below (Figure 3) shows that the proposed extension and the extension of the residential curtilage will not impact on the green belt.

Figure 3: Existing and Proposed Development in the context of the additional land and image of existing track

5.3.3 This part of the reason for refusal cannot therefore be justified.

5.4 *Scale Design and Siting*

5.4.1 The second part of the reason for refusal relates to scale, siting and design. Under this section in the Report of Handling, concerns are raised that the proposed extension will be visually separate to the existing bothy and have the appearance of a new, separate building by virtue of the proposed link and it being set back. It suggests that the extension is visually separate. This is not the case. The 3D visual below which was submitted as part of the planning application (Drawing 122-PL-12), shows that the proposed extension blends with the existing house and there is cohesion between the existing house and the proposed extension.

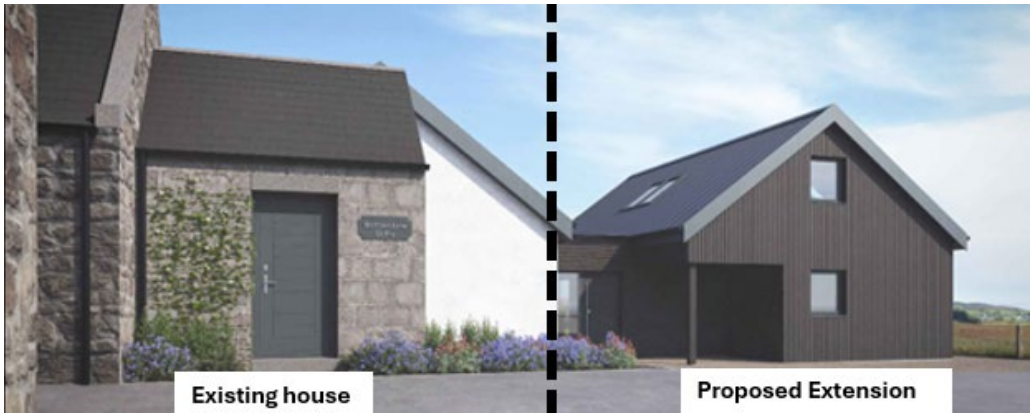

Figure 4: Proposed North Elevation (Part of the house is obscured by the Steading)

The elevation from the south also demonstrates the unity and cohesion between the existing house and extension.

Figure 5: Proposed Southern Elevation

The southern elevation above also shows the unity between the existing house and extension and demonstrates the subordinate nature of the extension compared to the existing home.

5.4.3 The report of handling also suggests that the extension is not subservient in nature due to a new entrance door being proposed on part of the extension. This door will replace a door being removed within the western elevation of the existing house. Figure 2 shows how this entrance works in the context of the existing house. The existing access to the bothy remains and is not undermined by the alternative access.

5.4.4 Concern is expressed in the report of handling as regards to impact of the extension on the bothy especially when viewed from Borrowstone Road. The Report specifically advises that "if approved, there will be very little evidence of the original bothy, particularly as seen from the public road (Borrowstone Road) as far back as 400m to the south which presents an adverse impact on the distinctive landscape character and setting of this area within the green

belt". The image below (Figure 6) which is taken 400m from the site shows that the views of the bothy, and indeed the whole of the existing home, from Borrowstone Road are limited.

Figure 6: Photograph of the application site from 400m (Image taken at 1x zoom on iPhone 16)

5.4.5 Figure 7 below the application site from approximately 200m from the site with 3 times zoom. This shows that the proposed extension will be seen in the context of the existing houses and farm buildings and the majority of the house will be behind the tree to the south of the garden which will be retained. It is clear that the views of the extension are limited and will not impact on the character, landscape and natural setting of the green belt as suggested in the reason for refusal.

Figure 7: Photograph of the application site from 200m (Image taken at 3x zoom on iPhone 16)

5.5 *Other matters referred to in the Report of Handling*

5.5.1 Alternative Design solution

5.5.1.1 Planning Officers suggest in the report of handing that the existing extension could be extended northwards. The inside of the property does not lend itself to this and would not result in the required space. In addition, an extension to the north of the building would compromise access to the remainder of the farm buildings. It would also in our opinion impact on the northern elevation of the bothy part of the building.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 It is our opinion that the proposed extension at Borrowstone Bothy complies with Development Plan. The scale and massing of the proposed extension is appropriate in the context of the existing home and will not be prominent in the existing countryside and is appropriate in its Green Belt setting. It is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission is granted for this application.

DOCUMENTS

Document 1 – Decision Notice

DECISION NOTICE

The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997

Detailed Planning Permission

Rachael Walker
Rachael Walker Architects Ltd
Mill Of Braco Croft
Pitcaple
Inverurie
Aberdeenshire
AB51 5JA

on behalf of **Ms Nicola Webster**

Aberdeen City Council in exercise of its powers under the above mentioned Act hereby **refuses planning permission** for the development specified below and shown in the plans and drawings listed.

Application Reference Number	250377/DPP
Address of Development	Borrowstone Bothy Borrowstone Road Kingswells Aberdeen AB15 8RR
Description of Development	Change of use from agricultural land to domestic garden ground and erection of 1.5 and single storey extensions to side
Date of Decision	12 June 2025

DETAILS OF ANY VARIATION MADE TO THE APPLICATION

None.

REASON FOR DECISION

The reasons on which the Council has based this decision are as follows –

The proposed extension would not be a small-scale, subordinate or ancillary extension owing to its built footprint and, combined with the existing extension, would more than triple the footprint of the original bothy and be substantially greater in width and length than the original building, as well as greater in height. The requirement to introduce additional green belt land into residential curtilage to introduce this additional extension demonstrates its excessive scale and would intensify the existing residential activity outwith its existing boundary. The design and siting of the proposal would introduce a second gable-end extension which would be visibly separate to the existing extended bothy, appearing as a separate building on the site, lacking a positive or complementary relationship with the original building and have a form and massing which would appear dominant on the site, compared to the existing extended dwelling, particularly from the south elevation which is visible from long views along the road due to the open setting of the surrounding agricultural land. Thus, the extended dwelling would not be of an appropriate scale, massing and external appearance and would not enhance the green belt, rather it would cause harm to the character, landscape and natural setting of the green belt, including from public views. Thus the proposal conflicts with Policy D1 (Quality Placemaking), Policy D4 (Landscape) and Policy NE1 (Green Belt) of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 and Policy 8 (Green Belts), Policy 14 (Design, Quality and Place) and Policy 16 (Quality Homes) of National Planning Framework 4 and the Householder Development Guide Aberdeen Planning Guidance.

A full evaluation and account of the processing of the application is contained in the report of handling, which is available by entering the application reference number at https://publicaccess.aberdeencity.gov.uk/.

PLANS AND DRAWINGS

PL-01	Location Plan
PL-07	Site Layout (Proposed)
PL-10	Multiple Elevations (Proposed)
PL-11	Multiple Elevations (Proposed)
PL-12	Multiple Elevations (Proposed)
PL-08	Ground Floor Plan (Proposed)
PL-09	First Floor Plan (Proposed)
	Other Supporting Statement
	Drainage Assessment
	Design Statement

Signed on behalf of the planning authority

Daniel Lewis

Daniel Lewis
Development Management Manager

IMPORTANT INFORMATION RELATED TO THIS DECISION

RIGHT OF APPEAL

If the applicant is aggrieved by the decision of the planning authority –

a) to refuse planning permission;
b) to refuse approval, consent or agreement requried by a condition imposed on a grant of planning permission;
c) to grant planning permission or any approval, consent or agreement subject to conditions,

the applicant may require the planning authority to review the case under section 43A of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 within three months from the date of this notice. A review request must be made using the'Notice of Review' form available from https://www.eplanning.scot/.

SERVICE OF PURCHASE NOTICE

If permission to develop land is refused and the owner of the land claims that the land has become incapable of reasonably beneficial use in its existing state and cannot be rendered capable of reasonably beneficial use by the carrying out of any development that would be permitted, the owners of the land may serve on the planning authority a purchase notice requiring the purchase of the owner of the land's interest in the land in accordance with Part 5 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

PLANNING SUPPORTING STATEMENT

Alterations and Extension to Dwellinghouse and Change of Use of Agricultural Ground to Garden Ground

Borrowstone Bothy, Kingswells, Aberdeen AB15 8RR

April 2025

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This is a planning supporting statement in respect of a proposed extension and alterations to Borrowstone Bothy, Kingswells, Aberdeen AB15 8RR and the change of use from agricultural land to garden ground. This statement will describe the site and the proposals, set out the planning polices applicable to this application and thereafter justify why planning consent should be granted.

2. THE SITE

2.1 Borrowstone Bothy is located within Borrowstone Farm to the west of Aberdeen. The area is characterised by agricultural land with scattered farms. There are also clusters of housing scattered throughout the area. These houses vary in age, size and form.

2.2 The site is part of a group of farm buildings and houses accessed from a farm track from the unclassified roads which runs from the A944 at its junction with the A90 to Clinterty. Two single storey modern bungalows "The Spinney" and "The Beeches" are located on the north side of the farm track. Borrowstone Bothy is located to the west of the farmyard adjacent to Borrowstone Farmhouse and steadings. The steadings are arranged in a U shape and range in height from 1½ storey to 2 storeys with the Borrowstone Bothy and Borrowstone Farmhouse to the south of the courtyard.

2.3 The site itself comprises an existing dwellinghouse comprising of a single storey granite building with a modern gable wing which is 1½ storey. Consent was granted for this dwellinghouse by planning consent P160109. The house includes a kitchen/dining room and mezzanine with a provides a master bedroom and ensuite. The house has a large south facing garden.

2.4 The house sits to the north of its plot and the garden slopes gently to the south and west. To the north of the site are the steadings and farm courtyard, to the east the farmhouse (owned by the applicant's sister), agricultural land is located to the south and west. The farm is owned by the applicant's family.

3. THE PROPOSAL

3.1 The applicant requires a larger home to accommodate a growing family. They have explored with their architect the potential to reconfigure the layout of their existing home to provide more bedrooms, but this has proven not to be possible without the need to demolish the existing gable wing. This is not a sustainable option and is therefore not being progressed. The applicant is also keen to stay on the farm with their family and extended family as they provide a support network for childcare and

such like. There are no other buildings within the farm or the farm cluster that are vacant or suitable for conversion to meet their needs.

3.2 The proposal is to extend the dwelling by mirroring the existing gable. On the ground floor will be a sitting/dining room and a bedroom and shower room. The upstairs will provide a further two modest bedrooms. The form and massing of the existing extension have been replicated and linked by a flat roof corridor providing a secondary entrance. The building will be built have a stone basecourse to match the existing building. The extension will have dark/black vertical and horizontal timber cladding. This will be complemented by dark grey aluminium rainwater goods and alu-clad windows and doors. The patio will be extended across the existing house and extension on the southern elevation. No external changes are proposed to the existing dwelling.

3.3 The proposal is also change the use of an area of agricultural land to create additional garden space. This has historically been used as a farm track but is no longer required for operational farming purposes. The area extends to 0.02 ha.

4. THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

4.1 The Development Plan for the area comprises National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 (ALDP).

4.2 The policies of NPF4 considered to be relevant to this application are:

Policy 1 (Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises) advises that when considering all development proposals significant weight will be given to the climate change and nature crises.

Policy 2 (Climate mitigation and adaptation) aims to encourage, promote and facilitate development that minimises emissions and adapts to the current and future aspects of climate change.

Policy 8 (Green Belts) advises that development proposals within a designated green belt will be supported if they are for the intensification of established uses including extensions to an existing building, where it is ancillary to its main use and that:

- reasons are provided as to why a green belt location is essential and why it cannot be located on alternative location outwith the green belt,
- the purpose of the green belt at that location is not undermined,
- the proposal is compatible with the surrounding established countryside and landscape character,
- the proposal has been designed to ensure it is of an appropriate scale, massing and external appearance and uses materials that minimise the visual impact on the green belt as far as possible, and

- there will be no significant long term impacts on the environmental quality of the green belt.

Policy 14 (Design Quality and Place) requires development proposals to be designed to improve the quality of an area whether in urban or rural locations and regardless of scale. It also advises that development proposals will be supported where they are consistent with the six qualities of successful places. Conversely, it advises that development proposals that are poorly designed, detrimental to the surrounding area or inconsistent with the six qualities of place will not be supported.

Policy 16 (Quality Homes) advises at (g) that householder development proposals will be supported where they:

i) do not have a detrimental impact on the character or environmental quality of the home and surrounding area in terms of size, design and materials; and

ii) do not have a detrimental effect on neighbouring properties in terms of physical impact, overlooking and overshadowing.

4.3 The relevant policies of the ALDP are as follows:

NE1 (Green Belt) carries a presumption against most forms of development. There are some exceptions to this including d) development which is associated with existing activities in the green belt and is within the boundary of that activity, is small scale and does not significantly increase the intensity of the activity and the proposed built construction is subordinate to what already exists (including extensions to existing buildings). Subclause i) relates to the conversion/rehabilitation of a historic building. If extending the original building, the original building will remain visually dominant to the extension, the design and siting of the extension will be sympathetic in terms of massing, detailing and materials and it will relate to the original building.

Policy D1 (Quality Placemaking) is similar to Policy 14 of NPF4 and requires high standards of design, the creation of successful and sustainable places and the creation of a strong and distinctive sense of place demonstrated by the six essential qualities of a successful place.

Policy D2 (Amenity) provides the criteria for an appropriate level of amenity to be provided in developments to ensure appropriate levels of daylight, sunlight, noise, air quality and immediate outlook.

Policy D4 (Landscape) requires development to provide opportunities for conserving or enhancing existing landscape elements (natural or built) that contribute to the character and sense of place. Developments should avoid disturbance to, or loss or

damage to important recreation, wildlife or natural resources or to physical or functional links between them.

Policy T3 (Parking) advises that parking standards as set out in the Aberdeen Planning Guidance (APG): Transport and Accessibility require to be adhered to as part of development.

5. MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 Various material considerations are relevant to this planning application. The APG is non-statutory planning advice. Aberdeen City Council's website advises that the suite of documents sit alongside the ALDP "and provide more detailed information on its policies…they will be used as material considerations in the determination of planning applications." The key point to note is the APG provides additional information but is not policy and cannot be directly applied to every proposal.

5.2 The parts of the APG that may be considered to be relevant to this application are:

Householder Development Guide (HDG) - This advises that the aim of the guidance is good quality design, careful siting and due consideration to the scale, context and design. The guidance sets out its General Principles as:

1. Proposals for extensions, dormers and other alternations should be architecturally compatible in design and scale with the original house and its surrounding area. Materials used should be complementary to the original building. Any extension or alteration proposed should not serve to overwhelm or dominate the original form or appearance of the dwelling and should be subservient in terms of height, mass and scale.
2. No extension or alteration should result in a situation where the amenity of any neighbouring properties would be adversely affected. Significant adverse impact on privacy, daylight and general amenity will count against a development proposal.
3. No existing extensions, dormers or other alternations which were approved prior to the introduction of the HDG will be considered by the planning authority to provide justification for a development proposal which would otherwise fail to comply with the guidance set out in the document.
4. The built footprint of a dwellinghouse as extended should not exceed twice that of the original building.
5. No more than 50% of the front or rear curtilage shall be covered by development.

Conversions of Buildings in the Countryside: this part of the APG provides detail for the conversion of traditional agricultural buildings and steadings to residential use. The majority of this APG has been written in the context of traditional steadings and

not as such cannot be directly related to the current application which does not include the conversion of an existing building.

Transport and Accessibility sets out the parking standards and advises that a 4 bedroomed house requires space for 3 cars.

6. JUSTIFICATION

6.1 Planning decisions must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Furthermore, all applications must be considered on their own merits. Whilst the bothy is a historical building, consent was granted for its use as a house under reference P160109. As it only had an internal floor area of 39sqm, the existing bothy did not have the scope to provide space to provide a home. The bothy was therefore enlarged to provide the accommodation the applicant needed at the time. The area added to it at this time has a footprint of 79sqm and an internal floor area of 93.7sqm. The application was originally refused by planning officers however this decision was overturned by the Local Review Body as Members accepted that the proposal was in conformity to the Development Plan (https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=39116).

6.2 The applicant's circumstances have changed and they now require a larger home to meet the needs of a growing family. As the applicant's family already live at Borrowstone Farm they want to remain there as is traditional with many farming families. The steadings located to the north of the application site are used for farm equipment and a biomass plant (used to heat the homes on the farm) and there are no alternative properties on the farm. The applicant has explored alternative means of additional accommodation but this cannot be achieved within the existing footprint of their home.

6.3 Both Policy 8 of NPF4 and Policy 1 of the ALDP permit extensions to "existing buildings". In this case, the existing building is the house that was granted planning permission by virtue of planning consent P160109. This existing building amounts to a footprint of 137sqm (internal floor area of 132.7sqm). Various tests associated with the above policies need to then be considered. Residential use in the greenbelt has been established by the existing use of the property and this use does not undermine the purpose of the green belt at this location. Policy NE1 advises that extensions to existing activities should be small scale. On the basis that this policy is designed to cover a range of green belt activities including, for example, quarries, golf courses, businesses etc, extensions to existing houses are naturally small scale. Both Policy 8 of NPF4 and NE1 of ALDP are specific in that they refer to existing buildings. The current application does not relate to the conversion/rehabilitation of a traditional building as that change of use was granted by the previous consent and therefore

subsection i) of policy NE1 is not applicable in this instance. However, it is accepted that the proposal needs to meet the tests of being appropriate in scale, massing, external appearance and uses materials that minimize the visual impact on the green belt as far as possible. In this respect it is helpful to turn to the guidance set out in the general principles of the HDG.

Proposals for extensions, dormers and other alternations should be architecturally compatible in design and scale with the original house and its surrounding area. Materials used should be complementary to the original building. Any extension or alteration proposed should not serve to overwhelm or dominate the original form or appearance of the dwelling and should be subservient in terms of height, mass and scale The proposed extension has been designed to replicate the gable of the existing building. Its proportions are similar, and it does not dominate or overwhelm the existing building's appearance especially as it will be located lower down due the slope of the site. As there are no changes proposed to the "bothy" part of the building, this will not be changed in its context of the steading courtyard and remains a key part of the historical part of the farm. Whilst the new wing is similar in size and scale to the existing gable it is smaller in footprint to the existing one. The materials have been carefully chosen to complement the materials of the existing building as shown on drawing PL-12(-) Proposed Elevations and Sections. These visually reduce the scale of the extension and helps it blend with the environment. As a result, the extension does overwhelm or dominate the existing building.

The scale of the extension also needs to be considered in the context of its surroundings. The neighbouring farmhouse has a footprint of 211sqm (internal floor area of 232.5 sqm). This compares to the combined existing building and extension having a total footprint of 212.4sqm (internal floor area of 230.4sqm). Additionally, the steadings are 1½ and 2 storey buildings which a backdrop. The proposal is therefore not out of keeping in the context of its surroundings.

No extension or alteration should result in a situation where the amenity of any neighbouring properties would be adversely affected. Significant adverse impact on privacy, daylight and general amenity will count against a development proposal. The extension will have no impact on amenity of neighbouring properties. The proposed extension is on the opposite side of the house to the neighbouring farmhouse and there are no windows that would overlook this neighbouring property. The nearest property to the west is some 380 metres away and therefore will not be impacted by the proposal.

No existing extensions, dormers or other alternations which were approved prior to the introduction of the HDG will be considered by the planning authority to provide

justification for a development proposal which would otherwise fail to comply with the guidance set out in the document. The existing home was granted planning permission under a previous Local Development Plan. The green belt policy and supplementary guidance was not materially different to that of the current NE1 policy and the HDG. This existing home has been consented and established under these policies and as such this current proposal is not being justified using precedent as the proposed extension to the existing home complies with policy as demonstrated by this supporting statement.

The built footprint of a dwellinghouse as extended should not exceed twice that of the original building. The existing building has a footprint of 137sqm and an internal floor area of 132.7 sqm. The proposed extension has a footprint of 75.4 sqm and an internal floor area of 97.7 sqm. The proposal is therefore significantly less than twice the size of the existing building.

No more than 50% of the front or rear curtilage shall be covered by development. 26% of the curtilage will be covered when the extension is added to the house. This is excluding the additional area of land for which consent is being sought to change use from the agricultural use to garden ground. When this is added the percentage covered is 20% thus complying with this part of the general principles.

6.4 The proposed extension therefore meets with the general principles in terms of scale, context and design and therefore meetings the requirements of NPF4 Policy 8 and NE1 of ALDP. The second aspect of the planning application is the change of use from agricultural land to garden ground. The area in question has historically been used as a field access but is no longer required. The area extends to 0.02ha and is *de minimus* both in terms of the overall scale of the farm and the surrounding green belt. The area will no be used for the extension and will remain as garden ground and its removal from the green belt will not have an impact on the wider green belt.

6.5 The extension also meets the requirements of policy 16 (Quality Homes) which advises that householder development proposals should not have a detrimental impact on the character or environmental quality of the home or surrounding area in terms of size, design and materials. The character of the home will not be detrimentally impacted by the proposed extension as it replicates the existing gable. There is no detrimental environmental quality on the existing home either and indeed by providing additional space to meet the needs of a growing family, it is argued that the environmental quality is enhanced. The second part of Policy 16 considers the impact of proposals on neighbouring properties. As demonstrated at 6.3 above, there is no impact on neighbouring properties and therefore the proposal complies with Policy 16 of NPF4.

6.6 The proposals also comply with Policy 14 (Design Quality and Place) of NPF4 and Policy 1 (Quality Placemaking) of the ALDP. The Design Statement submitted as part of the application demonstrates that the proposals are consistent with the six qualities of place. It also demonstrates a high standard of design.

6.7 The proposals also comply with Policy D2 (Amenity) of the ALDP. The south facing extension maximises the daylight and sunlight opportunities. Appropriate windows on the site and rear elevations also add to this. There were will no changes to noise levels or air quality as a result of the proposals.

6.8 In terms of Policy D4 (Landscape), the area of the proposed extension is currently hardstanding and used for car parking. Therefore, there will be an opportunity to enhance the landscape of the wider site. In addition, bringing an unused farm track into garden use will enhance the general landscape in the vicinity of the site by providing additional garden ground. No existing trees are to be removed for the development. The proposal therefore complies with this policy.

6.9 The application (Drawing no PL-07(-) Proposed Site Plan) clearly shows that 3 car parking spaces can be provided in line with policy and therefore the proposals comply with Policy T3 (Parking) of the ALDP.

6.10 The requirements of Policies 1 (Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises) and 2 (Climate Mitigation and Adaptation) are also met. This proposal is for an extension to an existing home albeit in the greenbelt. Although extensions do not require to comply with the R6 (Low and Zero Carbon Buildings) of the ALDP, it has been designed with energy efficiency in mind, especially with the passive solar gain afforded by the south facing elevation. The farm boasts its own biomass facility, and the home is currently fuelled by this. The extension will also be fuelled by this adding to the energy efficiency of the proposals. By virtue of proximity of the applicant to family members and shared resources there is less need to travel. The small scale nature of these proposals mean there is no conflict in terms of Policies 1 and 2 of NPF4.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 This supporting statement has demonstrated that this planning application for the extension and alterations to Borrowstone Bothy and the change of use of agricultural land to garden ground complies with the Development Plan. Material considerations also support this application. On this basis, it is respectfully recommended that planning permission is granted.

DESIGN STATEMENT

BORROWSTONE BOTHY
Kingswells, Aberdeen

Alterations and Extension to Dwellinghouse
and Change of Use of Agricultural Ground to Garden Ground

April 2025

RWA
RACHAEL WALKER
ARCHITECTS

Rachael Walker Architects Ltd
www.rwalkerarchitects.com

SITE APPRAISAL

Introduction

This document has been prepared for the application at Borrowstone Bothy, Kingswells for the alteration and extension of an existing dwellinghouse.

Site Location

The application site is located on Borrowstone Farm, which is positioned on the periphery of the Aberdeen City boundary, bordering rural Aberdeenshire. Borrowstone Bothy itself is located on the applicant's family farm. The immediate surrounding area of the site is agricultural and residential. There is a number of existing properties that are all accessed via a private track access, off Borrowstone Road. The site is conveniently located 1 mile North West of the A944 (which links Westhill and Aberdeen), and its junction / roundabout with the A90. This positions the property in an ideal location for commuting to Aberdeen and the surrounding area. The OS map and aerial photograph (*below*) shows the position of Borrowstone Bothy relative to Kingswells, and these main roadways.

OS map

Site Description

The site is accessed via a private access track past a number of residential properties. The site consists of the existing property and garden ground, bounded by timber fences. The land beyond is agricultural, owned by the applicant's family and belonging to Borrowstone Farm. The site benefits from panoramic long range views over open fields to the South East, South, South West and West.

Site Character

Viewing West - Existing dwellinghouse Borrowstone Bothy, patio (on right) and decking / garden ground (on left).

Viewing North East - Existing dwellinghouse and neighbouring Borrowstone Farmhouse (on right).

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SITE APPRAISAL

Site Character *(Continued)*

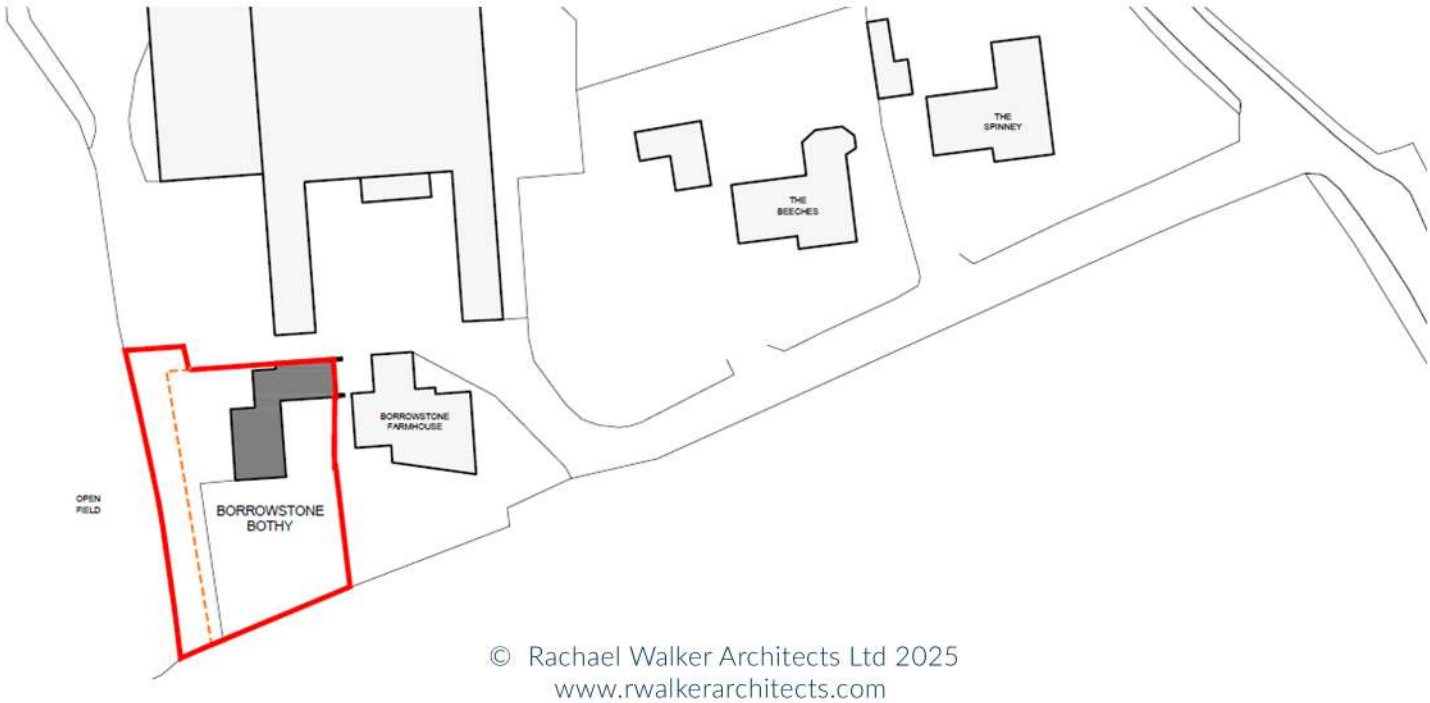
View South - Existing garden boundary fence to Borrowstone Bothy (left) and open field (right).

View South East - Existing dwellinghouse Borrowstone Bothy and current parking area (right).

View South - Existing dwellinghouse Borrowstone Bothy gable end.

View South East - Existing dwellinghouse Borrowstone Bothy North elevation and Borrowstone Farmhouse gable end (left).

View East - Existing dwellinghouse Borrowstone Bothy (right) and Borrowstone Farm Steading (left).



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DESIGN RESPONSE

Proposed Site Plan

The property is accessed via an existing site track access, running East to West, terminating at Borrowstone Bothy. It is proposed to retain the existing access / parking and turning area to the North West of the dwellinghouse to reduce the extent of groundworks required and allowing the farm traffic to continue operating as they currently do with minimal disruption.

The extension is proposed on the lower level of the site, on the same level as the existing kitchen / dining area. The position of the extension on this lower level, and its' general form, massing, heights and detailing mimics the gable of the existing dwelling. We have positioned the extension immediately adjacent to the West of the existing dwelling and have aligned the gable ends. In doing this, it is hoped that the two gable forms, linked by a small glazed hallway, can create one single dwelling on the site. The position of the extension allows for ample amenity ground, ensures the built-form across the site is consistent, and respects the already established building line. All of these key design decisions on site placement, scale and height creates a proposal which is seen to be a holistic addition to the existing dwelling.

Proposed Site Plan - N.T.S

Building Form & Mass

Precedent for form and massing of the new extension has been taken from the existing dwelling Borrowstone Bothy. The dwellinghouse is made up of a traditional stone bothy building and a contemporary render and glass gable. The proposed extension has been designed as a replica of the contemporary render and glass gable that currently exists. The form and massing, and the floor / eaves / ridge heights are all the same. Whilst the new gable extension is similar in size and scale to the existing gable it is smaller in footprint to the existing one. The 3D images below, and overleaf have been prepared to show the limited visual impact of the proposed extension in context, and its direct relationship with the existing dwellinghouse. In mirroring what is currently built on site, we are able to propose an extension which works within the context of the site, the wider surrounding landscape and importantly with the existing building that it adjoins - all while providing the necessary additional space required for modern day family living.

3D visualisation image - South elevation

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DESIGN RESPONSE

Six Qualities of Successful Places

The intrinsic character of the site and the existing dwellinghouse make this a **healthy** proposal. The rural location promotes an active lifestyle and the surrounding open fields and family farmland provides opportunities for outdoor pursuits, as well as having garden ground that is zoned for relaxation, leisure and growing home produce. The building, as proposed, will provide accessible accommodation and inclusion for everyone - something which the existing dwelling is not able to do currently with the differing floor levels. The proposed dwellinghouse, extended on one level, will provide an accessible bedroom, bathroom and kitchen all on the same level.

3D visualisation image - North elevation

The proposed design has gone through various iterations throughout the design process, all of which centred around the applicant's desire to have visual and physical connection to outdoors from their main living spaces. This connection with nature, to natural daylight, and direct access to quality, clean air cannot be emphasised enough when you are looking to create **pleasant** and well-designed built and natural spaces. The proposed layout and design will provide all of this for the applicant.

The location of the house ensures it is **safe** and **connected** to its place. The dwellinghouse is positioned adjacent to the family home farm, with the applicant's family members living in the Farmhouse and other relatives living nearby the farm hub. A key part of these proposals is to future proof the property for a young, growing family and ensure they can retain their socially connectivity with the family. It also allows the applicant to be within walking distance of family members, reducing car dependency and allowing for resource sharing.

As previously noted, the proposed scale, massing and form of the extension has used the existing dwellinghouse as a precedent. The building floor, eaves and ridges heights, orientation and building lines all match the existing dwellinghouse to create a clear, legible and **distinctive** building. Detailing and materials of the proposed extension will take inspiration and character cues from the existing building - explained in more detail on the next page. The new extension has been carefully considered in its built form and materiality as to not overwhelm or dominate the existing building, but instead be seen as a holistic addition.

The family farm has installed and runs its own biomass boiler which supplies both the farm, and nearby residential properties. The existing dwellinghouse is currently fuelled by the wood pellet biomass facility and it is proposed that the extension will be be built to a high thermal standard to ensure that the **sustainable** nature and character of the dwelling and site as a whole are retained and enhanced. Passive principles of orientation have been adopted within the design, in that the new extension is orientated due South allowing the main living spaces to benefit from solar gain throughout the day, which in turn will reduce the overall heating requirements of the house.

When assessing proposals to extend a property, it is necessary to think about the **longevity** and **future resilience** of the building. We carried out an extensive design review of the current building and explored whether it could be adapted for future needs. However, the outcome of this exercise clearly highlighted that the dwellinghouse, as existing, is not adpatable. The current proposals would ensure that the dwellinghouse is suited to growing family needs, provides an accessible and inclusive home and also importantly, is **adaptable**. The proposals to extend the property will provide additional living and bedroom spaces so that the building can cater for and respond to unforeseeable social, economic and environmental changes in the future.

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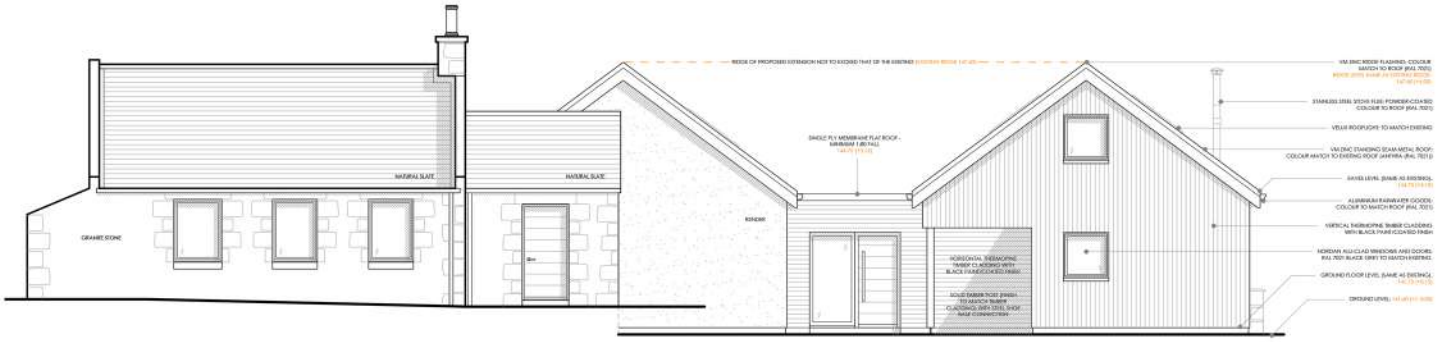
DESIGN RESPONSE

Materials

A simple pallete of external materials has been proposed for the new extension; to include dark grey standing seam metal, vertical and horizontal timber cladding, dark grey aluminium rainwater goods and alu-clad windows / doors. Standing seam metal has been proposed as a direct response to the existing dwelling roof - to tie-in and create one single, holistic dwelling. Similarly, the use of dark grey alu-clad windows and doors, and dark grey aluminium rainwater goods. Timber cladding has been proposed to bring texture and contrast to the elevations and to differentiate between the identical gable forms. And a natural stone basecourse balances the solidity of the bothy building. For full material details, please refer to Elevation drawings PL-10, PL-11, and PL-12.



2D drawing - North elevation

2D drawing - South elevation

Boundaries & Planting

Boundary treatment and planting will be respectful of the rural character of the site and in keeping with what is currently on site. The East boundary with the neighbouring Farmhouse will remain unchanged (1.8m tall vertical timber fence), ensuring privacy to private garden ground. This will continue to wrap around the Southern and Westerly boundaries enclosing the garden ground up to the point where it will meet the corner of the new extension. Beyond the new extension the boundary treatment will become a simple post and wire fence to keep with the rural character of the farming site. Planting / landscaping will be kept to a minimum to respect the already established landscape that borders the site.

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Document 4 - Officers Report of Handling

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL	**Strategic Place Planning**
	Report of Handling by Development Management Manager

Site Address:	Borrowstone Bothy, Borrowstone Road, Kingswells Aberdeen AB15 8RR
Application Description:	Change of use from agricultural land to domestic garden ground and erection of 1.5 and single storey extensions to side
Application Ref:	250377/DPP
Application Type:	Detailed Planning Permission
Application Date:	11 April 2025
Applicant:	Ms Nicola Webster
Ward:	Kingswells/Sheddocksley/Summerhill
Community Council:	Kingswells

DECISION

Refuse

APPLICATION BACKGROUND

Site Description

The application site relates to a small granite bothy, which has been previously converted into a dwelling and extended to incorporate a 1½ storey extension to the south of the western room, introducing a living, dining, kitchen space and a bathroom and utility room as part of the conversion of the original building. The dwelling has a north-facing principal elevation and the original bothy contained two main rooms and a smaller third room to the west side. The bothy was part of an existing farm grouping, containing a farm house and agricultural buildings sitting to the north. Access is off a private road, which leads to Borrowstone Road and the A944 Westhill-Aberdeen road beyond, past some other residential properties. A farm track runs on a north-south axis, adjacent to the western boundary of the site, with an open field beyond, which connects the agricultural building to the north and the fields to the south of the application site.

Relevant Planning History

- 150183 – Detailed planning permission was refused for the refurbishment and extension of the existing bothy in June 2015.

- 160109 – Detailed planning permission was refused for the conversion and extension of existing bothy to create one dwelling in March 2016. The principle of the conversion to a residential dwelling was supported, however, the extension was refused as it was not subservient to the scale and massing of the original bothy. The decision was subject to review by Local Review Body and was overturned in June 2016. This permission was implemented, with the resultant house subject of this application.

APPLICATION DESCRIPTION

Description of Proposal

Detailed planning permission is sought for the erection of a 1½ storey pitched-roof extension to the existing dwelling, extending into agricultural land proposed to be incorporated in the residential curtilage. The extension would introduce a second addition to the original bothy, of a similar scale and form as the existing extension, with a 73.5sqm footprint and height of 6m, connected to the existing extension with a 3m long hallway link (81sqm in total footprint). The extension would align with the existing to form a second, separate gable end on the south elevation and the resulting extensions to the bothy would measure a combined width of 17.4m and length of 11m. It would be finished with a stone basecourse, black-painted timber cladding and a zinc standing seam roof, fitted with aluminium-clad black-grey windows and doors and a 2m tall stove flue.

The proposal includes a change of use of agricultural land to be incorporated into the existing residential curtilage, to accommodate the proposed extension, currently comprising the 4.6m wide unsurfaced farm track running along the western boundary of the site and section of the driveway, forming an area measuring 220sqm.

Amendments

None.

Supporting Documents

All drawings and supporting documents listed below can be viewed on the Council's website at – https://publicaccess.aberdeencity.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=SUJVXNBZHUL00

- Design Statement
- Drainage Report
- Supporting Statement

CONSULTATIONS

Aberdeen City Council (ACC) Internal Consultees

- **ACC - Roads Development Management Team** – The site is located in the outer city, outwith any controlled parking zone.

External Consultees

- **Kingswells Community Council** – No comments received.

REPRESENTATIONS

None

MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Legislative Requirements

Sections 25 and 37(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 require that where making any determination under the planning acts, regard is to be had to the provisions of the Development Plan; and, that any determination shall be made in accordance with the plan, so far as material to the application, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Development Plan

National Planning Framework 4

- Policy 1 (Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises)
- Policy 2 (Climate Mitigation and Adaptation)
- Policy 8 (Green Belts)
- Policy 14 (Design, Quality and Place)
- Policy 16 (Quality Homes)
- Policy 22 (Flood Risk and Water Management)

Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 (ALDP)

- Policy D1 (Quality Placemaking)
- Policy D2 (Amenity)
- Policy D4 (Landscape)
- Policy NE1 (Green Belt)
- Policy R5 (Waste management Requirements for New Development)
- Policy T3 (Parking)

Aberdeen Planning Guidance

- Householder Development Guide
- Transport and Accessibility

EVALUATION

Key Determining Factors

The key determining factors in the assessment of this application relate to the scale and design of the extension and the change of use of agricultural land to residential curtilage, and whether there is compliance with green belt policy.

Policy Context

The application site comprises a converted and extended traditional bothy, now a residential dwelling, within the Green Belt. Policy 8 (Green Belts) of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and Policy NE1 (Green Belt) of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 (ALDP) requires the character, landscape, natural setting and identity of the green belt to be protected and enhanced. Development should also minimise visual harm to the green belt, not undermine the purpose of the green belt and not present any harm to the environmental quality of the green belt. Development which is associated within the boundary of an existing activity will only be supported provided it is small-scale, does not significantly increase the intensity of the activity and the proposed built construction is subordinate and ancillary to what already exists (including

extensions to existing dwellings). Section ii) requires development to be designed to ensure it is of an appropriate scale, massing and external appearance, and uses materials that minimise visual impact on the green belt as far as possible.

Design, Scale and Impact on the Green Belt and its Character

Alongside the green belt policy context of the site, falling under Policy 8 (Green Belts) of NPF4 and Policy NE1 (Green Belt) of ALDP, Policy 14 (Design, Quality and Place) of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and Policy D1 (Quality Placemaking) of the ALDP both expect development to be designed to be consistent with the six qualities of successful places, to be of an appropriate design for the context, and to not have an adverse impact on the amenity of the surrounding area. Policy D4 (Landscape) requires development not to adversely affect those existing elements of landscape character which contribute towards a distinct sense of place. Policy 16 (Quality Homes) of NPF4 notes that the development must not impact on the character, environmental quality of the home and the surrounding area.

The Householder Development Guide Aberdeen Planning Guidance (HDG) requires development to be architecturally compatible in design and scale with the host building and surrounding area and for the materials used to be complementary. Additional guidance in considering the design and scale of house extensions is also given in that the general principles of the APG outline that extensions should not overwhelm or dominate the dwelling and should be visually subservient in terms of height, mass and scale. Furthermore, the built footprint of the dwellinghouse should not exceed twice that of the original dwelling, and no more than 50% of the front or rear curtilage should be covered by development.

Consideration to the development and an assessment of the aforementioned policies will be given below under the relevant headings.

Built footprint

In this case, the proposed 81sqm extension and link, combined with the existing extension, would be substantially larger than the original building on the site. The footprint of the original bothy is approximately 60sqm and as extended, the dwelling would have a footprint of approximately 215sqm, making it more than 3.5 times larger than the original building. Paragraph 6.3 of the submitted Supporting Statement states that the proposed is significantly less than twice the size of the existing building. The original building on the site relates to the bothy, which was previously extended, and this statement is therefore inaccurate and misleading. The proposal therefore does not comply with the general principles of the HDG as it would more than triple the footprint of the original building, nor would it be small-scale or subordinate and ancillary to what already exists.

This Supporting Statement also applies the principles of the HDG to conclude that the extension meets the requirements of NPF4 Policy 8 and NE1 of the ALDP. The principles set out in the overarching policy however, require development in the green belt to be small-scale, not significantly increase the intensity of the activity and the proposed built construction is subordinate and ancillary to what already exists (including extensions to existing dwellings).

In light of this, the extension does not present a subordinate or small scale addition to the modest bothy and is thus contrary to Policy NE1 of the ALDP. While the development would technically be ancillary, in terms of its use, to the dwelling, a structure of this footprint, which contributes to more than tripling of the original footprint, cannot be deemed ancillary or subordinate in terms of scale, thus the proposal fails to adhere to the requirements of Policy 8 of NPF4 and Policies NE1 and D1 of the ALDP as well as the general principles for overdevelopment outlined in the HDG.

Scale, design and siting

The proposal would introduce a 1½ storey extension, matching the existing extension in form and scale, separated from the existing with a 3m long link which is set back 5.5m from the south elevation. This extension would thus have the appearance of a new, separate building on the site, which would be longer and wider than the original stone bothy. The submitted Design Statement makes the argument that the existing extension offers a precedent for an additional extension, which mirrors its scale and form. The existing extension forms an addition to the original bothy and the application proposal is similarly assessed as an extension to the bothy, which forms the host building for which an extension is required to be of an appropriate scale, massing and external appearance, as well as subservient. As such, the suggestion that this existing extension sets the precedent for another structure of a similar form and scale is not relevant. In addition, this argument is undermined by the proposal to extend this existing example further, and using the existing extended dwelling as 'precedent' further alludes to the proposal creating a visually separate building, as opposed to a subservient addition to the dwelling, even noting in the statement that this would be a 'clear, legible and distinctive building'.

This additional structure and separation from the existing dwelling as extended would significantly add to the dwelling's massing. The existing extension has a south-facing gable which measures 7.2m in width, which is already dominant in scale in relation to the original bothy's width (5.5m). The proposed extension would result in an overall width of 17.4m, presenting two gable-end structures on the south elevation, with the proposed addition having little visual relation to the original bothy. The resulting extension measuring 11m in length and 17.4m in width would thus be substantially greater in scale and massing than the original 5.5m by 12m bothy. With respect to height, the original bothy comprises a single-storey building, which is set at a higher ground level than the proposed extension (by c.600mm). Therefore, while the ridge of the proposed extension would be at the same level as the existing bothy, the proposal would be for a 1½ storey addition which would be taller than the original bothy. As a result, the scale and massing of the proposed extension, combined with the existing extension, would be significantly larger than, and thus not suitably subservient to, the scale and form of the original bothy in length, width, height and overall massing.

In assessing the impact of this large scale addition, when considering the level of development on this site, if approved, there would be very little evidence of the original bothy, particularly as seen from the public road (Borrowstone Road) as far back as 400m to the south which presents an adverse impact on the distinctive landscape character and setting of this area within the green belt. As noted in the Design Statement, the site benefits from long range views over open fields. The proposal would thus introduce the most dominant element (two gable-end structures measuring 17.4m in total width) to the south, making them visible and dominant from long views over this flat, open landscape, which allows it to be easily viewed from the Borrowstone Road and the surrounding area.

The proposal to incorporate the adjacent farm track from green belt land into the residential curtilage further demonstrates the excessive scale and dominant nature of the extension. The requirement to extend into additional ground outwith the existing residential curtilage clearly indicates that the development is not subordinate or ancillary to the existing residential activity contained within the existing boundary, or to the scale of the original bothy and site context. The submitted Design Statement states that the extension proposed 'works within the context of the site', however, this cannot be the case where the site needs to be enlarged and extended into the adjacent agricultural land to accommodate an extension of this size. The submitted Supporting Statement (section 6.4) notes that the area to be changed to garden ground would not be used for the extension and will remain as garden ground, to not impact the wider green belt. The proposed site plan however, clearly shows the extension extending to be 1.5m from the new boundary and

sited where the track currently sits. The extension would therefore significantly increase the intensity of the existing residential activity and comprise development outwith the boundary of the existing activity, in direct conflict with ALDP Policy NE1 and its presence would harmfully impact the landscape character of this area of green belt.

Paragraph 6.1 of the submitted Supporting Statement rightly outlines that applications must be considered on their own merits. Paragraph 6.3 makes reference to the neighbouring farmhouse. The main consideration of this application relates to the scale of the development in relation to the original bothy and the context of its site. As such, the footprint of neighbouring farmhouse is not a relevant planning matter.

It was suggested through the application process, by the Planning Authority that the existing extension could potentially be extended to the north, maintaining the general L-shape of the existing extended dwelling, while introducing additional floorspace over two floors in a more compact form to avoid substantially increasing the massing of the development and confine it to the private side of the site, screening it from public views. A proposal to extend the dwelling in this way would also avoid the need to extend into the surrounding green belt, presenting a proposal which is within the boundary of the existing activity. However, no amendments were made to address the massing of the proposal. The submitted Design Statement notes that the proposed design has gone through various iterations to achieve the desired needs and account for future needs, however, the applicant has not provided any information or details on these nor demonstrated or explained why any of them could not be taken forward. Design Statements would normally include this information as part of the narrative on why a specific proposal is ultimately taken forward. In addition, pre-application advice was previously given for this proposal which highlighted the issues with the scale and massing of the development and no material changes were made by the applicant to address any of these concerns. As such, while the principle of adapting the dwelling to present needs is accepted, it is not accepted that the most appropriate proposal has been considered which would increase the footprint of the dwelling and allow for the continued use of the dwelling, while preserving the character of the original bothy and surrounding green belt. The six qualities of successful places are further, required to be applied to ensure the pleasant and distinctive character of the surrounding green belt is preserved and not harmed by unsuitable development, which has been assessed in the foregoing report.

In assessing the design and layout of the extension, it would introduce a new entrance door being placed between the existing and proposed extensions, designed with a glazed panel forming a double-door appearance with an adjacent covered porch area, sitting directly in front of the driveway. This design would draw attention to this as a focal entrance point to the dwelling on the principal elevation, which would be completely separate to the original bothy. The bothy would become visually subservient to the later additions, appearing as a separate outbuilding to the side of these two dominant extensions which would form the main part of the dwelling, further failing to introduce a subservient addition to the original bothy.

In terms of materials, the proposed use of stone and timber for the external walls and metal cladding for the roof is considered to be high quality and suitable for the context of the green belt. With respect to the design and appearance of the extension in isolation, there is no concern with the architecture and form of the extension itself; the concern arises from the additional structure on the site which introduces an unacceptable overall massing and additional dominant structure to the original bothy, which is not small scale and subordinate.

Summary

The proposal would introduce an extension with the appearance of an additional building on the site which would not be subservient to the original building and combined with the existing

extension, would result in an extension which is 3.5 times larger in footprint than the original bothy, as well as substantially greater in length, width, height and overall massing. The proposed entrance within the link of the extension pulls the focus of the main section of the dwelling away from the original bothy, making it visually subservient to the later additions. The requirement to introduce additional green belt land into residential curtilage to introduce this additional extension demonstrates the excessive scale of the extension, particularly in relation to the original bothy and site context. The proposal therefore fails to meet the criteria for extensions to existing dwellings within the green belt as set out in Policy 8 of NPF4 and Policy NE1 of the ALDP, as it would not be subservient or small-scale in relation to the original building and would intensify the existing residential activity outwith its existing boundary. The design and massing of the proposed extension would also have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the property and the landscape character in the context of its siting within the green belt, contrary to Policies 14 and 16 of NPF4 and Policies D1 and D4 of the ALDP and the relevant APG.

Principle of Proposed Change of Use from Agricultural Land to Residential Curtilage

The area of land proposed to be included in the residential curtilage comprises a section of a gravelled driveway / access area associated with the agricultural buildings on the site and an unsurfaced single which connects the farm yard to a field to the south of the application site. The gravelled area is proposed to remain as an open gravelled area for turning cars, while the path to the west is proposed to be incorporated into the garden of the house. The change of use of this farm track and hardstanding in the green belt would not comply with ALDP policy NE1 as it would extend the existing residential activity outwith the existing boundary, intensifying this activity. In assessing the impact of this departure from the development plan, the change of use would not impact on the neighbouring agricultural use or result in the loss of any of the adjacent field, as it would be limited to the farm track between the neighbouring fields boundary fence and the existing residential curtilage. As there is another entrance into this field from Borrowstone Road, which appears to be the main access for agricultural use, the removal of this path is not considered to impact on the operation of this existing use.

Therefore, while the proposal is contrary to Policy 8 of NPF4 and Policy NE1 of the ALDP, the principle of incorporating the farm track and area of gravelled hardstanding into the residential curtilage would be acceptable, as this aspect of the proposal in itself would be small-scale and not undermine the function or character of the green belt.

Amenity

The only immediate neighbouring dwelling is the farmhouse, immediately to the east and within the same ownership. The proposed development would be confined to the west of the existing building as extended, and as such, would not introduce amenity harm to this farmhouse, or to any other properties.

Parking

Policy T3 (Parking) of the ALDP expects development to comply with the Transport and Accessibility APG. The Transport and Accessibility Aberdeen Planning Guidance would typically expect three allocated parking spaces for a four-bedroom dwelling. The proposed site plan shows suitable parking accommodation for the site and is therefore acceptable.

Drainage

Policy 22 (Flood Risk and Water Management) of NPF4 requires development to manage surface water through sustainable urban drainage systems and not worsen flood risk for surrounding sites

and Policy NE4 (Our Water Environment) of the ALDP 2023 would not support development where it would increase flood risk and expects new development to incorporate SuDS to manage surface water. The proposal seeks to introduce a new surface water soakaway within the garden to accommodate water run off caused by the new extension. This would be acceptable and there are no concerns with drainage within the site and the proposal would comply with Policy 22 of NPF4 and Policy NE4 of the ALDP 2023.

Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises, Climate Mitigation and Biodiversity

Policy 1 (Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises) of NPF4 requires planning authorities when considering all development proposals to give significant weight to encouraging, promoting and facilitating development that addresses the global climate emergency and nature crisis. Similarly, Policy 2 (Climate Mitigation and Adaptation) of NPF4 encourages, promotes and facilitates development that minimises emissions and adapts to the current and future impacts of climate change. Policy 3 (Biodiversity) seeks the enhancement of biodiversity.

Due to the nature of the development, comprising a change of use of a small section of green belt land confined to a farm track and an addition to the residential property, it is sufficiently small scale and does not offer the opportunity to address the global climate emergency and nature crisis, minimise emission or to enhance biodiversity.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

None

DECISION

Refuse

REASON FOR DECISION

The proposed extension would not be a small-scale, subordinate or ancillary extension owing to its built footprint and, combined with the existing extension, would more than triple the footprint of the original bothy and be substantially greater in width and length than the original building, as well as greater in height. The requirement to introduce additional green belt land into residential curtilage to introduce this additional extension demonstrates its excessive scale and would intensify the existing residential activity outwith its existing boundary. The design and siting of the proposal would introduce a second gable-end extension which would be visibly separate to the existing extended bothy, appearing as a separate building on the site, lacking a positive or complementary relationship with the original building and have a form and massing which would appear dominant on the site, compared to the existing extended dwelling, particularly from the south elevation which is visible from long views along the road due to the open setting of the surrounding agricultural land. Thus, the extended dwelling would not be of an appropriate scale, massing and external appearance and would not enhance the green belt, rather it would cause harm to the character, landscape and natural setting of the green belt, including from public views. Thus the proposal conflicts with Policy D1 (Quality Placemaking), Policy D4 (Landscape) and Policy NE1 (Green Belt) of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 and Policy 8 (Green Belts), Policy 14 (Design, Quality and Place) and Policy 16 (Quality Homes) of National Planning Framework 4 and the Householder Development Guide Aberdeen Planning Guidance.

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