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

- **Aberdeen City Council Local Housing Strategy 2018-2032**
- **Coming Home Implementation Report 2022**

Local Housing Strategy

2018 - 2023

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Appendices

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
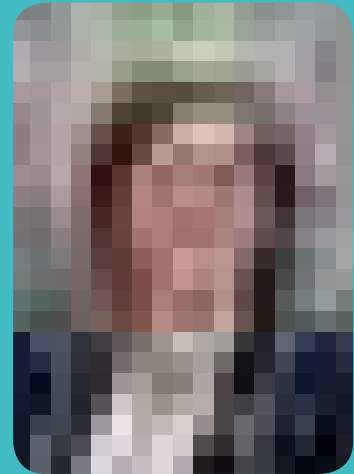
Chapter 1 - Introduction

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 km² (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.

○ **Aberdeen Housing Market Area**

○ **Rural Housing Market Area**
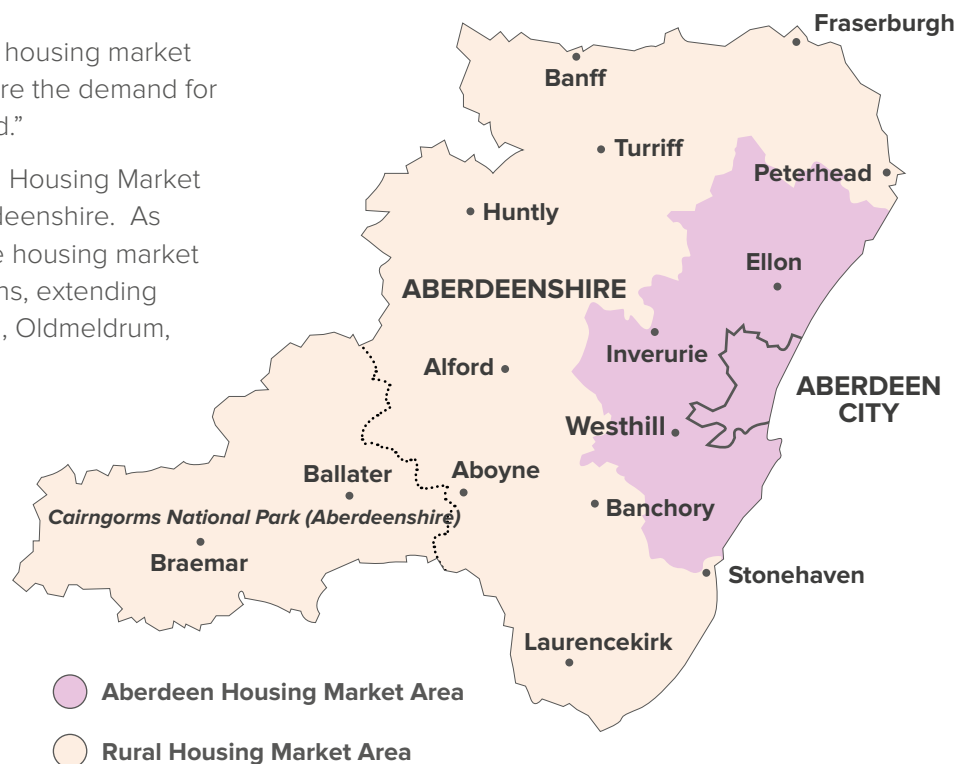
[1] Aberdeen City Council Strategic Business Plan Refresh 2017-2018

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

- Rented: Local Authority (22,041)
- Rented - Other Social (4,776)
- Private Rented (23,034)
- Owner Occupied (66,601)

Total Stock (116,452)

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
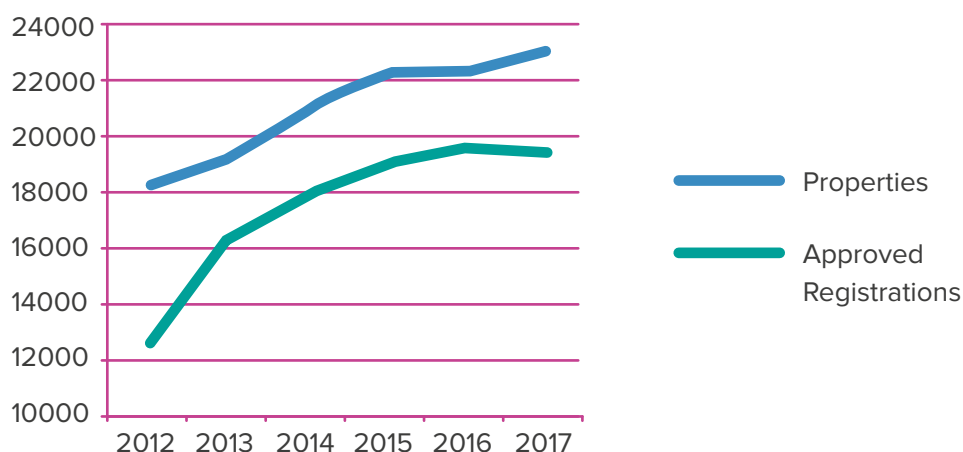
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Change 2012 - 17
Properties	18,249	19,160	20,949	22,252	22,312	23,034	4,785 (26.2%)
Approved Registrations	12,644	16,258	17,889	18,998	19,573	19,438	6,794 (53.7%)

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
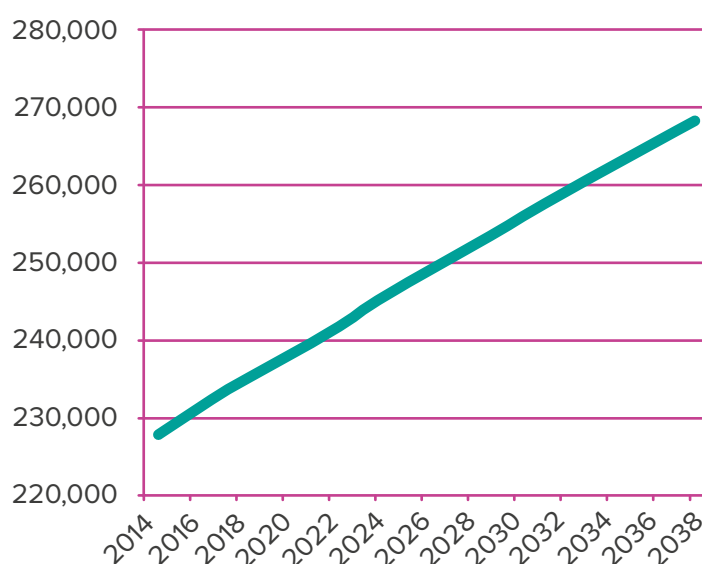
Source: National Records of Scotland (2016)

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
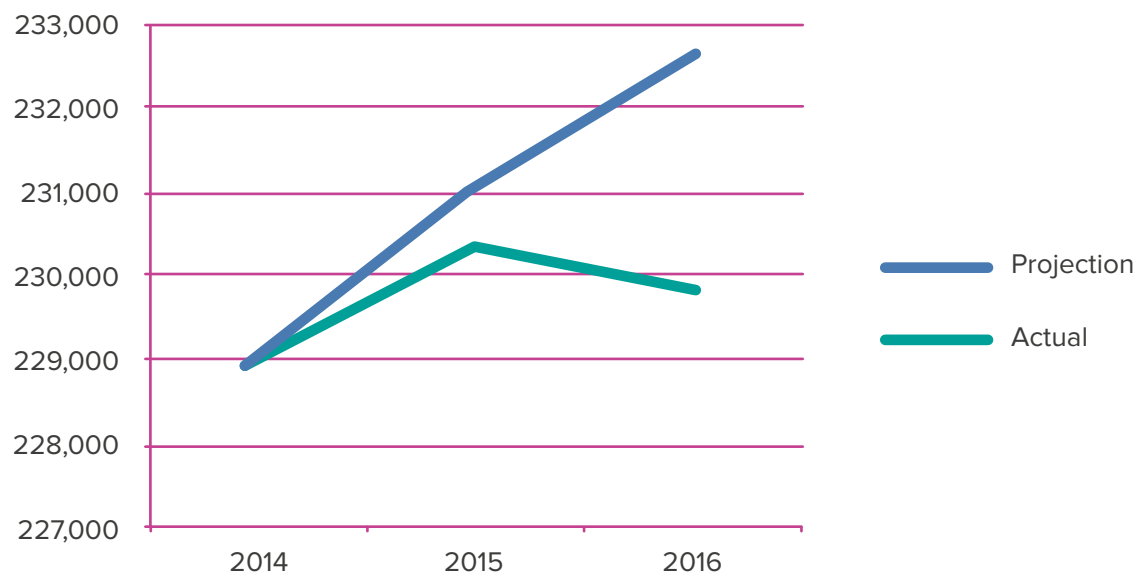
Households

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

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
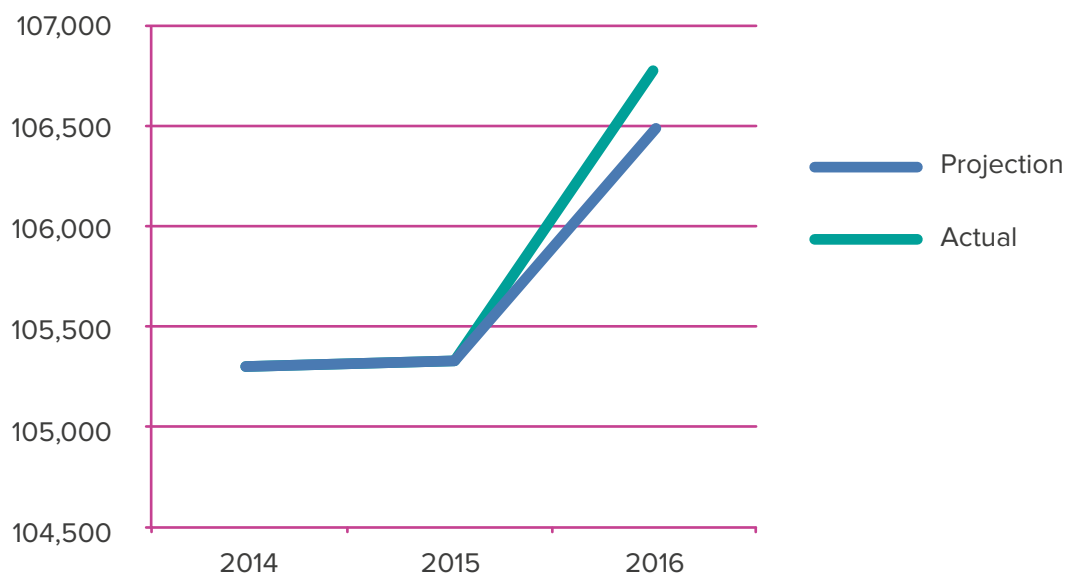
Source: National Records of Scotland (2017)

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
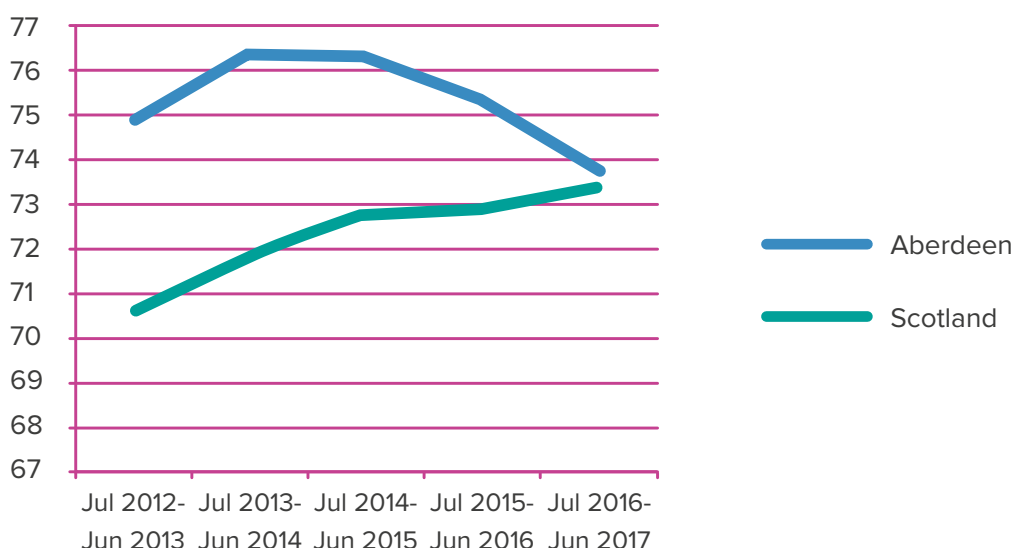
Source: Office for National Statistics (2017)

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)

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[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:
    - o   Online Housing Options and housing application.
    - o   Increase in front line Customer Service staff.
    - o   Holistic approach that accounts for individual's needs.
    - o   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:

  o   Money, debt and benefits advice.

  o   Temporary accommodation and floating housing support.

  o   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.

Local Housing Strategy

- Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing
- City Centre Living Strategy
- National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes
- Scheme of Assistance
- Housing and Regeneration Outcomes Framework
- Aberdeen Local Outcome Improvement Plan
- Scottish Housing Quality Standard
- Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan
- Scottish Energy Efficiency Programme Scotland
- Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2017
- Climate Change Plan
- Aberdeen City Strategic Commissioning and Implementation Plan
- Housing Need and Demand Assessment 2017
- Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2018 - 2023
- Communities & Housing Service Improvement Plan 2017 – 2020
- Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan

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.

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[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.
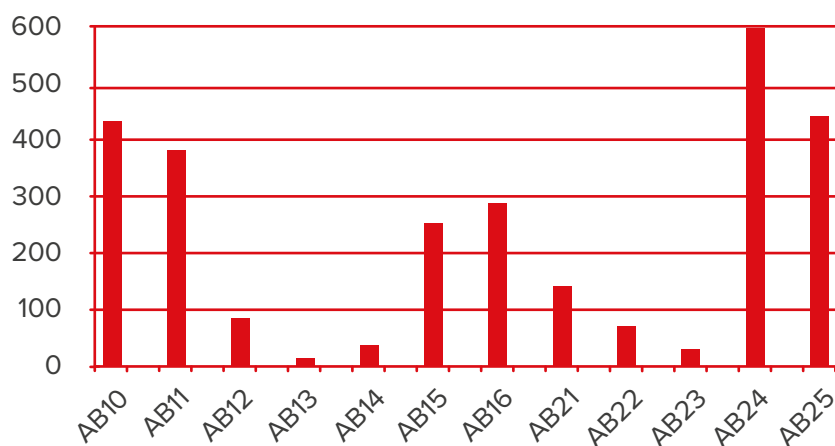
Figure 3.5: Length of time properties have been vacant within Aberdeen.
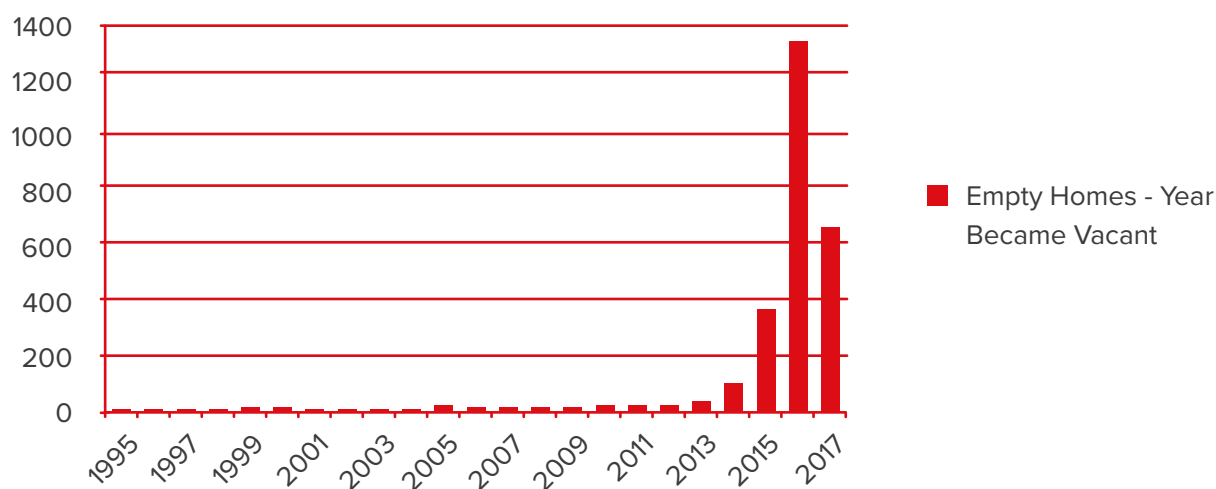
Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

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.

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[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

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.
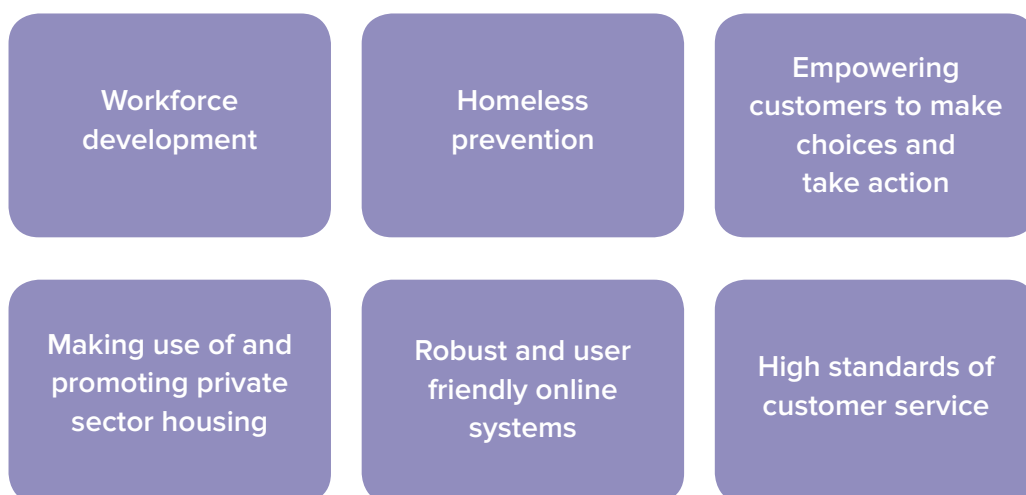
All applications for council housing are screened through the online housing options checker and proactively contacted by the council's Housing Access Service in an attempt to identify potential issues that could lead to homelessness. In line with the national Housing Options Guidance published in March 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	**Homeless prevention**	**Empowering customers to make choices and take action**
Making use of and promoting private sector housing	**Robust and user friendly online systems**	**High standards of customer service**

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.
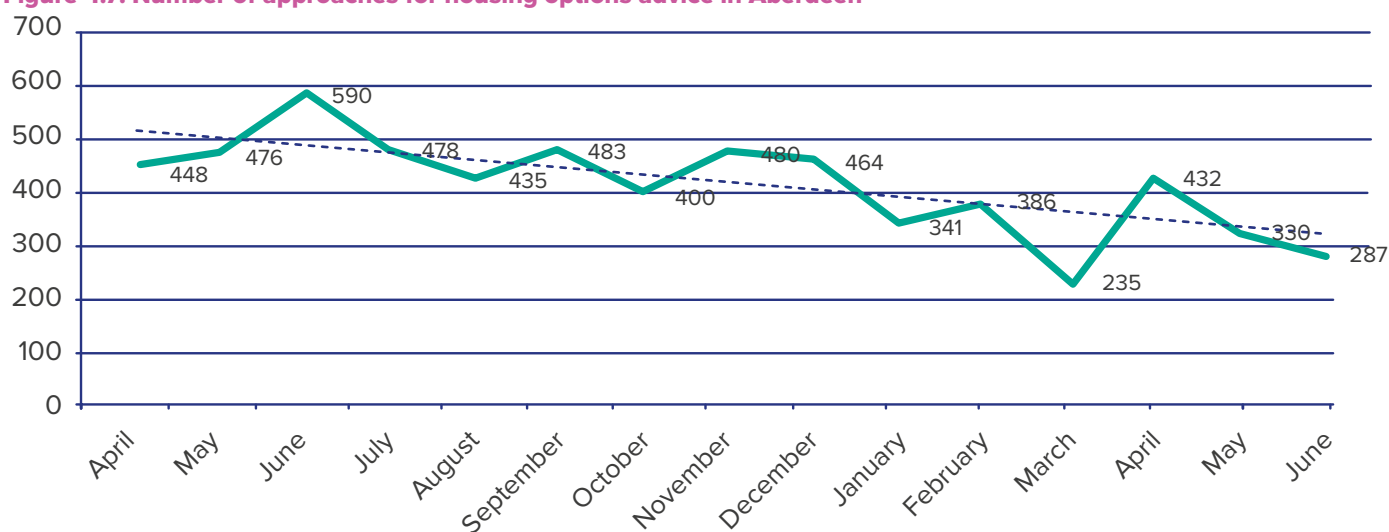
Homeless prevention

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.

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[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)

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[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.

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[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.

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[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)

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[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)
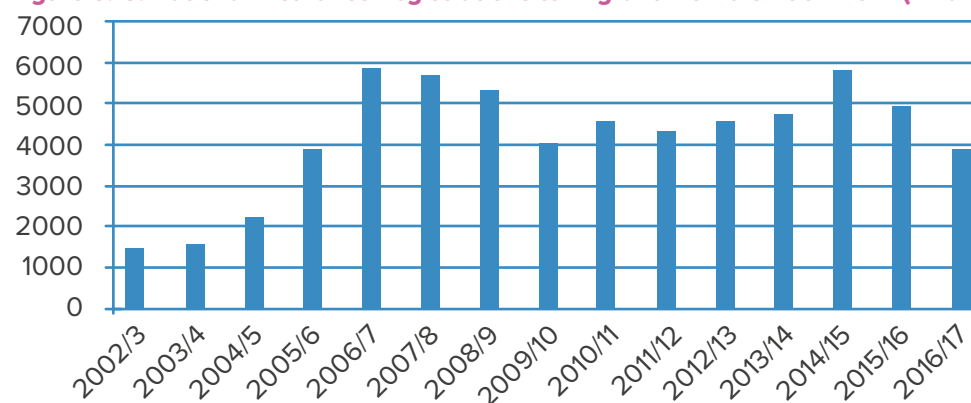
Source: Department for Work and Pensions (2016)

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[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

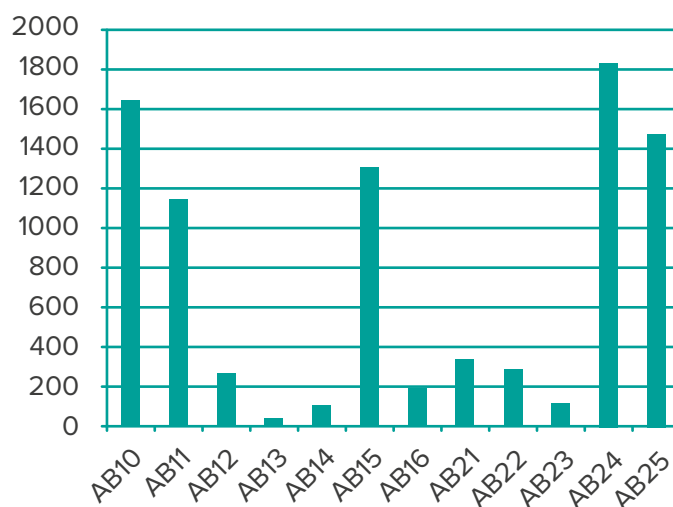|	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Change 2012 - 17
Properties	18,249	19,160	20,949	22,252	22,312	23,034	4,785 (26.2%)
Approved Registrations	12,644	16,258	17,889	18,998	19,573	19,438	6,794 (53.7%)

Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

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[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: Private Rented Sector Properties

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.

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
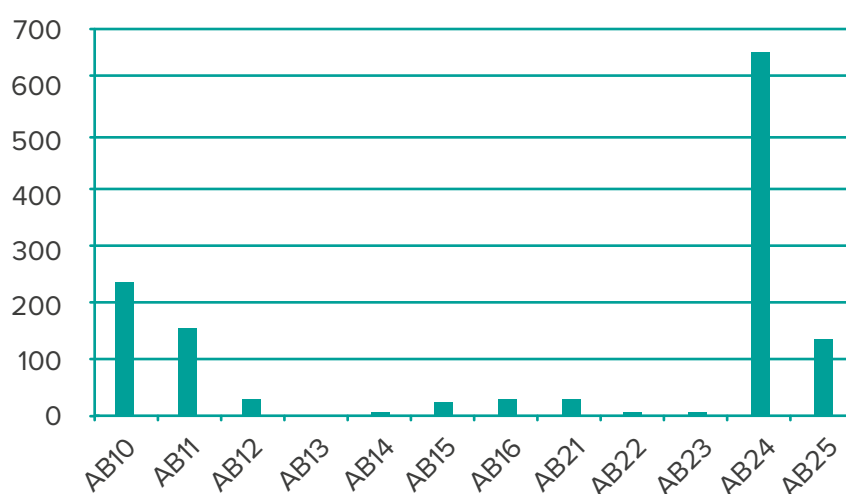
Source: Aberdeen City Council (2017)

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.

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[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.

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[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
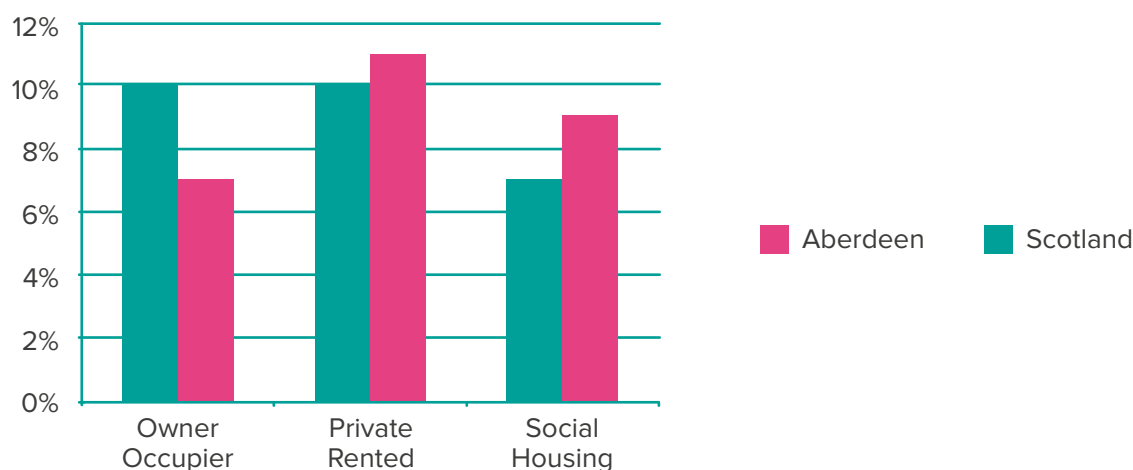
Source: Scottish House Condition Survey (2013-2015)

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.
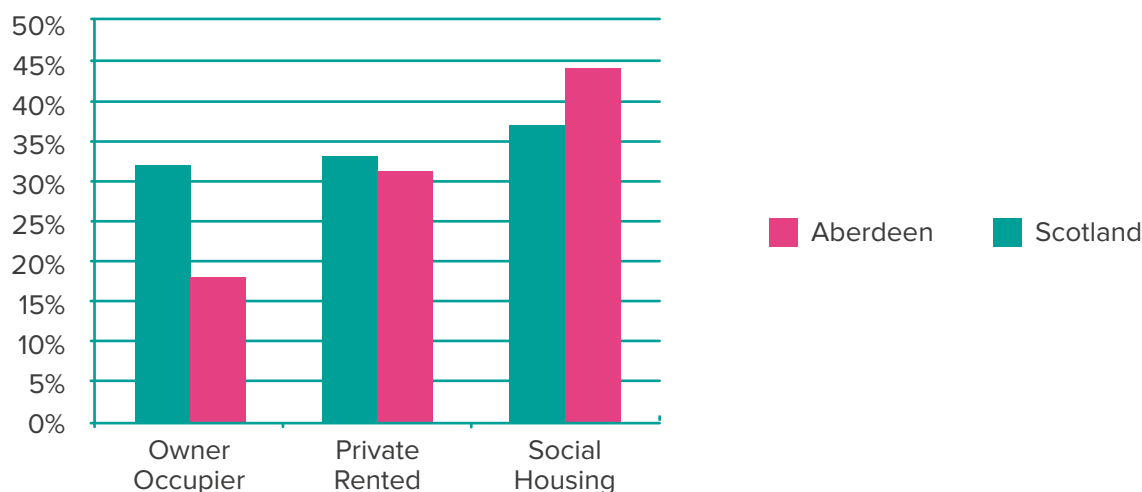
According to the Scottish House Condition Survey, the average SAP rating of all housing in Aberdeen has risen from 62.1 in 2003-2005 to 65 in 2013-2015, which is in line with the Scottish average. This improvement in ratings, whilst partly due to the increased numbers of new build housing (additional 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.

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[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
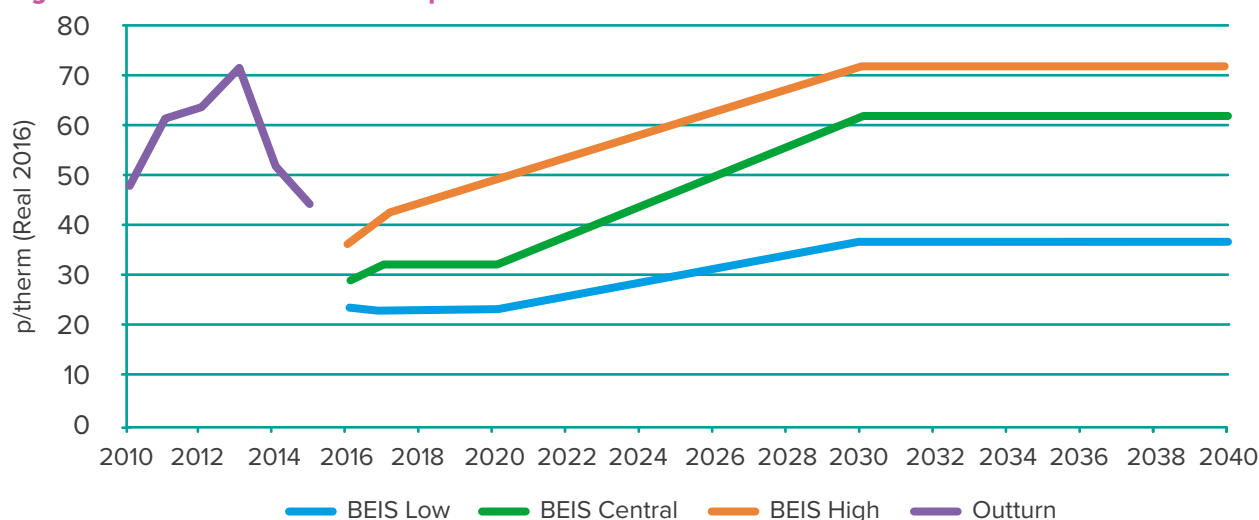
Source: Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (2016)

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.

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[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.

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[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
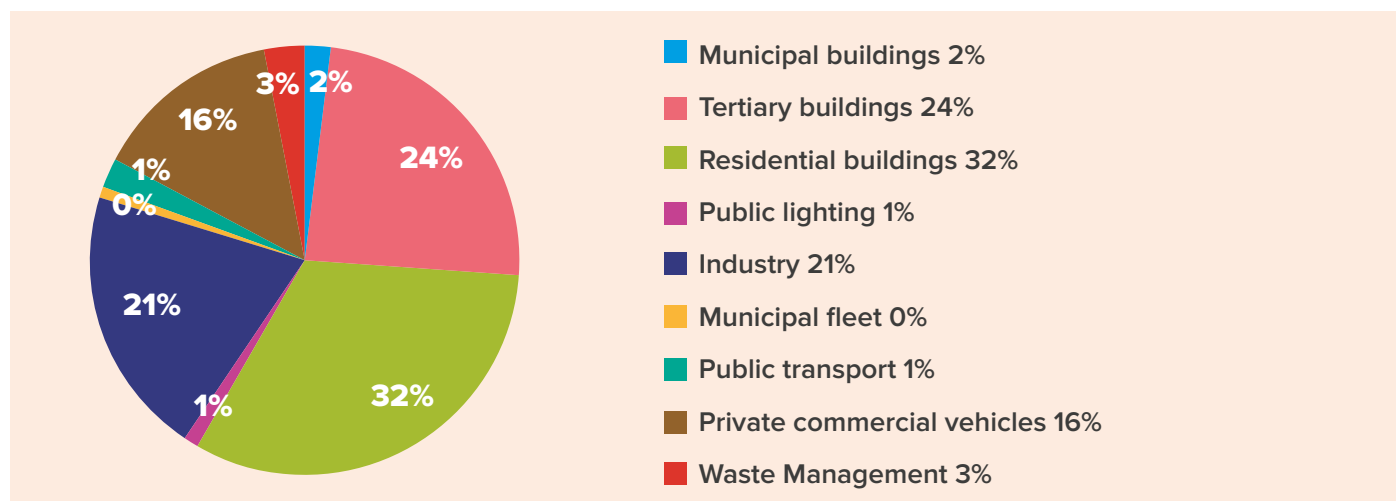
Source: _Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (2017)_

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.

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[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.

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[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.
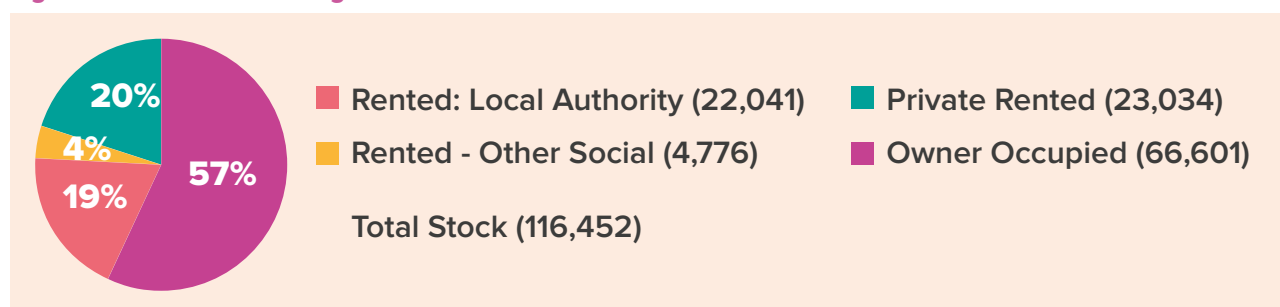
[2] The tolerable standard is a "condemnatory" standard; a house that falls below it is not acceptable as living accommodation.

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

■ Rented: Local Authority (22,041)	■ Private Rented (23,034)
■ Rented - Other Social (4,776)	■ Owner Occupied (66,601)
Total Stock (116,452)	

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

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[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:

   o deteriorate rapidly into a state of serious disrepair, or

   o 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).

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[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.

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[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 CO_2 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%	100%
		Castlehill 100%	
		Grampian 88%	
		Langstane 94%	
		Sanctuary 95% All as at March 2017	
Number of dwellings meeting Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESSH).	Annual Scottish Housing Regulator	Aberdeen City Council 86%	100% by 2020
		Castlehill 91%	
		Grampian 76%	
		Langstane 85%	
		Sanctuary 54% All as at March 2017	
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.

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.
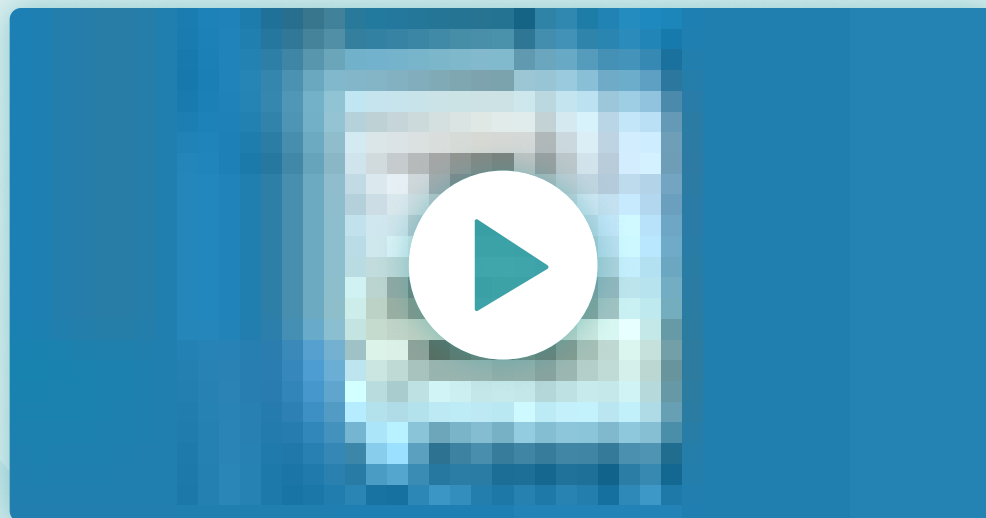
Vision:

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.

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.

"Ordinary Place of Residence rules meant there could be no continuation of care staff"

"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. 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.

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.

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]

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2 Challenging Behaviour: A Unified Approach' Royal College of Psychiatrists, British Psychological Society & Royal College of SALT 2007

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. 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

How I grow and develop

- Communicting/being understood
- Participating in community life
- Learning to be responsible
- Enjoying family and friends
- Confidence in who I am
- Lifelong learning
- Being healthy

What I need from the people who look after me
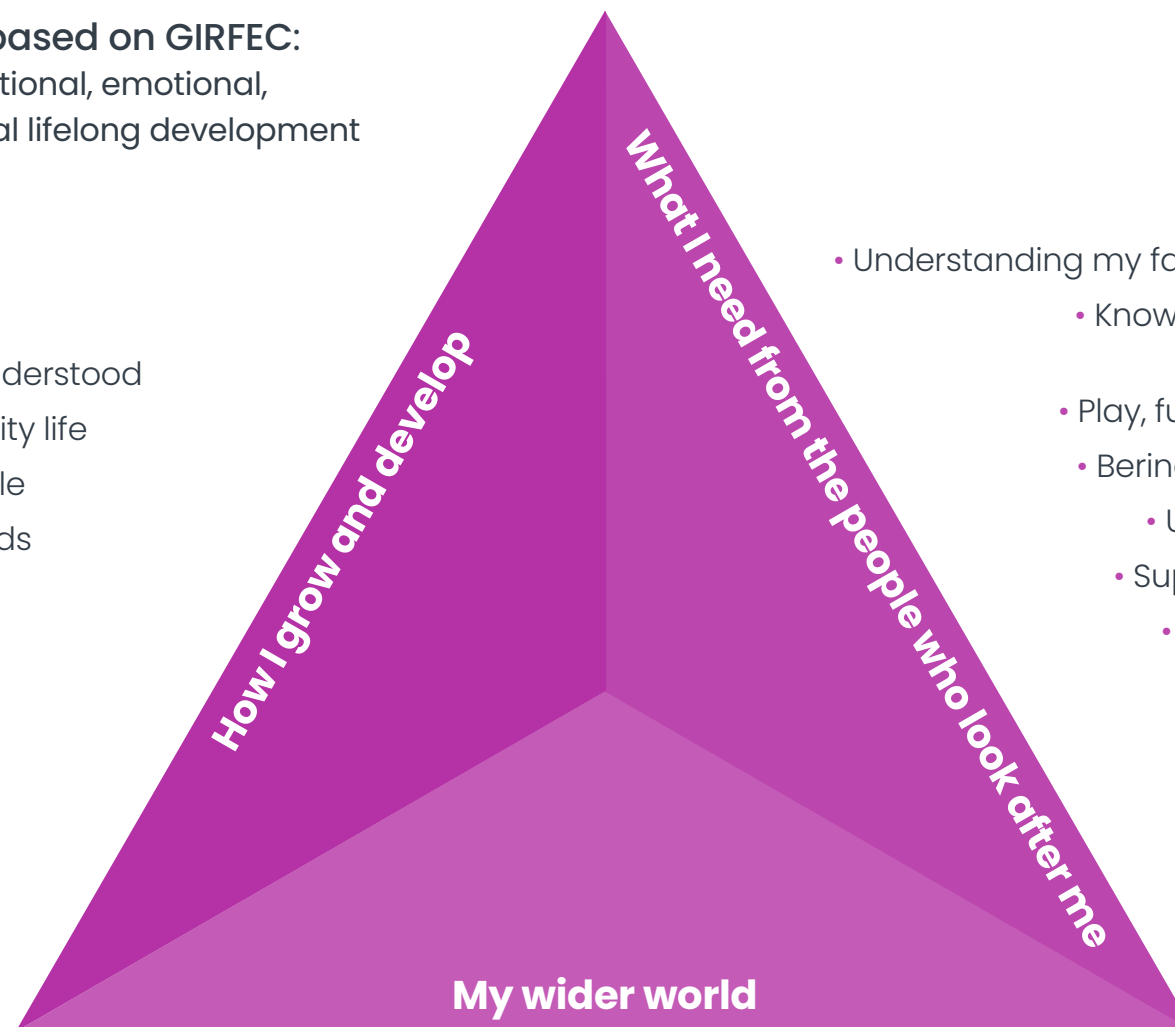
- Understanding my family's history, culture, beliefs
- Knowing what is going to happen and when, to reassure me
- Play, fun, encouragement, exercise
- Bering there for me: commitment
- Understanding my language
- Support to make good choices
- Everyday expert care & help
- Keeping me safe

My wider world

- Support from family, friends, wider community
- Comfortable, suitable housing
- Belonging
- Committed, skilled carers
- Enough money
- Local resources

Background

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.

5 This does not include one HSCP which did not provide data.

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.

705 people out-of-area in Scotland

79 people placed outside of Scotland

67 people experiencing delayed discharge

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.

69,500 total bed days

23,255 bed days linked to people with learning disabilities who did not need to be in hospital.
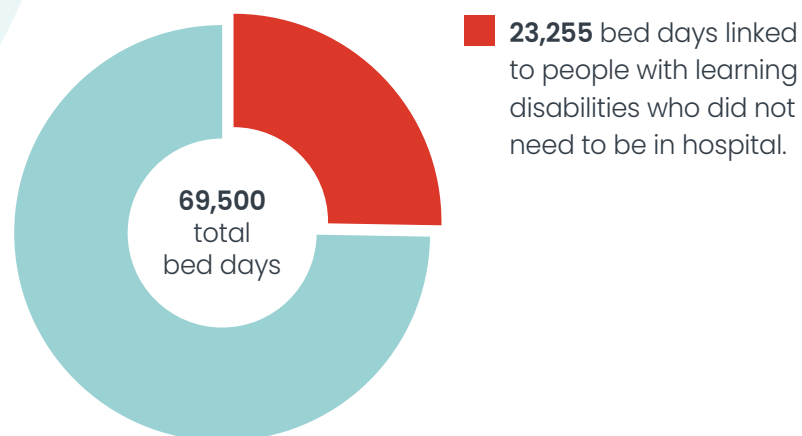
6 See Appendix 3
7 See Appendix 3

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).

8 Public Health Scotland data (2018/19)
9 Calculated on a population share basis

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'

3. Background

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. 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.
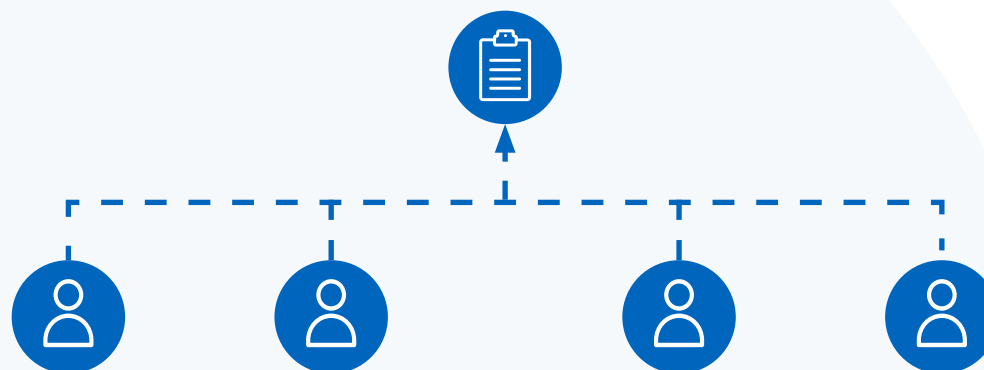
The Register will be applicable to adults with learning disabilities who are regarded as having complex support needs. While formally undefined, complex support needs may include those, who in addition to having a learning disability:

- Are also autistic
- Have a mental health diagnosis
- Have a forensic need, and/or who are described as demonstrating behaviour that challenges.

4. Dynamic Support Register

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).

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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.
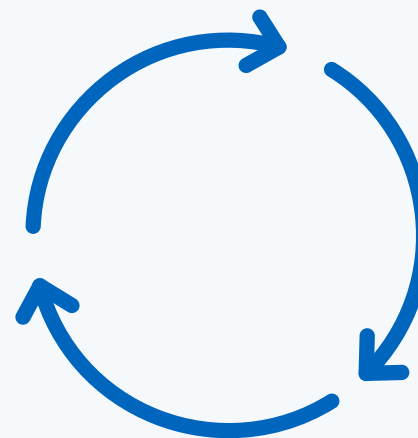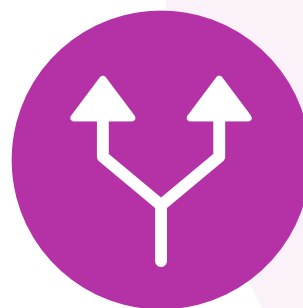
Framework to Support Register

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:
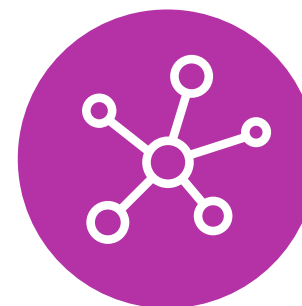
5.1 Complex Support Needs Pathway

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.
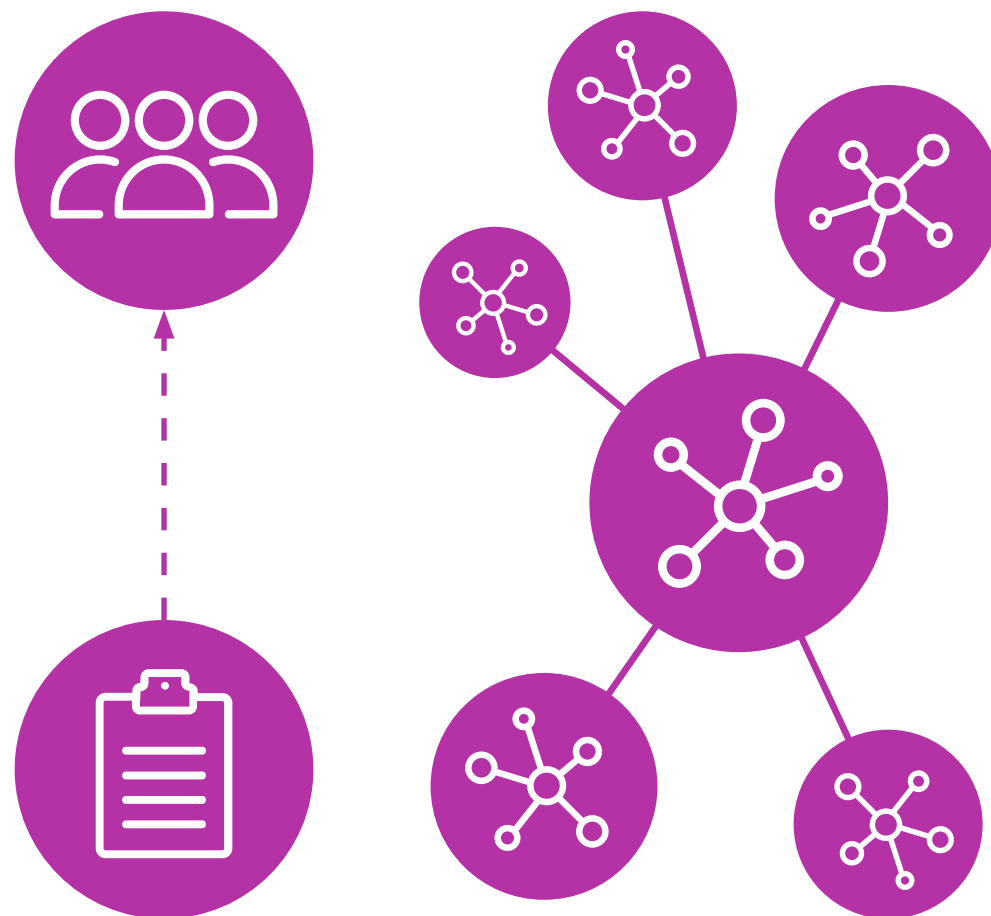
Community Change Fund

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.

51

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.

6. Community Change Fund

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.

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[1].

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.

[1] 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
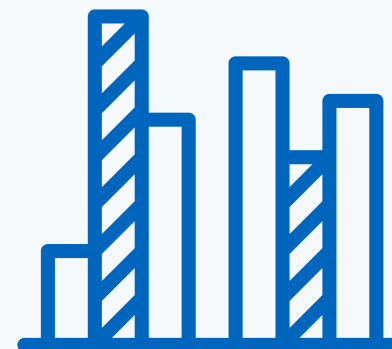
What should happen nationally?

- 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.

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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.
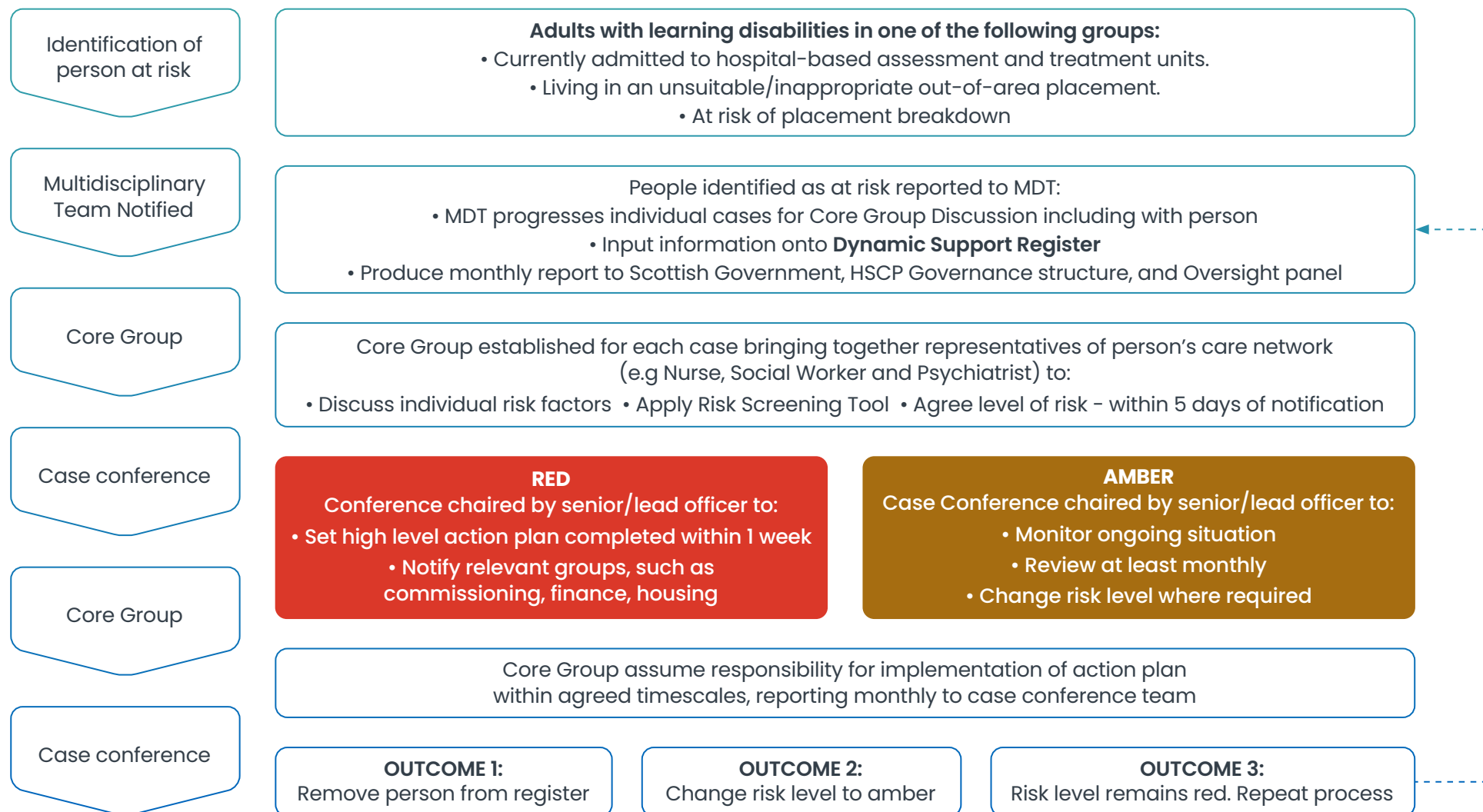
3. Coming off the Register

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

Identification of person at risk	**Adults with learning disabilities in one of the following groups:** • Currently admitted to hospital-based assessment and treatment units. • Living in an unsuitable/inappropriate out-of-area placement. • At risk of placement breakdown
Multidisciplinary Team Notified	People identified as at risk reported to MDT: • MDT progresses individual cases for Core Group Discussion including with person • Input information onto **Dynamic Support Register** • Produce monthly report to Scottish Government, HSCP Governance structure, and Oversight panel
Core Group	Core Group established for each case bringing together representatives of person's care network (e.g Nurse, Social Worker and Psychiatrist) to: • Discuss individual risk factors • Apply Risk Screening Tool • Agree level of risk - within 5 days of notification
Case conference	**RED** Conference chaired by senior/lead officer to: • Set high level action plan completed within 1 week • Notify relevant groups, such as commissioning, finance, housing	**AMBER** Case Conference chaired by senior/lead officer to: • Monitor ongoing situation • Review at least monthly • Change risk level where required
Core Group	Core Group assume responsibility for implementation of action plan within agreed timescales, reporting monthly to case conference team
Case conference	**OUTCOME 1:** Remove person from register **OUTCOME 2:** Change risk level to amber **OUTCOME 3:** Risk level remains red. Repeat process

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.

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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

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Appendix Five

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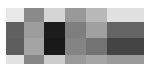
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