

Local Housing Strategy 2013-18



Quality | Equality | Access | Partnership



Foreword

I am pleased to introduce East Ayrshire's second Local Housing Strategy which sets out our housing priorities and the outcomes that we would seek to deliver over the next five years.

The strategy comes at a vital time for housing and addresses a number of the most significant challenges facing the Council and its partners and our communities.

The global economic crisis has had a severe impact on the housing sector, while the recession and the uncertain signals around recovery, have been accompanied by reductions in the level of public spending which are set to continue for a number of years.

As such, ensuring that the quantity and quality of housing meets the needs and aspirations of the people of East Ayrshire will be a considerable undertaking. Many of the challenges set out in this strategy reflect much wider social, economic and demographic issues and link directly to national priorities.

Creating and sustaining strong, vibrant communities, and re-vitalising our town centres to ensure they are attractive places to live and work, requires the commitment and resources of a range of public and private sector agencies and, crucially, local people. This partnership approach underpins East Ayrshire's Community Plan, which aims to improve the quality of life for everyone living here. Housing has a vital role to play in achieving this which extends beyond a simple investment in buildings.

The Local Housing Strategy is East Ayrshire's leading strategic housing statement, incorporating a range of approaches to address the diverse housing needs and aspirations of East Ayrshire's residents. Although the Council has overall responsibility for this strategy, it could not have been developed without input from many partners, organisations and individuals who took part in the development process.

I thank all of you who took the time to participate and provide feedback on the consultative draft, and I look forward to working with you over the coming years as we implement the strategy and deliver positive housing outcomes for the people of East Ayrshire.

Douglas Reid

Leader of the Council



1 Introduction	3
2 Vision	6
3 Community Planning and Local Context	7
4 National and Regional Context	10
5 Developing the Strategy	12
6 Housing Need and Demand Assessment	14
7 Achieving a Balanced Housing Market	23
8 Housing Quality, Energy Efficiency & Climate Change	36
9 Independent Living for Specific Groups	49
10 Accessing Housing, Advice and Support	59
11 Homelessness Prevention and Support	64
12 Creating Better Neighbourhoods	71
1 Action Plan	79
2 Monitoring and Evaluation	102
3 Glossary	103



1 Introduction

1.1 The **Housing (Scotland) Act 2001** places a statutory requirement on local authorities to prepare a Local Housing Strategy (LHS) supported by an assessment of housing need and demand. The LHS provides the strategic direction to tackle housing need and demand and to inform the future investment in housing and related services across the local authority area.

1.2 The **East Ayrshire Local Housing Strategy 2013-18** has been produced in accordance with guidance produced jointly by the Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities which was published in 2008.

1.3 The Strategy sets out the challenges that the Council faces in delivering its vision for housing; describes the work that is currently being undertaken to address these challenges; and identifies priorities for future activity. It is supported by an LHS Action Plan (appendix one) that provides the detail of the activity that the Council proposes to undertake over the lifetime of the strategy.

1.4 The Strategy covers all housing both rented and owned. It seeks to ensure that good quality, well-managed housing and housing advice and support services are available to support the wider economic and social objectives of the Council.

1.5 The Strategy aims to deliver six outcomes:

1. **People in East Ayrshire can find a home they can afford to live in.**
2. **People in East Ayrshire live in warm, energy efficient and well maintained homes.**
3. **People in East Ayrshire are able to live independently in suitable accommodation or with appropriate support, where this is required.**
4. **People in East Ayrshire are able to access quality housing information and advice, and the ways in which housing is accessed are simplified.**
5. **Homelessness is prevented as far as possible and accommodation, advice and support is available where it cannot be avoided.**
6. **People in East Ayrshire live in sustainable communities within safe, clean and attractive neighbourhoods.**

1.6 The Council and its Partners have to deliver housing, and related support services, for the residents of East Ayrshire within a changing and increasingly challenging context. The important developments and major risks that will define the operating environment over the next five years include:

- The introduction of the Scottish Government's new Social Housing Charter

- Welfare reform and potential risks to tenants' incomes and social landlords' cashflows
- New and increasing demands from an ageing population and growth in customer expectations
- Achieving and maintaining the target to provide all unintentionally homeless people with settled accommodation
- Delivery of the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015, and climate change duties by 2020
- Continuing demand for new affordable homes (as identified in the HNDA)
- An increasingly restricted supply of borrowing and rising cost of borrowing
- Scarcity of direct public funding for the provision of services
- New and complex funding and business models

1.7 We recognise that our outcomes are ambitious and, given the challenges outlined above, will require us to work closely with our partners to develop flexible and innovative approaches to deliver our identified outcomes and enable local people to meet their housing needs and aspirations.

1.8 This LHS sets out to strengthen the important role that housing plays in delivering wider, social economic and environmental priorities and details the local contribution that we will make in delivering the Scottish Government's ambitions for housing.

Reading the Local Housing Strategy

1.9 The LHS is set out in sections to allow the reader to move between areas of particular interest.

1.10 Section 4 identifies the Local and National context in which the strategy has been developed and will be implemented.

1.11 Section 5 outlines the strategy development and consultation processes that underpin the LHS and details the Impact Assessments undertaken as part of this process.

1.12 Section 6 sets out the key findings of the Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) that provides the evidence base for the LHS.

1.13 Sections 7 - 12 consider each of the LHS outcomes in turn detailing:

- **Where we are now** - the main issues, activities, policies and requirements we must consider when deciding how to deliver the outcome
- **Where we want to be** - the key priorities that we would look to deliver in order to fulfil the outcome
- **How we will get there** - the activities we will undertake to meet the identified priorities and deliver the outcome

1.14 The appendices include an **LHS Action Plan**, details of our arrangements for **Monitoring and Evaluating** the LHS and a **Glossary** of the terms used throughout the document.

2 Vision

2.1 Our **Community Plan** Vision states that

“East Ayrshire will be a place with strong, vibrant communities where everyone has a good quality of life and access to opportunities, choices and high quality services which are sustainable, accessible and meet people’s needs.”

2.2 A vision for the Local Housing Strategy has been developed to ensure its contribution towards that of the Community Plan:

- ***“Everyone in East Ayrshire can afford to access a quality home that meets their needs and aspirations, and is located within a safe and attractive neighbourhood in which they are proud to live.”***

3 Community Planning and Local Context

Links with Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement

3.1 The Local Housing Strategy supports the guiding principles of the **East Ayrshire Community Plan**, the Council's Sovereign Planning Document, and its implementation will contribute to the delivery of the following Community Planning themes:

1. **Delivering Community Regeneration**
2. **Improving Community Safety**
3. **Improving Health and Wellbeing**

3.2 The **East Ayrshire Local Housing Strategy 2013-2018** also supports the following Scottish Government National Outcomes and associated Local Outcomes:

National Outcome	Associated Local Outcomes
(6) We live longer, healthier lives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active, healthy lifestyle and positive behaviour change promoted • Alcohol and drug related harm reduced • Older people, vulnerable adults and their carers supported, included and empowered to live the healthiest life possible
(7) We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of multiple deprivation and poverty on the health and wellbeing of the most vulnerable individuals and communities addressed
(8) We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection of children and the safety of vulnerable adults, individuals and families promoted • Positive and sustained destinations for learners improved • Sustainable and affordable housing solutions delivered
(9) We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime and anti-social behaviour tackled and the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour reduced

National Outcome	Associated Local Outcomes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Preventative and diversionary activity delivered ● Community safety in neighbourhoods and homes improved
<p>(10) We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Connectivity and local transport solutions improved ● Quality and accessibility ensured ● Sustainable and affordable housing solutions delivered
<p>(11) We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community capacity, spirit and cohesion developed ● Older people, vulnerable adults and their carers supported, included and empowered to live the healthiest life possible
<p>(12) We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Our town centres and villages are sustainably regenerated ● The natural environment protected, conserved and enhanced, and the negative effects of climate change mitigated
<p>(14) We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The natural environment protected, conserved and enhanced, and the negative effects of climate change mitigated
<p>(15) Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Resources and services delivered maximised through shared premises and shared services with shared management arrangements

Table 3.1 National Outcomes and Associated Local Outcomes

Links with Other Strategies

3.3 The **East Ayrshire Council Transformation Strategy 2012-17** sets out the three key strategic priorities around which the Council's strategic direction should be focused in order to deliver services in times of severe financial constraint. The Local Housing Strategy is best placed to help deliver two of these priorities and the key actions that have been developed to support them:

(1) Support older people live independently in the community

- Encourage older people to participate in community life.
- Promote intergenerational work.
- Support more older people live independently in their own homes and ensure that they are well cared for within the community.

(2) Promote town centre living

- Build new council houses in and around our town centres and encourage external investment in town centres.
- Work with retailers and local businesses to improve our town centres and villages.
- Build on our investment on town centre regeneration.

3.4 The Local Housing Strategy is underpinned by the **East Ayrshire Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) 2012** which was signed off as Robust and Credible by the **Scottish Government's Centre for Housing Market Analysis (CHMA)** on 14/09/12.

3.5 The HNDA also forms the evidence base that is used to identify the scale of the requirement for housing in the **Main Issues Report** for consideration for inclusion in the forthcoming **Local Development Plan** which will be adopted in 2015.

3.6 The Local Development Plan will replace the existing **East Ayrshire Local Plan 2010**. Any activity related to the delivery of new housing is fully compliant with the Local Plan.

3.7 The priorities set by the LHS inform the Council's affordable housing investment decisions, with site specific projects being determined through the framework of the **Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP)**.

3.8 All former 'stand-alone' housing strategies, such as those addressing homelessness, housing support, fuel poverty, information and advice and private sector condition and management are integrated within the LHS.

3.9 The LHS is actively contributing to the objectives of a broader range of strategies and plans in East Ayrshire. Further strategic links are referenced against each of the LHS outcomes.

4 National and Regional Context

The National Housing Agenda

4.1 The National Housing Agenda has been influenced and guided by a range of legislative drivers, including **Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, 2006, 2010: Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003; Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009; Fuel Poverty Statement (2002).**

4.2 Drawing on these drivers, and building on responses to the '**Fresh Thinking, New Ideas**' discussion paper, the Scottish Government published its ten-year policy and action plan '**Homes fit for the 21st Century**' in February 2011. Priorities are focused around the creation of high quality affordable housing as well as improving the condition of existing housing across all sectors within the constraints of reduced public expenditure. Some of the ideas proposed in the paper are now being put forward for legislation, such as the proposal to allow local authorities to charge a Council Tax levy on long-term empty homes.

4.3 The national housing strategy also reinforces the Scottish Government's commitment to achieve four major housing related targets:

1. By December 2012, all unintentionally homeless households will be entitled to settled accommodation
2. By April 2015, all social landlords must ensure all their dwellings meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard
3. By November 2016, as far as reasonably practicable, no one in Scotland will be living in fuel poverty
4. By December 2020, improved design and greater energy efficiency in housing will have made a contribution to Scotland's commitment to reduce energy consumption by 12% and our greenhouse gas emissions by 42%

4.4 Also included in the strategy are suggestions around the development of more innovative funding methods. Given the continued constraints on public expenditure and credit restrictions, the Council and other housing providers must increasingly explore opportunities for innovation and alternative sources of finance and service delivery.

4.5 **The Scottish Social Housing Charter** was introduced in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 which required Ministers to set standards and outcomes that social landlords should be achieving for tenants and customers through their housing activities. The purpose of the Charter is to help improve the quality and value of the services that social landlords provide. The Charter replaces the *Performance Standards for Social Landlords and Homeless Functions* that were set out in guidance issued by Scottish Ministers under Section 79 within the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. The revised Charter puts a greater emphasis on annual reporting to the Scottish Housing Regulator, and contains 16 outcomes and standards.

Planning Policy

4.6 Alongside changes in housing policy, there have been a number of changes to National Planning Policy aimed at streamlining the planning process and improving links between strategic housing and planning.

4.7 Of particular relevance is **Scottish Planning Policy 3 (SPP3): Planning for Homes**. SPP3 emphasises the importance of local authority housing and planning services taking an integrated approach to the production of Housing Need and Demand Assessments (HNDA) to ensure that the operation of the housing system is considered as a whole. The preparation of Local Development Plans and Local Housing Strategies must be closely aligned, and Local Development Plans must identify suitable housing sites to meet HNDA housing targets for each Housing Market Area in full.

UK Government Welfare Reform Proposals

4.8 The Welfare Reform Act 2012 contains proposals to reform a number of welfare benefits. The key changes relevant to housing providers are those relating to Housing Benefit, although the implementation of the proposals around the implementation of 'universal credit' will also have an impact, specifically:

- Loss of direct payments to landlords
- Extension of the shared room rate to all single claimants under 35
- Reduction of housing benefit for under-occupying social tenants
- Potential changes to arrangements for supported and temporary accommodation

Economic Context

4.9 The economic climate will continue to be a key factor influencing the LHS. The effects of the recession and economic downturn are influencing household income levels, house building levels, and access to mortgage finance. There is likely to be continued significant reductions in public sector resources over the coming years. We need to meet increasing demand for housing with reducing resources.

Environmental Context

4.10 A key consideration in the development of the LHS has been the challenge of climate change. The Scottish Government has set ambitious targets on energy and carbon emissions. Strategies need to contribute to meeting these targets by encouraging more environmentally sustainable development, reducing energy consumption and considering the future impact of climate change.

5 Developing the Strategy

5.1 The Local Housing Strategy has built on the research findings from the recently completed **East Ayrshire Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) 2012** and has been developed in partnership with relevant agencies and stakeholders.

5.2 The Strategy has taken shape in response to a series of development and consultation events, including:

- Consultation sessions with East Ayrshire Tenants and Residents Federation (EATRF)
- Meetings of LHS Steering Group and multi-agency LHS working groups
- Discussions with key Council staff
- Priority gathering information stall at Annual Tenants Conference
- Circulation of priority gathering questionnaire via EATRF
- Consultation sessions with East Ayrshire North and South Access Panels
- Publication of consultation draft on East Ayrshire Council's web-site
- Distribution of consultation draft to Housing Information Partnership; Scottish Government; EATRF; Access Panels and council staff

5.3 Ongoing consultation throughout the development of the Local Housing Strategy shaped the consultation draft that was circulated for comment in September 2012. Feedback was received from a range of interested parties and individuals across East Ayrshire. The Council is grateful to all those who contributed to the consultation process and has used the feedback from this process to develop this final version.

5.4 The strategy will be subject to review in preparation of annual updates and monitoring and evaluation of the LHS Action Plan. Therefore, comments and feedback are welcome throughout the lifespan of the LHS and should be forwarded to:

Strategy and Development

Housing Services

Civic Centre North

John Dickie Street

Kilmarnock

KA1 1HW

Phone: 01563 576651

Email: housing@east-ayrshire.gov.uk

Impact Assessment

5.5 An Equality Impact assessment has been completed as part of the strategy development process, and this is available on the Council's web-site.

5.6 A Strategic Environmental Assessment pre-screening exercise has also been undertaken, and this is available on the Council's web-site.

6 Housing Need and Demand Assessment

6.1 The Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) is a technical exercise to determine the location and amount of housing need across East Ayrshire. The assessment provides robust evidence on which the Council and its partners can base planning and policy decisions around the delivery of both market and affordable housing over the next 10 years and beyond.

6.2 **The East Ayrshire HNDA 2012** has been undertaken in full accordance with the Scottish Government Guidance. ⁽¹⁾

6.3 The HNDA was primarily undertaken by officers of East Ayrshire Council, supported by a multi-agency Housing Information Partnership (HIP). In November 2011, Arneil Johnstone were appointed to provide a critique of HNDA content and processes; to undertake modelling work; and to further strengthen the analysis that had been undertaken to date.

6.4 The East Ayrshire Housing Need and Demand Assessment was assessed as 'Robust and Credible' by the Scottish Government, in September 2012. ⁽²⁾

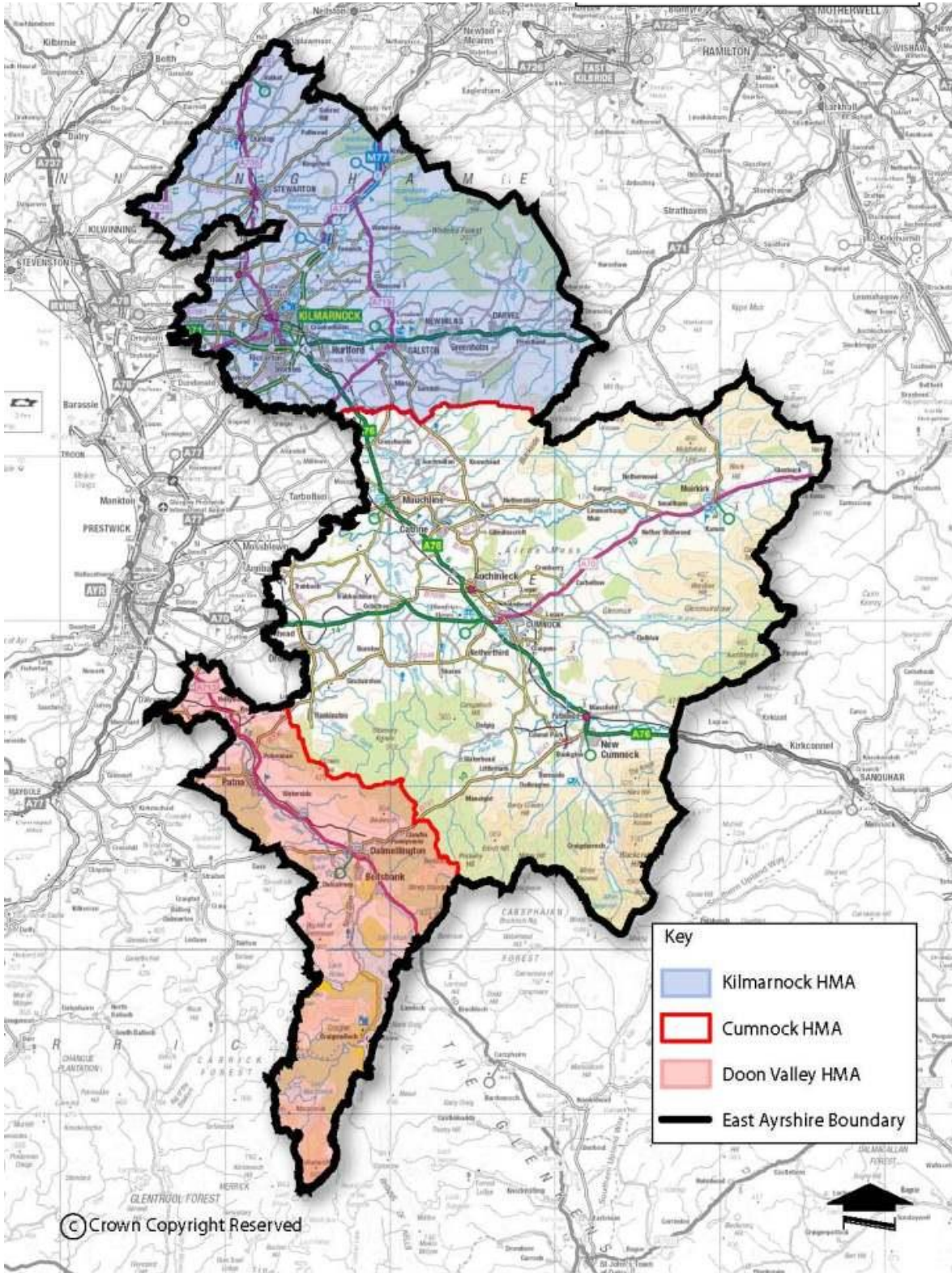
6.5 This section provides a summary of the HNDA and the key features of the East Ayrshire Housing System detailed therein:

Housing Market Sub Areas

6.6 The East Ayrshire geographical area forms the boundary for the HNDA study. This larger Housing Market Area is split into 3 Housing Market Sub-Areas (HMA) namely Kilmarnock & Loudoun, Cumnock *and* Doon Valley. These are set out in the map below:

1 Housing Need and Demand Assessment Guidance, Scottish Government, March 2008.

2 Housing Need & Demand Assessment, East Ayrshire Council, 2012.



Picture 6.1 East Ayrshire Housing Market Sub-Areas

Demographics

6.7 The East Ayrshire population has largely remained stable in the period between the 2001 census and the General Register Office for Scotland (GROS) 2010 mid-year estimates at around **120,240** individuals.

6.8 There has been some variance in the degree of population change at HMSA level. The population in the Doon Valley has largely remained stable and is currently home to around **7,500** people. The Kilmarnock & Loudon HMSA experienced population growth of around 0.8%, reaching **80,255** in 2010; while the Cumnock HMSA experienced population decline in the region of 2% and is now home to approximately **32,471** people.

6.9 The overall stability of the population masks notable variation by age group. Overall, the population aged over 60 is estimated to have increased by around 14%, while the population aged under 60 has decreased by around 4% over the same period.

6.10 The GROS 2008 population projections estimate that the population in East Ayrshire will increase by around 1.4% in the period up to 2023.

6.11 The population projections indicate significant variations across age group. Those aged 16-29 are projected to decline by around 13% and those aged 30-49 by around 15%. However, all age groups over 50 are projected to increase, with the most substantial increase being in the 75+ group which is set to increase by over 50%.

6.12 The number of households in East Ayrshire has increased by around 2.2% since 2001. There are currently around **50,346** households living across the area. It is estimated that this increase will continue, with the number of households reaching **57,580** by 2023, an increase of 8.6%.

6.13 The number of 1 adult and single parent households are projected to rise, while the number of family households is projected to decline. In line with these changes, the average household size is also projected to get smaller, falling from around 2.24 members in 2008 to 2.08 by 2023.

Economics

6.14 For the greater part of the last decade, there was steady economic growth at national and global levels. However, the economic crisis that began in late 2007 has had a far-reaching impact on all aspects of the economy, dropping the UK into recession. While predictions regarding the length and severity of the recession abound, it remains speculative to predict the exact extent of its impact. This has meant that consideration of the economic context has been undertaken with a degree of caution.

6.15 Jobs growth in East Ayrshire was below the national average for the period between 1998 and 2008, increasing by 5% as compared to a national increase of 12%.

6.16 The East Ayrshire economic growth (Gross Value Added) rate was around 0.1% between 1997 and 2007, below the national rate of 2.3%.

6.17 The public sector has been a key driver of the economy in recent years.

6.18 Despite job growth being below the National average, in the period up to 2009 there was growth in the number of East Ayrshire residents in work which led to an increase in the employment rate in the area and a corresponding decline in the unemployment rate in the area, which at 2009 was 6% (only slightly above the Scottish average of 5%).

6.19 The challenge will be to ensure that provision is in place to support new entrants to the unemployment register, predicted as a result of the recession.

The Housing Stock

6.20 There are some **56,494** residential dwellings in East Ayrshire. This figure includes an increase of around 3000 dwellings since 2003, reflecting the large increase in new-build completions recorded across the area during this time.

6.21 Over **64%** of the housing stock is owner occupied. The Council owns around **23%** of all stock, while the other RSLs operating in the area manage **6%** of all stock. The private rented sector accounts for just over **7%** of all stock.

6.22 The Scottish House Condition Survey (SHCS) 2009-11 indicates that **91%** of properties in East Ayrshire have some disrepair, **58%** of these dwellings have urgent disrepair. This is higher than the Scottish figure of **37%**. Urgent disrepair in the public sector (**62%** of all stock with any disrepair) was higher than in the private sector (**56%**).

6.23 Privately owned properties are more likely to have poor energy efficiency (**21%** have NHER rating of 0-5) than those in the public sector (**8%** has NHER rating of 0-5). Pre-war houses are less energy efficient than their post-war counterparts. **29%** of pre-war homes have an NHER rating of 0-5, whilst only **13%** of post war homes do.

6.24 The SHCS estimates that **17%** of households are living in fuel poverty, while a further **8%** were recorded as living in extreme fuel poverty. Pensioners account for the largest proportion of fuel poor households.

Specific Household Groups

6.25 Different types of households have different needs. The HNDA considers sub-groups of the population that may have particular housing and/or support requirements which differ from those of the general population. These groups include those with particular housing needs and those who might not require purpose-built accommodation but nonetheless have distinctive housing requirements:

- Older People
- People with physical disabilities
- People with learning difficulties
- People with mental health or substance misuse issues
- Families and Lone Parents
- Ethnic Minority households
- EU Migrant workers
- Gypsies / Travellers
- Homeless Households including young vulnerable adults
- Young vulnerable adults, especially those under 17 years leaving care
- Households fleeing domestic violence or abuse
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender households

Housing Market Activity

(i) Social Rented Sector

6.26 As at April 2011, there were a total of 5,085 households awaiting housing by EAC. The majority of these households, around 77% were waiting list applicants. The number of new applicants has remained fairly steady over the last three years, at just over 1700 new applicants each year, while the number of properties re-let is around 1300 per year.

6.27 The average weekly rent charged in the social rented sector, at April 2011, was £52.36, slightly lower than the Scottish Figure of £54.12.

(ii) Private Rented Sector

6.28 Data on the private rented sector remains under-developed both nationally and locally. The advent of Private Landlord Registration has meant better information on the location of private rented properties, however information on rent, turnover and tenants remains incomplete.

6.29 75% of all private rented stock is located in Kilmarnock & Loudoun HMA. Private renting is limited within the Doon Valley, accounting for only 2% of all private renting in East Ayrshire.

6.30 Local Housing Allowance (LHA) figures for Ayrshire demonstrate that the average rent charged across East Ayrshire exceeds the LHA allowance, especially for larger properties, meaning tenants relying on Housing Benefit would have to 'top-up' in order to access the sector. Changes to the level of Housing Benefit payable were announced by Central Government in 2011. Crucially this will mean single people aged under 35 will no longer be entitled to the 1-bed LHA rate, but rather the shared rate. Locally this will mean over 200 individuals will experience a reduction in the amount of Housing Benefit received.⁽³⁾

(iii) Owner Occupied Sector

6.31 The owner occupied sector is the largest sector in East Ayrshire accounting for over 64% of properties in the area.

6.32 Approximately 67% of sales in East Ayrshire are to purchasers already resident in the area. Further analysis of purchaser origins demonstrates the strong influence of purchasers from South Ayrshire on the Doon Valley and, to a lesser extent, the Cumnock HMA:

Purchaser Origin	Destination HMA		
	Cumnock	Doon Valley	Kilmarnock & Loudoun
East Ayrshire	65.4%	40.7%	65.0%
South Ayrshire	12.7%	35.3%	6.5%

Table 6.1 Purchaser Origin and Destination

6.33 The analysis of the records of all housing transactions recorded by the Registers of Scotland, indicates that the volume and price of sales has followed a trajectory that broadly reflects that of the rest of Scotland, namely a large increase between 2002 and 2007, followed by a sharp drop.

6.34 In all areas and across all quartiles, house prices increased every year between 2002 and 2007. By 2008, entry level prices in all 3 areas remained below the Scottish wide entry level price.

6.35 Between 2007 and 2010 the number of sales recorded fell by 65.4%. Lower quartile prices witnessed a 12.2% drop in value; the median price change was slightly lower at 10%. At the upper quartile, prices remain unchanged.

3 Calculation based on the number of single people aged under 35 claiming LHA at April 2011.

Affordability

6.36 An affordability analysis was undertaken to establish the proportion of households able to afford a lower quartile property in each of the Housing Market Sub Areas:

Housing Market Area	% Who Cannot Afford to Purchase
Cumnock	36%
Doon Valley	39%
Kilmarnock & Loudoun	40%

Table 6.2 Households who CANNOT afford by HMA

Estimate of Households in Need

6.37 Based on an assessment of both existing and future housing need and the availability of accommodation to meet this need, the HNDA demonstrated that there is an annual shortfall of affordable housing in the region of **234** units.

Housing Market Area	Shortfall
Cumnock	-2
Doon Valley	-32
Kilmarnock & Loudoun	-196
EAC Total	-234 ⁽⁴⁾

Table 6.3 Annual Shortfall of Affordable Housing by HMSA

Assessing housing market supply

6.38 As well as assessing the sufficiency of affordable housing in East Ayrshire, the HNDA also assessed the ability of the private housing market in East Ayrshire to meet housing need and demand. Are there enough houses for those in need who can afford to purchase a property?

6.39 A modelling exercise was undertaken which identified a cumulative shortfall of market properties in the region of **1,963** units by year 10 of the model. The market supply model assumed that **2,274** new build sales would occur over the 10 year period of the modelling exercise.

4 sum of HMSAs and EAC total differ due to rounding

6.40 The total of these two figures (**4,237**) gives us the total requirement for market housing over the next ten years. This is broken down by Housing Market Sub Area in the table below:

Housing Market Area	Shortfall
Cumnock	-1,438
Doon Valley	-360
Kilmarnock & Loudoun	-2,439
EAC Total	-4,237

Table 6.4 Total Market Housing Requirements by HMSA

Total Requirement for Housing

6.41 If the affordable housing shortfall is added to the market housing requirement, a ten year total housing land requirement in the region of **6,577** units is estimated (**4,237 & 2,340**).

Establishing a Range of Total Housing Requirement

6.42 In both the calculation of affordable housing and the calculation of market housing a **range of housing need** was established. The figures generated have been combined to develop four models of total housing requirement.

6.43 Models 1-3 have been established by considering the variations in the number of newly forming households that would be created should there be growth in the East Ayrshire population above the levels estimated by GROS. Model 4 has been established by considering the impact of the increase on the affordable housing shortfall that is generated by a change to the estimate of existing households falling into need:

		Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
		GROS Estimate	Modest Growth	High Growth	Higher New Need
Cumnock	Total Market Housing Requirement	1438	1492	1547	1438
	Affordable Housing Shortfall	20	180	330	440

		Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
		GROS Estimate	Modest Growth	High Growth	Higher New Need
	Total Requirement for Housing	1458	1672	1877	1878
Doon Valley	Total Market Housing Requirement	360	369	379	360
	Affordable Housing Shortfall	320	360	390	420
	Total Requirement for Housing	680	729	769	780
Kilmarnock & Loudoun	Total Market Housing Requirement	2439	2545	2652	2439
	Affordable Housing Shortfall	1960	2430	2900	3330
	Total Requirement for Housing	4399	4975	5552	5769

Table 6.5 Models of Housing Need at HMA level

6.44 Therefore, the total 10 year requirement for housing in East Ayrshire ranges from **6,577** to **8,457**.

6.45 The total requirement for housing does not equal the number of units to be delivered. The next sections set out the range of interventions that will be pursued to meet housing need.

7 Achieving a Balanced Housing Market

Outcome One: People in East Ayrshire can find a home they can afford to live in

7.1 A balanced housing market is one in which the demand for and supply of houses is well matched, and people looking for a suitable place to stay can find one.

7.2 The East Ayrshire HNDA provides an assessment of the number of households which are currently in housing need and identifies the shortfall that would arise over a five and ten year period at HMA level if no further action were taken to alleviate the situation.

7.3 Based on the outcomes of this assessment, the Council has set housing supply targets which inform the requirement for effective land to be allocated in the Local Development Plan.

Outcome One: People in East Ayrshire can find a home that they can afford to live in

Where we are now

This section details the main issues, key activities, relevant policies and current strategic requirements that we must consider in shaping our priorities for the delivery of this outcome.

Housing Supply Targets

7.4 The Scottish Government have requested that Councils set Housing Supply Targets (HST) for the annual delivery of housing in their areas and to ensure that sufficient available land is allocated through the Local Development Plan for the purpose.⁽⁵⁾ These targets should cover all tenures and should include new housing, replacement housing, empty properties brought back into use and conversions.

7.5 The Housing Supply Targets represent an annual target to be delivered in each of the five years of the LHS. The process of monitoring and evaluating the LHS will afford us an opportunity to ensure that the HST is reviewed and amended where necessary, particularly in response to the consultation on the content of the Main Issues Report and the subsequent preparation of the Local Development Plan.

Type of Supply	Target Figure
New Build affordable Housing	100

5 Local Housing Strategy Guidance, Scottish Government, June 2008.

Type of Supply	Target Figure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Local Plan (SLP) Affordable Housing Policy (AHP) NHT & variants 	
New Build Market Housing	434
Make best Use of Existing Stock <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open market resales Bringing empty homes back into use Mortgage to Rent Policy Initiatives for Social Rented stock Open Market Shared Equity Pressured area status 	90
Other (indirect) Interventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tackling disrepair in the private sector Technology / Aids & Adaptations for older & disable people to remain at home Tackling and preventing homelessness Growing Private rented sector Tackling fuel poverty and energy efficiency 	65

Table 7.1 : Housing Supply Targets

Supply of Market Housing

7.6 Market Housing is that which is for sale or rent where prices are set in the open market.

7.7 The HNDA estimated that the demand for new-build **market** homes over the next ten years will range between **424** and **458** units per annum. The range of figures was arrived at by considering scenarios to include varying the assumed rate of population growth and modelling the impact of increased numbers of households falling into need.

7.8 The Council's Main Issues Report (MIR) was approved by Cabinet on 24 October 2012 and a formal consultation will run until 25 January 2013 as part of the Local Development Plan process. From the range of demand options identified in the HNDA, the MIR has identified the modest population growth scenario (**441** units per annum) as the preferred option for assessing housing land requirements in order that the LDP might support the overall vision for East Ayrshire of creating a desirable place in which to live, work, invest and visit.

7.9 LDPs must provide for a 'generous' supply of housing and it is considered appropriate that a 'generosity allowance' of 20% is added on top of the identified housing land requirements.

7.10 In this way it has identified an overall market housing land requirement that would be sufficient to facilitate the delivery of **6880** units over the next 13 years. This allocation supports the MIR vision of attracting more people and jobs to East Ayrshire and allows for the development of an adequate supply of housing to meet identified demand which can be comfortably accommodated within existing settlements and that the principles of creating sustainable places could be applied.

7.11 A further examination of existing land, potential requirements associated with the adoption of an affordable housing policy, and consideration of historical completion rates in each of the HMAs, undertaken for the preparation of the MIR led to a slight reduction of the HNDA figure, arriving at a housing supply target of **434** units per annum.

7.12 However, we recognise that, in relation to new-build market housing, East Ayrshire is facing the same challenges as Local Authorities across the Country. Private sector house completions have slowed in recent years. The number built in 2010/11 was only 31% of those built at the peak of the market in 2006/07 (dropping from **789** per annum to **247** per annum).

7.13 Given the continued challenges that face the construction industry, the current low levels are likely to continue in the short term, and the Local Housing Strategy Partners can have little influence on the number of units delivered. However the housing supply target will remain ambitious, reflecting the full level of need identified in the HNDA, in order that the Local Development Plan might respond and ensure that a sufficient supply of effective land is available when construction levels pick up.

Supply of Affordable Housing

7.14 Affordable Housing refers to accommodation made available at a cost below full market value to meet an identified need and includes:

- Social Rented Housing
- Subsidised low cost housing for sale (discounted, shared ownership or shared equity)

- Low Cost housing without subsidy (entry level housing for sale)
- Private rented accommodation at lower costs than market rents and mid market rent

7.15 The term "intermediate affordable housing" or "intermediate tenure" is a catch-all term used in relation to all types of affordable housing which are not social rented.

7.16 The HNDA indicates a **total current shortfall** ranging between **234 and 422** units per annum over 10 years. The range of figures was arrived at by considering scenarios to include varying the assumed rate of population growth and modelling the impact of increased numbers of households falling into need.

7.17 It should be noted that this level of potential unmet need does not translate into a requirement to build this number of new properties. A proportion of this need can, and should be, met through a range of other interventions within the housing system. In this way affordable housing need will be met via:

- New Build Affordable Homes
- Making Best use of Existing Stock
- Indirect Interventions

(1) New Build Affordable Homes

7.18 A number of mechanisms are available to facilitate the delivery of new affordable homes to meet identified need:

Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP).

7.19 The **Strategic Housing Investment Plan (2012/13-2015/16)** sets out the Council's approved programme to deliver over 547 new affordable homes.

7.20 However funding levels have been dramatically reduced in recent years, and the Resource Planning Assumptions revealed in June 2012 suggest that funding will be significantly restricted for the foreseeable future. If additional funding should become available, based on past performance of the Council and local RSLs to provide new affordable houses successfully, on time, and within reasonable costs, then the SHIP partnership is confident that it could deliver additional units of affordable housing.

Strategic Local Programme (SLP)

7.21 In May 2012, the Scottish Government issued new guidance on the Affordable Housing Supply Programme introducing Strategic Local Programmes which bring together Council and Registered Social Landlord funding streams into one budget to produce a combined three-year Resource Planning Assumption for council areas

up to March 2015. This approach is designed to enable each council to exercise its strategic role more flexibly, and to put forward to the Government a programme of social and affordable housing developments based on the Local Housing Strategy and Strategic Housing Investment Plan.

7.22 The Council published its **Strategic Local Programme (SLP)** in late 2012. The SLP not only supports a commitment to affordable housing but supports the Council's strategic priority of promoting town centre living as an aid to town centre regeneration. The SLP seeks to deliver 168 new council houses in the period up to March 2015, 140 of which are in and around town centres.

Council New Build

7.23 The Council has delivered 60 new council homes since 2010. As detailed in the SLP, the Council remains committed to the delivery of new council houses. The **East Ayrshire Council Transformation Strategy 2012-17** includes a specific commitment to support the building of new council houses in and around our town centres as one of the key priorities shaping service delivery in these times of severe financial constraint.

Affordable Housing Policy

7.24 In accordance with the findings of the HNDA, the Main Issues Report sets out options for the inclusion of an affordable housing policy in the forthcoming **Local Development Plan (LDP)** in order to meet the demonstrated need for affordable housing which will include a range of developer contributions tailored to specific requirements of each Housing Market Area.

Low Cost Home Ownership

7.25 The findings of the HNDA indicate that most households in housing need require social rented housing, and the Council remains committed to the provision and sustainability of this sector as a priority. However, the levels of funding available from the Scottish Government to support the development of social rented housing is unlikely to increase in the foreseeable future, and other types and tenures of affordable housing will play an increasingly large role in meeting need in the future.

7.26 A small proportion of households may be able to meet their housing need by accessing other Low cost Initiatives for First-Time Buyers (LIFT) options such as Open Market Shared Equity (OMSE) and New Supply Shared Equity (NSSE) supported by grant funding by the Scottish Government.

7.27 Private house-builders have developed their own range of low-cost home ownership initiatives, which may offer a route into home ownership for households who don't qualify for LIFT.

National Housing Trust & Mid-Market Rent

7.28 While we have identified that mortgage restrictions and high deposit requirements have, for many, curtailed access to owner occupation, the gap between rents in the social rented sector and the private rented sector, may mean that those who don't qualify for housing benefit and have low priority in terms of access to the social rented sector find themselves in need of another affordable housing option.

7.29 Mid-market rent is one such solution, offering homes to rent below the market rent level within the local area. Mid market rental properties can be developed at much lower subsidy than social rented homes. Indeed, it is sometimes possible to develop them with no subsidy at all. The National Housing Trust is one such initiative.

7.30 East Ayrshire Council has not yet taken part in the National Housing Trust (NHT) Initiative. When the evaluation of the first National Housing Trust projects becomes available, its suitability in an East Ayrshire context can be fully considered. The outcomes of this evaluation will be useful in shaping further research to establish the level of intermediate housing which might be required / demanded across the Local Authority area.

(2) Making Best use of Existing Housing

7.31 It is not possible, or appropriate, for all of the identified housing need to be delivered by new build housing. Indeed, given the reductions in development funding and the dramatic fall in the rate of housebuilding in recent years, supply of new affordable homes will remain limited. Therefore, it is essential that the best use is made of existing housing supply. This means ensuring that homes are empty for as short a period as possible, and encouraging people to occupy housing that is appropriate to their household size and type.

Common Housing Register

7.32 The Council's newly implemented Common Housing Register (CHR) afforded the Council and its partners the opportunity to refresh the waiting list, ensuring those registered were actively seeking a home. This allows better targeting of homes which become available for let and reduces the number of offers of tenancy that are declined.

Allocations Policy Review

7.33 A Common Allocation Policy was developed to support the Common Housing Register and involved a review of the existing policies in place in each of the organisations. This process led to the development of a robust and effective policy based on a "groups plus points" scheme which means that applicants will be placed on the group most applicable to their circumstances and awarded points based on their current living arrangements.

Mutual Exchange Schemes

7.34 Mutual exchange schemes can prove useful in better matching households to homes within the social rented sector. In by-passing the allocations process, households can move quickly where an appropriate match can be found. The landlord(s) are involved in the exchange process and households are not allowed to worsen their housing circumstances as a result of an exchange. Households looking to move outwith the Council area can register with national schemes. The Council and its CHR Partners have recently registered with the **Homeswapper Scheme** which allows free access for East Ayrshire residents.

Under-occupation

7.35 The Council's house building programme has, to date, been supported by allocations plans developed to ensure that properties are let to older tenants, currently living in a social rented sector property within East Ayrshire. In this way it aims to reduce under-occupation and release family-sized accommodation. The Common Allocations Policy also awards points for under-occupation to tenants of the social rented sector within the East Ayrshire boundary. Applicants under-occupying by 2 bedrooms or more and looking to move to smaller accommodation are awarded additional points.

7.36 The Government's Welfare Reform and the restriction on levels of Housing Benefit payable will mean the under occupation policy may require further review, prompting a re-assessment of the supply and demand for various accommodation sizes.

Empty Homes

7.37 The Scottish Government is keen to encourage owners of empty homes to bring these back into use. Two key initiatives have been introduced to support this - the reduction of the Council Tax discount offered to owners of long-term empty properties and the Introduction of the Empty Homes Loan Fund.

7.38 The Council will take advantage of the legislation, regarding Council Tax discount, and the revenue generated will contribute to meeting our affordable housing targets.

7.39 In December 2012 the Scottish Government announced that the Council had been successful in its bid to access the **Empty Homes Loan Fund** ⁽⁶⁾ to provide loans to owner occupiers with empty homes in order that these might be brought up to the repairing standard and offered to the private rented market. The proposals involve allowing landlords access to the Rent Deposit Scheme and will seek to return currently empty properties to the wider pool of housing to meet identified need.

⁶ Scheme launched by the Scottish Government in July 2012 which aims to support a range of projects to bring empty homes back into use as affordable housing. All funding will be provided in the form of loans, although interest will not be charged. Bidders would have to repay at least 60 per cent of the funding by 2019/20 and would be expected to repay the remainder of the loan by 2023/24 at the latest.

Pressured Area Status

7.40 Using available evidence regarding pressure on the current housing stock the Council can establish whether it would be appropriate to make use of measures leading to the designation of Pressured Area Status. This will be considerate of any changes to the Right to Buy legislation which is currently the subject of Scottish Government consultation.

Capacity in the Private Rented Sector

7.41 Private renting can offer a wider choice of housing than the social rented sector in relation to location, size, type and flexibility. Demand in this sector has grown in the last few years, and is likely to continue to do so.

7.42 Again, high deposit requirements and restrictions on mortgage access mean that newly forming households, particularly younger people, who might previously have bought, will look to the private rented sector. Also the choice and availability afforded by private rented housing means that it is often the best option for households who have presented as homeless or for those who have low priority for social housing.

7.43 The private rented sector has grown in the authority area over recent years. However, some of this growth can be attributed to 'accidental landlordism', where homeowners find they are unable to sell their property in the current market and choose to let it out instead. Should these landlords at a future date, exercise their preference to sell, the sector may experience a consequential decline.

7.44 The Scottish Government has recently launched a range of legislation, consultation and initiatives aimed at "*creating a private rented sector in Scotland that offers accommodation of a high standard, both in terms of physical condition and management, whilst being able to meet the increasing demands being placed on it.*"⁽⁷⁾⁽⁸⁾⁽⁹⁾

7.45 The challenge for the Council is to support the growth of the private rented sector in order to meet the identified shortfall of affordable housing options and to improve standards and service levels in line with the strategic vision of the Scottish Government.

7.46 A rent deposit guarantee scheme has operated in East Ayrshire since 2008. Management of the scheme is provided by a third party, currently the Community Housing and Advocacy Project (CHAP), and the scheme is monitored by the Private Sector Housing Unit. At December 2012, there were 184 landlords registered with the scheme which assists households who are not able to raise a deposit to access the private rented sector.

7 *Consultation on a Strategy for the Private Rented Sector*, Scottish Government, April 2012.

8 *Evidence Review of the Private Rented Sector in Scotland*, Scottish Government, April 2012.

9 *Consultation on the Introduction of a Tenant Information Pack in the Private Rented Sector*, Scottish Government, February 2012.

(3) Other Interventions

7.47 There a number of indirect interventions that that will help to meet identified housing need:

- Tackling disrepair in the private sector
- Using aids and adaptations and assistive technologies to promote independence for older and disabled people in existing homes
- Tackling and preventing Homelessness
- Tackling fuel poverty and improving energy efficiency throughout the stock.

7.48 These activities are explored further in the following sections of the strategy.

Outcome One: People in East Ayrshire can find a home that they can afford to live in

Where we want to be

We have identified the key priorities that we would look to deliver in order to fulfil this outcome:

1. Promoting the need for additional investment to support the SHIP so that we can build more houses.
2. Supporting the regeneration of town centres by focusing new council house building in town centre locations.
3. Supporting the development of an affordable housing policy as part of the forthcoming LDP
4. Supporting households looking to access low cost home ownership offered by private developers and evaluating whether to include these models in a future SHIP.
5. Monitoring the outcomes of the current NHT to establish whether to get involved in possible future rounds of this or other mid market rental models of housing provision.
6. Continuing to grow the private rented sector in the area and improve both the management and quality of stock in order that it becomes a viable alternative to the social rented and owner occupied sectors.
7. Continuing to monitor allocations processes and procedures to ensure that the process is efficient and meets identified need.

8. Supporting residents looking to address their housing needs via mutual exchange.
9. Taking appropriate measures to protect existing social rented stock to ensure it is available to meet future need.

Outcome One: People in East Ayrshire can find a home that they can afford to live in

How we will get there

We have developed an action plan that sets out the activities that we will undertake to meet the identified priorities and deliver this outcome:

Projected Outputs		Actions	Timescale	Action Owner
Local Development Plan includes appropriate response to Housing Supply Target	1.1	Ensure forthcoming Local Development Plan includes an effective, quality land supply to meet needs identified in HNDA	2015	EAC PED
More new-build affordable homes are delivered	1.2	Identify opportunities to bid for extra pots of development funding as these are announced	Ongoing	EAC HES
	1.3	Update the register of effective land in Council Ownership	Annual	EAC HES
	1.4	Work in partnership with private developers who bring forward land (windfall sites)	Ongoing	EAC HES
	1.5	Deliver Strategic Local Programme	2015	EAC HES
	1.6	Use HNDA to inform the annual SHIP review process to ensure housing investment addresses identified need	Annual	EAC HES

Projected Outputs	Actions		Timescale	Action Owner
	1.7	Develop supplementary planning guidance (SPG) as part of Local Development Plan setting out details of proposed Affordable Housing Policy	2015	EAC PED
	1.8	Engage with developing partners as part of the SPG development process	2015	EAC PED
	1.9	Work with private developers to encourage delivery of affordable housing at developments not covered by AHP	Ongoing	EAC PED
More households are supported to access low-cost home-ownership	1.10	Identify a point of contact to deal with enquiries about low cost home ownership schemes which can provide appropriate signposting to the private developers	2013	EAC HES
	1.11	Ensure HNDA findings are disseminated to Housing Information Partnership in order that private development might address identified need	2013	EAC HES
The suitability of mid-market rental in each is established at HMA level.	1.12	Identify potential demand for mid-market rent using HNDA refresh	2013	EAC HES
	1.13	Work with RSL partners to establish feasibility of variant models of NHT programme	2013	EAC HES / RSL
Previously empty homes have been returned to the pool of effective housing stock	1.14	Explore opportunities for open-market resale of council stock	2014	
	1.15	Work with homeowners to bring empty private sector	2013	EAC HES

Projected Outputs	Actions	Timescale	Action Owner
	properties back into use, particularly in town centres		
	1.16 Review the reasons for long term voids and investigate feasibility of returning them to the effective allocations pool	2014	EAC HES
	1.17 Promote low/no demand properties through advertisement and as part of the housing application process	Ongoing	EAC HES
Social rented homes are allocated quickly and meet identified need.	1.18 Develop Lettings Plans for each letting area, linked to pressure on housing stock	2014	EAC HES / CHR
	1.19 Implement a package of initiatives to encourage tenants to 'downsize' where appropriate	2014	EAC HES / CHR
	1.20 Undertake regular monitoring of the outcomes of allocations process to ensure it's working effectively	Ongoing	EAC HES / CHR
	1.21 Work with CHR partners to pilot a register for tenants that facilitates movement via mutual exchange	2013	EAC HES / CPR
Existing social rented stock is protected and remains available to meet future need.	1.22 Explore options for the application of Pressured Area Status subject to legislative changes	2013	EAC HES
The Private Rented Sector is a viable alternative to the social rented sector and owner occupied sectors.	1.23 Increase the number of PRS landlords gaining accreditation	Ongoing	EAC HES
	1.24 Continue to raise awareness of the expectations and	Ongoing	EAC HES

Projected Outputs	Actions		Timescale	Action Owner
		standards in relation to the private rented sector and provide support to achieve these		
	1.25	Take appropriate action to enforce private rented sector standards where breaches are identified or reported by tenants	Ongoing	EAC HES
	1.26	Provide applicants to the social rented sector with information and advice about about the Private Rented Sector	Ongoing (from 2013)	EAC HES
	1.27	Provide a package of assistance to support interested owners to become landlords	Ongoing (from 2013)	EAC HES

8 Housing Quality, Energy Efficiency & Climate Change

Outcome Two: People in East Ayrshire live in warm, energy-efficient and well maintained homes

8.1 Housing quality has an impact on both the look and appearance of local neighbourhoods and the physical and mental health of inhabitants.

8.2 Well-maintained, energy-efficient homes are essential to tackling the inter-related issues of fuel poverty and environmental sustainability.

Outcome Two: People in East Ayrshire live in warm, energy-efficient and well maintained homes

Where we are now

This section details the main issues, key activities, relevant policies and current strategic requirements that we must consider in shaping our priorities for the delivery of this outcome.

Housing Stock Condition

Scottish House Condition Survey

8.3 The Scottish House Condition Survey (SHCS) 2009-11 ⁽¹⁰⁾ indicates that **91%** of properties in East Ayrshire have some disrepair, **58%** of these dwellings have urgent disrepair. This is higher than the Scottish figure of **37%**. Urgent disrepair in the public sector (**62%** of all stock with any disrepair) was higher than in the private sector (**56%**).

The Scottish Housing Quality Standard

8.4 The Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) was introduced in 2004 and applies to properties in the social rented sector. To meet the standard a property must be:

- Compliant with the tolerable standard
- Free from serious disrepair
- Energy Efficient

10 Scottish House Condition Survey 2009-11

- Provided with modern facilities and services
- Healthy, safe and secure

8.5 All properties must meet this standard by 2015, and are required to maintain the standard thereafter.

8.6 The Scottish Housing Regulator identified the following SHQS failure rates at March 2011:

	Number	% of Total Stock
Council Stock	3,478	26.9
RSL Stock	356	10.7
Total Social Rented Stock	3,834	23.6

Table 8.1 SHQS Failure Rates (March 2011)

8.7 East Ayrshire Council Stock -Housing Asset Services is responsible for overseeing a programme of house condition surveys, which allows the Council to identify the individual components of SHQS failure.

8.8 House condition surveys are currently being undertaken with a view to completing 100% of external surveys by 2013 and internal surveys by 2015. The survey results are used to deliver a programme of internal and external works that will have a positive visual impact on local communities and will ensure our houses will last for many more years.

8.9 RSL Stock - Individual rates of failure vary across the RSL stock, and largely reflect the age and construction type of the stock owned by each landlord. Each RSL has its own delivery plan for meeting the SHQS, and their progress is monitored by the Scottish Housing Regulator.

Mixed Tenure Buildings

8.10 One of the knock-on effects of the Right-to-Buy has been the emergence of mixed-tenure buildings which require the participation of owners in common repair programmes and improvement projects. The issue of non-compliance is a significant one, which is recognised as a key risk in the ability of landlords in the area to meet the standard.

8.11 The Scheme of Assistance (see 9.19) offers advice and assistance to owners on how they might fund their share of any common works, while the **Tenements (Scotland) Act 2004** offers a legal process that allows any owner to instruct works and recover the cost from the other owners.

8.12 In order to improve ongoing maintenance issues and avoid the requirement to recover costs through expensive and often lengthy legal processes, the Council in accordance with the legislation has recently registered its property factoring responsibilities.

Private Sector Stock

8.13 The **Housing (Scotland) Act 2006** introduced a number of duties that are aimed at improving quality in the private sector. Ultimately, the provisions of the Act reinforce that the primary responsibility for repairing and maintaining homes must rest with the property owner and that public money should be used in limited circumstances. Instead councils should extend the range of assistance they provide to owners to undertake improvement works, and are obliged to produce a statement on how they will deliver a Scheme of Assistance.

8.14 The Council will provide support for owners and private landlords through **East Ayrshire's Scheme of Assistance**. The Scheme of Assistance was adopted in 2011 with the aim of promoting greater responsibility amongst homeowners for the repair and maintenance of their homes and highlights the ways in which the Council can help homeowners achieve this. It also sets out the ways in which the Council can help people with physical impairments and restricted mobility remain in their own homes through the provision of advice and assistance to help carry out adaptations.

8.15 The aims of the Scheme of Assistance are to:

1. Encourage owners to recognise they have the primary responsibility for maintaining their homes;
2. More effectively address disrepair in private housing by prioritising the use of the Private Sector Housing Grant (PSHG) to facilitate improvement works in mixed tenure blocks.
3. Provide a fair and reasonable approach to providing assistance to help homeowners repair, improve and adapt their homes;
4. Help older and disabled residents in private properties live independently in their home for as long as they choose.

Care and Repair

8.16 The East Ayrshire Care and Repair service is managed on behalf of the Council by Shire Housing Association, and offers a free and confidential client-orientated service to owner occupiers and private tenants who are over 60 years of age or who have a disability and live in East Ayrshire.

8.17 The aim of the project is to carry out works, and offer information and advice to improve property condition, help make homes safer and prevent accidents or injury. The project is also designed to assist clients in hospital get back into their own homes, through the provision of works in the home to make them suitable for their return.

8.18 Care & Repair also provides a small repair service, carrying out jobs that are too small to be of interest to contractors, but which have a big impact on the lives of the residents who benefit. Where contractors are required, Care and Repair operates an approved contractors list.

Housing Renewal Areas

8.19 The Housing Scotland Act (2006) introduced Housing Renewal Areas (HRA). Local Authorities can designate an HRA to help secure the improvement of houses within the area. There are two main occasions that might instigate HRA designation:

1. When there is a significant number of sub-standard houses in a localised area
2. When the appearance of houses are adversely affecting the amenity of the area.

8.20 Housing Renewal Area status offers an effective way of tackling identified issues, particularly where problems are long-standing and progress on an individual basis has proved impossible.

8.21 At present there has been no evidence that imposing Housing Renewal Area status in any area of East Ayrshire would be of particular use. Further investigation is required in order to establish the usefulness and the cost implications of HRA designation as a tool for tackling decline.

Private Rented Sector Issues

8.22 The Private Rented Sector has witnessed significant growth in recent years and now accounts for over 7% of the total housing stock in East Ayrshire providing a home for almost 4000 households. The condition of property in this sector will, therefore, impact on overall conditions in the area.

8.23 While most landlords want to provide good quality housing and management standards, some are not aware of their responsibilities, especially the obligations placed on them by recent legislation. Evidence demonstrates that many landlords own one property, and are often described as 'accidental' landlords

8.24 The Council established a Private Landlords' Forum in 2003. Supported by the Private Sector Housing Unit, the Forum meets to discuss local and national issues affecting the sector and offers local landlords the opportunity to network and share

best practice and ensure they are kept up to date with changes in legislation and Government policy. The Council also publishes 'Lets Talk', the Private Sector newsletter which is used to disseminate information and advice to landlords.

8.25 The Council is actively working to try and increase the number of private rented landlords adhering to the Scottish Core Standards and achieving Accredited Status. Landlords wishing to become accredited must be registered under the national landlord registration scheme, must subscribe to the standards set for management and condition of properties and must agree to undertake a minimum of one training session per year. To date the number of accredited landlords locally remains low, a reflection of the costs attached and the voluntary nature of the programme.

8.26 The Scottish Government has recognised the vital role that private rented housing plays in providing people with a flexible housing option and is currently developing a Strategy for the Private Rented Sector to support implementation of the **Private Rented Sector Housing (Scotland) Act, 2011**. The Strategy will include, as one of its strategic aims, a commitment to delivering "*better quality property management, condition, and energy efficiency to be enabled by smarter more targeted regulation*"⁽¹¹⁾. Recognising that property condition needs to be improved, but that assistance and regulation will be required for landlords who require support to enable them to invest, and for those who are unwilling to invest.

8.27 The Council will identify the ways in which it can support landlords to meet obligations in relation to property condition as set out in both the Private Rented Sector Housing (Scotland) Act, 2011 and the forthcoming strategy. These new arrangements, set alongside the current activities around landlord registration, i.e. promotion of accreditation and the continued delivery of information and advice to landlords by the private sector liaison team, will help to raise awareness amongst landlords and tenants of their rights and responsibilities in relation to property maintenance and repair, with a view to securing improvements in housing quality in the sector.

Fuel Poverty, Energy Efficiency and Climate Change

8.28 Privately owned properties are more likely to have poor energy efficiency (**21%** have NHER rating of 0-5) than those in the public sector (**8%** has NHER rating of 0-5). Pre-war houses are less energy efficient than their post-war counterparts. **29%** of pre-war homes have an NHER rating of 0-5, whilst only **13%** of post war homes do.

8.29 According to the the Scottish Government's definition, "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. Furthermore, extreme fuel poverty has been defined when more than 20% is being spent on fuel."

11 Consultation on a Strategy for the Private Rented Sector, Scottish Government, April 212.

Fuel Poverty in East Ayrshire and Scotland				
	Households in Fuel Poverty		Households in Extreme Fuel Poverty	
	000s	%	000s	%
East Ayrshire	12	23	3	7
Scotland	465	20	189	8
Source: SHCS (2009/11)				

Table 8.2 Fuel Poverty in East Ayrshire and Scotland

8.30 The SHCS estimates that **23%** of households are living in fuel poverty, while a further **7%** were recorded as living in extreme fuel poverty. Pensioners account for the largest proportion of fuel poor households.

Fuel Poor Households by Tenure / Household Type		
Tenure	Fuel Poor Households	
	000s	%
Private	10	29
Public	6	36
Household Type		
Families	4	18
Pensioners	7	44
Others	6	35
Source: SHCS (2009/11)		

Table 8.3 Fuel Poor Households by Tenure/Type

8.31 29% of households living in the private sector are fuel poor (10,000 households), compared with 36% of households in the public sector (6,000 households).

8.32 Pensioners households account for the largest proportion of fuel poor households. 44% of Pensioner Households (7,000 households) are fuel poor households.

8.33 Three elements contribute to whether or not a household is in fuel poverty:

1. Income
2. Fuel Prices
3. Energy Efficiency of the Property

8.34 That the level of fuel poverty at both local authority and national level has risen since 2002, despite improvements in condition, NHER rating and the prevalence of central heating systems, demonstrates the major impact of fuel prices on the rate of fuel poverty.

8.35 The Scottish Government published its **Fuel Poverty Statement** in 2002 which sets out the commitment to reducing fuel poverty in Scotland by 2016 as far as is reasonably practicable and East Ayrshire Council shares that commitment.

8.36 Alongside Fuel poverty targets is the commitment to tackling climate change. **The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009** requires greenhouse gas emissions to be reduced by 42% by 2020. Given the high proportion of emissions that are generated by the housing stock, measures to improve domestic energy efficiency in both new and existing homes will be essential in meeting these targets.

Current Scottish Government Programmes

8.37 The Scottish Government's Climate Change Delivery Plan (2009) identifies a focus on insulating homes; improving heating systems and encouraging changes in lifestyle to reduce energy consumption, and a range of programmes aimed at reducing carbon emissions and tackling fuel poverty are currently in operation to support delivery of climate change targets.

8.38 Major problems lie with the inability or unwillingness of owners and private landlords to undertake energy efficiency improvements. Specific programmes introduced which are restricted to owner-occupiers and tenants living in the private rented sector, include:

- Energy Assistance Package
- Universal Home Insulation Scheme
- Boiler Scrappage Scheme

8.39 2012 saw the launch of **Warm Homes Fund** making available £50m over the next five years, to deliver renewable energy and energy-efficient homes to those communities worst affected by Fuel Poverty.

8.40 In addition the Scottish Government has an energy efficiency budget of around £18m in 2012-13 for the provision of energy advice to support landlords, tenants and owner-occupiers. Advice is delivered by Energy Savings Trust. This budget also covers research, pilot programmes, ensuring robust data is available, and delivering Energy Action Plan and Climate Change objectives.

Green Deal

8.41 The Energy Act 2011 includes provision for the GB-wide "**Green Deal**" which is a framework to enable private firms to offer consumers energy efficiency improvements to their homes, community spaces and businesses at no upfront capital cost, and recoup payments through a charge in instalments on the electricity bill.

8.42 At the heart of the scheme is the "Green Deal Plan", an innovative financing mechanism which allows consumers to pay back the cost of work through their electricity bills. This means consumers can see the Green Deal charge alongside the reductions in energy use which generate savings on their bill.

8.43 It also means that if they move out and cease to be the bill-payer at that property, the financial obligation doesn't move with them but moves to the next bill payer. Therefore, the charge is only paid whilst the benefits are enjoyed. In this way, the Green Deal differs from a conventional loan since the bill-payer is not liable for the full capital cost of the measures, only the charges due whilst they are the bill-payer.

8.44 Alongside the Green Deal, the UK Government is planning to replace the existing energy company obligations. The new **Energy Company Obligation (ECO)** will focus energy companies on improving the ability of the vulnerable and those on lower incomes to heat their homes affordably, and on improving solid wall properties, which have not benefited much from previous schemes.

8.45 The Green Deal Oversight & Registration Body (GDORB) was launched on the 8th August 2012 however installation activity will not begin until Spring 2013. Full details regarding the the role of local authorities in Green Deal have yet to be released. The Council will explore the opportunities the new programme presents to support improvements to stock that has traditionally been difficult to tackle under previous initiatives.

Local Programmes and Activity

8.46 East Ayrshire produced its first **Fuel Poverty Strategy** in 2004 and much work has been undertaken across the Authority to meet the challenges set therein.

8.47 The focus of activity has been the delivery of area based initiatives aimed at providing energy efficiency measures and information and advice to households in areas identified at high risk of fuel poverty.

8.48 These area based initiatives are supported by the delivery of information and advice across the authority area and particular activities around income maximisation.

8.49 This work will continue, and will be further developed and strengthened to ensure households are able to access the advice and support that they need to improve the energy efficiency of their homes, to maximise their income and to ensure they are not paying more than necessary for the household fuel.

8.50 Private landlords will be particularly encouraged to consider their energy performance standards. As part of the current registration process, landlords must obtain and clearly display an energy performance certificate at each property. The aim is to increase the number of accredited landlords that adhere to the **Scottish Core Standards** - which includes enhanced energy performance standards. Energy Advice Scotland have launched **The Home Advice Service** which will inform landlords about the current energy efficiency of their properties, give advice on beneficial improvements to increase tenant comfort and add value to the properties and provide guidance on the financial mechanisms available to fund these improvements. The work of this group will be promoted via the Private Landlords' Forum locally.

8.51 There is a requirement to strengthen links between the various aspects set out in this section. Improving housing quality; exploring new approaches, and funding opportunities, to tackle energy efficiency; and the delivery of information and advice at household level will all contribute to meeting targets around housing quality, climate change and fuel poverty.

Outcome Two: People in East Ayrshire live in warm, energy-efficient, well maintained homes

Where we want to be

We have identified the key priorities that we would look to deliver in order to fulfil this outcome:

1. Ensuring that all Council and Housing Association stock in the area meets the SHQS by 2015, as far as practicable.
2. Improving the condition of Council houses through continued investment in the capital programme and provision of a quality repairs service.
3. Improving our knowledge about property condition in the private sector.
4. Investigating the usefulness of Housing Renewal Area designation.
5. Supporting private landlords to raise and maintain the condition of private rented properties.
6. Raising awareness of the support available through the Scheme of Assistance to encourage owners to improve and maintain the condition of their properties.

7. Increasing the number of owners participating in improvement programmes in mixed tenure blocks.
8. Co-ordinating strategic planning around fuel poverty and delivering climate change.
9. Ensuring information and advice on energy and fuel poverty is widely available.
10. Maximising resources available locally via government and other funding sources to improve household energy efficiency and secure carbon reduction.
11. Strengthening local partnerships to tackle fuel poverty and ensuring robust referral mechanisms are in place.
12. Identifying low income households at risk of fuel poverty and maximising their household income.
13. Maximising the Green Deal Scheme benefits for local households as it is rolled out in 2013.
14. Increasing the number of private landlords gaining Accreditation and delivering enhanced energy performance standards.

Outcome Two: People in East Ayrshire live in warm, energy-efficient and well maintained homes

How we will get there

We have developed an action plan that sets out the activities that we will undertake to meet the identified priorities and deliver this outcome:

Projected Outputs		Actions	Timescale	Action Owner
Property condition in the social rented sector is improved and maintained	2.1	Continue to progress the Council's Standard Delivery Plan to achieve SHQS	2015	EAC HES
	2.2	Identify the level of exemptions / abeyances across the Social Rented Sector	2014	EAC HES
	2.3	Ensure effective planned and cyclical maintenance	Annual	EAC HES

Projected Outputs		Actions	Timescale	Action Owner
		programme is in place to ensure standard is maintained		
	2.4	Annually review repairs processes to ensure these remain responsive and effective	Annual	EAC HES
Information about the condition of property in both the social rented and private sectors is improved.	2.5	Undertake rolling programme of internal and external surveys of all Council housing stock	Ongoing	EAC HES
	2.6	Further Develop the Asset Management Plan for council Housing	2016	EAC HES
	2.7	Identify gaps in available secondary data on private sector stock condition and determine whether a Private Sector Stock Condition Survey is required	2014	EAC HES
	2.8	Undertake full examination of HRA designation requirements and funding issues	2015	EAC HES
Property condition in the private sector is improved and maintained.	2.9	Identify the information and assistance that could be made available to private landlords looking to undertake property/energy performance improvement works	2015	EAC HES
	2.10	Raise awareness of the support available through the Council's Scheme of Assistance to encourage owners to improve and maintain the condition of their properties	2013 (update Annually)	EAC HES
	2.11	Provide support to owners participating in improvement programmes in mixed tenure blocks	Ongoing	EAC HES

Projected Outputs		Actions	Timescale	Action Owner
Levels of Fuel Poverty are reduced as far as practicably possible.	2.12	Continue to use enforcement measures to ensure Private landlords have a valid EPC.	Ongoing	EAC HES
	2.13	Identify opportunities to take advantage of bid-funding and other initiatives to alleviate fuel poverty in communities that are off the mains gas grid	Ongoing	EAC HES
	2.14	Ensure information and advice on tackling fuel poverty is widely available to households	2013	EAC HES / CHR
	2.15	Maximise resources available locally via government and other funding sources to improve households energy efficiency	Ongoing	EAC HES / CHR
	2.16	Provide advice and support to households seeking to take advantage of UHIS and Green Deal	Ongoing	EAC HES
	2.17	Strengthen local partnerships to tackle fuel poverty and ensure robust referral mechanisms are in place	2013	EAC HES / FP Steering Group
	2.18	Continue to identify low income households at risk of fuel poverty and maximise their income where possible	Ongoing	EAC HES / FP Steering Group
Targets on Energy Efficiency and Climate Change have been identified and progressed	2.19	Extend role of Fuel Poverty Steering Group to include energy efficiency and climate change	2013	EAC HES / FP Steering Group
	2.20	Identify targets in relation to energy efficiency and climate	2013	EAC HES / FP



Projected Outputs		Actions	Timescale	Action Owner
		change and establish monitoring systems for the same		Steering Group



9 Independent Living for Specific Groups

Outcome Three: People in East Ayrshire are able to live independently in suitable accommodation or with appropriate support

9.1 Understanding the varying needs of specific household groups is important to ensure an appropriate range of housing solutions are made available. The Housing Need and Demand Assessment describes the issues concerning key groups with specific housing needs:

- Older people
- People with physical disabilities
- People with learning disabilities
- People with mental health issues
- People with addiction issues
- Vulnerable young people
- Women fleeing domestic abuse
- Gypsies / Travellers
- Black and Minority Ethnic Groups

9.2 The delivery of new social rented housing across the Authority has responded to priorities set out in the 2004-09 LHS and as such has included completions tailored to meet the needs of older people, people with physical disabilities and supported housing for vulnerable groups.

9.3 New supply is not the only solution. Adapting or remodelling existing properties can allow individuals to remain in their current home or might offer a more cost effective way of facilitating a move for a household in need.

9.4 Further, the provision of support services has proved essential in allowing people to remain in mainstream accommodation. This reflects Local and National priorities around "Shifting the Balance of Care" from institutional to community based support and enabling people to remain in their own home wherever practicable.

Outcome Three: People in East Ayrshire are able to live independently in suitable accommodation or with appropriate support

Where we are now

This section details the main issues, key activities, relevant policies and current priorities that we must consider in shaping our priorities for the delivery of this outcome.

Older People

9.5 As identified in the HNDA, it is estimated that almost 13,500 residents in East Ayrshire will be aged over 75 by 2023, an increase of over 50% over the level at 2008. The key impacts of this ageing population will be:

- Changing demands for housing supply and housing stock
- Higher levels of health, care and support needs
- Support for people to remain at home
- Adaptations to housing stock

9.6 Nationally, the central objective of Health and Community Care Policy is to assist older people to live in their own home or a community setting for as long as it safe or practicable to do so. ⁽¹²⁾

9.7 The continued local commitment to this objective is reflected in the Council's recently published Transformation Strategy which has, as one of 3 core strategic priorities, a focus on supporting older people to live independently in the community.

9.8 Therefore, the role of preventative and low-level support services that allow older people to stay in their own homes will have an increasingly important role in the delivery of services for older people.

9.9 The forthcoming activities around the Integration of Adult Health and Social Care will require the establishment of a local Health and Social Care Partnership, and a "Housing Contribution Statement" is being prepared nationally that will facilitate the ways in which housing providers might be best placed to support Local Commissioning Plans.

Accommodation for Older People

9.10 Many services can be provided to people in their current homes but for some a move to smaller or supported accommodation may be the better option.

9.11 A review of sheltered housing across East Ayrshire was undertaken in 2006 and resulted in the implementation of a modernised range of supported accommodation for older people, which offers 794 units of accommodation, provided by a number of social landlords and allocated according to an assessment of housing need.

9.12 All supported accommodation schemes receive the support of an alarm service, some have a scheme manager, while others have visiting support staff who are there on a daily basis.

12 See "Shifting the Balance of Care"

9.13 Some of these supported accommodation schemes are struggling to find tenants whose needs match the range of services on offer. Most supported accommodation schemes have been modernised, but the small size of individual properties, many being bed-sits, are increasingly not meeting the needs or aspirations of older people. In other cases, expectations of the level of support that such accommodation is able to provide don't match that which is available.

9.14 The Council will explore opportunities for remodelling or redevelopment and establish whether some units might be better used for alternative client groups. However, the current financial climate is likely to impact heavily on available options.

9.15 As well as supported accommodation, it is recognised that the needs of older people might best be met by moving to smaller, more accessible and manageable accommodation. This has been the focus of the The Council's house building programme in recent years which has delivered 50 new homes between March 2009 and November 2011 specifically designed to meet the needs of older and ambulant disabled people. These tenants have benefited from a move into modern, easily adaptable homes, and have freed-up family sized accommodation for those looking for a larger home.

9.16 There is limited specific provision for older people in the private sector, with only one scheme built by McCarthy Stone in Kilmarnock. Expanding provision for those looking to continue to own their property⁽¹³⁾, and the role played by the private rented sector in housing older people requires further examination.

Other Services for Older People

9.17 The East Ayrshire Community Alarm Service supports a further 3500 mainly elderly people across East Ayrshire living in all tenure types. The 24 hour service facilitates independent living, offering security to elderly people and their carers that, in the event of an emergency, trained help is readily available. More enhanced assistive technology, such as fall and trip sensors and motion activated lighting offer increased opportunities for independent living in the home. The Council is currently reviewing its options for replacement of the traditional pull-cord system found in its supported accommodation schemes.

9.18 The East Ayrshire Care and Repair service provides a range of services to older owner occupiers and private tenants and plays an important role in helping them remain in their own homes. The service also seeks to prevent admissions to, and facilitate a return home from, hospital by undertaking preventative or remedial works.

9.19 Home Care services are co-ordinated by the Council's Social Work Department and provide high levels of personal care and support services. Services aim to be flexible and responsive and are provided following an assessment of need.

¹³ "Wider Planning for an Ageing Population", published by the Scottish Government in 2010, points out that the majority of older people own their own homes and it is likely that most of them wish to remain as owners

Physical Disability

9.20 The HNDA identified around 4000 dwellings requiring adaptation across East Ayrshire. This figure represents an estimate of the number of households affected by disability but it does not translate into a requirement for new fully accessible homes or specifically adapted properties.

Accessible New Build Homes

9.21 The 2010 Building Standards Building Regulations have improved accessibility standards for all newly built homes. However, they do not impose a requirement on developers to deliver fully accessible homes. Consultation with the North and South Access Panels identified an aspiration to include a proportion of homes that meet the needs of wheelchair users within all new housing developments.

9.22 Where possible, social housing developments, financed via grant funding will contain a small number of properties fully designed for wheelchair use. The Housing Service works with Social Work colleagues to identify families in need in order to allocate these homes.

Adaptations and Equipment

9.23 As new building accounts for a small proportion of the total housing stock in East Ayrshire, a focus on improving existing stock remains a key priority.

9.24 Many existing homes can be made more suitable for those with mobility and health issues through the use of adaptations and Telecare, and for many disabled people, relatively minor adaptations will allow them to remain in their own home for longer.

9.25 The Council and RSL Partners carry out a range of adaptations to their own stock, following an assessment by an Occupational Therapist. The Council also provides grant assistance to support owners to carry out adaptations to their own homes.

9.26 Annually, around 400 adaptations are made to Council stock. In 2010/11, 439 were carried out with external handrails accounting for 47% of these. During 2010/11 a total of 141 private sector disabled adaptations were carried out under the Council's Scheme of Assistance.

9.27 It is anticipated that demand for adaptations will continue at, or above, current levels which will present particular challenges given the current economic climate.

9.28 Consultation to date has identified the continued need to make better use of existing adapted stock. The Council and RSL partners hold relatively good information about adapted stock. However, levels of demand and personal preference, mean it

has historically proved difficult to allocate based on the presence of an existing adaptation. The introduction of a Housing Occupational Therapist has improved our knowledge of applicants' needs which will enhance the matching process over time.

9.29 The Scottish Government has provided funding for a project led by the Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living and Ownership Options in Scotland, to develop a Scottish Accessible Housing Register. The register is currently being piloted and the Council awaits the outcome of the evaluation of the pilot process.

9.30 Occupational Therapists and Social Work staff can also supply a range of equipment that can be provided without adapting the home, which often means lower costs, and continues to allow disabled people to remain in their own homes.

Learning Disabilities

9.31 The HNDA identified that in 2009 the number of adults with a learning disability in East Ayrshire who were known to the Council was recorded at 522. This represents a ratio of 5.3 adults with a learning disability per 1000 of the population.⁽¹⁴⁾

9.32 The majority (73%) of known people with Learning Disability live in mainstream accommodation. 18% live in registered adult care homes, and a further 10% live in supported accommodation.

9.33 As the numbers of people with additional support needs due to learning disabilities and associated physical needs continues to grow alongside a reduction in alternative funding streams, such as Independent Living Fund, and pressures on public services, innovative supported accommodation solutions require to be identified.

9.34 Access to good quality housing in defined localities where supports can be shared amongst several people along with the use of assistive technology has provided cost effective solutions to enable people to live in their own communities with access to support when required. There is a need to further develop this provision in response to the growing population of people who live with ageing carers and who will require alternative living arrangements in due course.

9.35 Supporting adults with learning disabilities to live independently in their communities has been achieved successfully for many people as a consequence of positive partnership working across Social Work, Housing Services and Registered Social Landlords in East Ayrshire. Building on these working relationships to support continued service development is important to ensure continued positive outcomes for those with learning disabilities.

Gypsies / Travellers

9.36 Currently there is no permanent site provision for Gypsies/Travellers in East Ayrshire.

14 eSay statistics release 2009

9.37 In 2008 Craigforth undertook an Accommodation Needs Assessment of Gypsy/Travellers for West Central Scotland which identified key priorities for East Ayrshire and led to the development of a joint proposal to develop a transit site in conjunction with South Ayrshire.

9.38 The council established a short-life working group in 2010 which successfully implemented a policy for dealing with unauthorised encampments in the area and secured Cabinet approval to identify a suitable site to develop a transit site for Gypsies / Travellers moving through the area. This remains a priority and is included in the LHS Action Plan for implementation.

Vulnerable Young People

9.39 Young people seeking to live independently can have their needs met via mainstream housing stock. However some young people, particularly previously looked after young people, face particular challenges that mean they require support to ensure the transition from care to independent living is a successful one.

9.40 Particular work with young people who present as homeless is a priority of the homelessness prevention initiatives (set out in Chapter 12). The provision of additional support for those young people who are unable to return home is made available to develop the young person's capacity to sustain their tenancy.

9.41 An alternative form of supported accommodation has been developed by Social Work colleagues with input from Housing Services. The **Supported Carers Scheme** will provide supported accommodation for up to 5 individual care leavers. They will receive accommodation, support and training in life skills in a family environment. Careful matching to ensure compatibility between the care leaver and their hosts is known to be an essential element in the success of other similar schemes that successfully operate in other local authorities.

Women Fleeing Domestic Abuse

9.42 East Ayrshire Women's Aid provides a range of support services to women suffering domestic abuse or violence. They have a refuge in Kilmarnock which has eight self contained flats, two of which are accessible to people with physical disabilities, and it includes spaces specifically for young children. A key priority is to secure additional refuge accommodation in the south of the authority.

9.43 Crisis and longer term planned support to women is also offered through refuge based support, a refuge out of-hours service, practical assistance and advocacy.

9.44 Follow on support is provided to women children and young people to move into independent housing after leaving their home because of domestic abuse. Outreach services are provided to support women, and their families living in the outlying areas of East Ayrshire and can provide support at home or somewhere else in the local community where the victim feels safe.

9.45 Further information and support is available to women whether they are living with their partner, have decided to leave or have already left. This includes signposting to specialist agencies where required and providing support to relocate to another area and stay safe in a new home.

Minority Ethnic Households

9.46 The HNDA sets out full details of the minority ethnic population in East Ayrshire. Fewer than 1% of the population (840 people) in East Ayrshire is from a minority ethnic group. This compares with just over 2% for the whole of Scotland.

9.47 Between 2002 and 2009, 840 inward migrants from all parts of the world registered with the DWP for a National Insurance number and gave their address within East Ayrshire. There is no way of knowing whether these individuals chose to remain in East Ayrshire. However, should this inward migration be reflected in the outputs of the 2011 census the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) population could potentially more than double.

9.48 Minority Ethnic Households will have a range of accommodation and support needs which are the same as the rest of the community, and face the same challenges set out across the whole of the Local Housing Strategy. However, removing barriers to accessing housing is a key issue for BME groups. This is particularly relevant in relation to the provision of information and advice, and some of the particular arrangements that are in place are set out in chapter 11.

Housing Support Services

9.49 Housing Support Services are provided across East Ayrshire with the primary aim of developing and sustaining an individual's capacity to manage their own home and enable them to live independently. Appropriate housing support has also been recognised as playing a vital role in preventing homelessness.

Outcome Three: People in East Ayrshire are able to live independently in suitable accommodation or with appropriate support

Where we want to be

We have identified the key priorities that we would look to deliver in order to fulfil this outcome:

1. Reviewing current adaptations processes and implementing improvements in service delivery within the social rented sector

2. Continuing to support the provision of adaptations in the private sector via the Scheme of Assistance
3. Increasing the supply of suitably designed properties to meet the needs of older people and those with a disability
4. Providing services to help older people remain in their own home
5. Prioritising grant assistance for disabled adaptations in order to promote independent living
6. Ensuring advice and information is available regarding options for adaptations or alternative housing is best suited to individual housing needs
7. Continuing to support the delivery of Care and Repair services
8. Improving outcomes for young people with support needs and "looked after" young people via support services and the delivery of appropriate accommodation solutions
9. Reviewing housing and support services available for people with learning disabilities to identify future requirements
10. Reviewing housing and support services available for people affected by domestic abuse to identify future requirements
11. Identifying an appropriate solution for meeting the transit requirements of Gypsy Traveller households arriving in the East Ayrshire

Outcome Three: People in East Ayrshire are able to live independently in suitable accommodation or with appropriate support

How we will get there

We have developed an action plan that sets out the activities that we will undertake to meet the identified priorities and deliver this outcome:

Projected Outputs		Actions	Timescale	Action Owner
Knowledge of the location and nature of adapted stock in the	3.1	Develop a database of adapted properties across all CHR partners' stock	2014	EAC HES / CHR

Projected Outputs		Actions	Timescale	Action Owner
social rented sector is improved.				
The allocation of adapted stock is better aligned to meeting need	3.2	Link adapted property database to common allocation system	2014	EAC HES / CHR
The number of properties suitable for older people and people with physical disabilities is increased	3.3	Work with private developers to identify opportunities to increase the supply of wheelchair standard homes for sale	2014	EAC HES
	3.4	Work with private developers to identify opportunities to increase the supply of housing for older people for sale	2014	EAC HES
	3.5	Increase the supply of new build homes suitable for disabled and older people in the social rented sector	Ongoing	EAC HES
	3.6	Review and strengthen the Scheme of Assistance	2013	EAC HES
	3.7	Identify opportunities to incorporate 'future proofing' works in council stock as part of cyclical maintenance and improvements	2014	EAC HES
People are supported to remain in their own home	3.8	Work with the Health and Social Care partnership to provide effective contribution to meeting accommodation needs	Ongoing	EAC HES
	3.9	Continue to support the Care & Repair Project	ongoing	EAC HES
	3.10	Identify costed options for expanding provision of telecare services	2014	EAC HES

Projected Outputs		Actions	Timescale	Action Owner
	3.11	Continue to prioritise PSHG for the delivery of adaptations for people with physical disabilities.	ongoing	EAC HES
	3.13	Ensure accommodation provision is in place to support Social Work in planning services for care leavers	ongoing	EAC HES / SW
Appropriate plans are in place for the development of services for people with learning disabilities.	3.15	Ensure accommodation is available to support the work of Health / Social Care Partnership.	ongoing	EAC HES H&SC
The Housing Needs of people affected by domestic abuse are planned for and met	3.16	Continue to support Women's Aid and routes to finding safe, secure accommodation.	ongoing	EAC HES / WA
Appropriate services are available for Gypsies/Travellers arriving in East Ayrshire	3.17	Undertake options appraisal of identified sites to establish suitable location for transit Gypsies / travellers site.	2014	EAC HES

10 Accessing Housing, Advice and Support

Outcome Four: People in East Ayrshire are able to access quality housing information and advice and the ways in which housing is accessed are simplified

10.1 People look to move home for a variety of reasons. For some people the need to move will be as a result of increased family size or changed occupation. For others it will be a result of a change in health or mobility, relationship breakdown or a change in circumstances. While many movers are able to move without assistance, others require advice and support. It is important to ensure that this assistance is made available to prevent crises such as homelessness.

10.2 Housing advice and support is particularly important for groups who may be disadvantaged or discriminated against as a result of their particular needs.

Outcome Four: People in East Ayrshire are able to access quality housing information and advice and the ways in which housing is accessed is simplified

Where we are now

This section details the main issues, key activities, relevant policies and current priorities that we must consider in shaping our priorities for the delivery of this outcome.

Consistent Comprehensive and Appropriate Housing Advice

10.3 The provision of advice and support needs to be designed to reach people who cannot manage the move to more suitable housing independently and therefore end up in a crisis situation. Some people will need this advice and support to help them because of mobility issues or mental health difficulties. Others will need it to avoid the loss of accommodation because of rent arrears, anti-social behaviour, relationship breakdown or financial pressures.

10.4 People can be poorly informed about their housing choices because of a lack of information, or simply not knowing how to access the relevant information. People need the right advice, information and support at the right time to help them to stay in their existing home, or move to a more suitable home, if appropriate.

Housing Options Approach

10.5 Housing Options Hubs have been established as five regional joint-working partnerships that will take forward and encourage the development of the housing options approach to homeless prevention in Scotland. East Ayrshire Council is part of the South West Hub and work is currently underway to develop the Hub Model for implementation within the Authority. ⁽¹⁵⁾

10.6 In this way, prospective applicants will be able to discuss their housing options with an adviser and will include details about options within the whole of the social rented sector, the private rented sector and the owner occupied sector. Having received advice about the realistic options available to them at application stage, customers can make early and informed decisions about the most appropriate solution to meet this need.

Welfare Reform - impact on Housing Options

10.7 The UK Government has embarked on a programme to reform the current benefits and tax credits system. This programme will introduce the Universal Credit to replace a number of different benefits and will place an overall cap on the level of benefit paid. The Government still has to set out full details of the changes, which will be phased in over the next six years.

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

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

10.9 Housing providers must assess the impact of these changes on the housing options available to those in housing need, and ensure that customers are correctly advised about the implications of various housing options on their benefit entitlement and income.

15 <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/homeless/HomelessnessPrevention/hubs> for full details.

Common Housing Register and Allocation Policies

10.10 The way in which people apply for and are allocated a home in the social rented sector has been simplified across the authority area:

10.11 The Single East Ayrshire Register for Community Housing (SEARCH) was launched in 2012 and is supported by a Common Allocation Policy applicable across the 5 partner organisations involved, namely Atrium Homes, Cunninghame Housing Association, East Ayrshire Council and Shire Housing Association.

10.12 Applicants complete a single application form and join the common register in order to be considered for a property owned and managed by any of the partner organisations thereby simplifying the process of applying for a social rented home in East Ayrshire.

Barriers to Access

10.13 As well as ensuring that the information and advice is good quality and consistent, consideration must be given to the way on which this information might be accessed.

10.14 Physical barriers include location of offices and the particular impact on rural communities who might be some distance away from the nearest housing office, as well as the disabled access arrangements within offices.

10.15 The growth of electronic forms of communication over the last decade have proved useful in offering an alternative medium for accessing information without the requirement to leave home. Making literature available in other locations within the community, such as libraries, GP surgeries and Local Offices has proved useful in the past and should be explored further.

10.16 The success of remote access requires literature to be kept up to date and regularly replaced.

10.17 Within the BME community, it might be cultural or language barriers that limit access. The Council provides translation and interpretation services which may prove useful in these circumstances. The Council continues to be aware of good practice in relation to cultural sensitivities, such as requests for same-sex interviews.

10.18 Some individuals might require support to overcome learning difficulties, problems with reading and writing or deafness. Necessary arrangements should be put in place to provide assistance as required.

Independent Advice

10.19 The Council is not the only agency responsible for the delivery of quality housing advice. Locally The Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) and the Ayrshire Housing Advocacy Project (AHAP) provide free, independent legal advice. National Organisations, such as Shelter, can also offer information, particularly in times of crisis.

Outcome Four: People in East Ayrshire are able to access quality housing information and advice and the ways in which housing is accessed are simplified

Where we want to be

We have identified the key priorities that we would look to deliver in order to fulfil this outcome:

1. Strengthening the Housing Options service to ensure it fulfils a range of housing need and is accessible to everyone who requires it
2. Adopting the Housing Options Hub approach to the delivery of local housing information and advice services
3. Raising awareness of housing options to improve access to housing
4. Ensuring all housing offices are accessible
5. Making advice available in a variety of formats and at a wide range of locations
6. Ensuring necessary assistance can be made available to individuals who visit housing advice offices who have particular cultural or support requirements
7. Providing details of independent housing advice providers to ensure access to appropriate information

Outcome Four: People in East Ayrshire are able to access quality housing information and advice and the ways in which housing is accessed is simplified

How we will get there

We have developed an action plan that sets out the activities that we will undertake to meet the identified priorities and deliver this outcome:

Projected Outputs		Actions	Timescale	Action Owner
Housing services are accessible to all	4.1	Carry out an EQIA review of all housing service policies and procedures to identify any differential impact	2016	EAC HES
Housing Options model is utilised throughout the Authority Area	4.2	Extend use of Housing Options Model Toolkit	2013	EAC HES
	4.3	Implement a programme of staff training on housing options	2013	EAC HES
	4.4	Implement Prevention Model Action Plan	2013	EAC HES
	4.5	Evaluate and Review the Housing Options Model	2015	EAC HES
Housing advice literature is current and easily accessed	4.6	Update all housing advice literature and electronic media and carry out regular review of its availability	Ongoing (in response to changes in service)	EAC HES
	4.7	Make all housing offices accessible for those with a physical disability	2017	EAC HES
	4.8	Ensure translation and interpretation services are available on request	Ongoing	EAC HES
People know where to go when they need Housing Advice and information	4.9	Develop 'Housing Options Promotion Plan'	2013	EAC HES
	4.10	Develop Multi-agency referral procedures into Housing Options Team	2014	EAC HES
	4.11	Develop a directory of independent housing advice providers	2013	EAC HES

11 Homelessness Prevention and Support

Outcome Five: Homelessness in East Ayrshire is prevented as far as possible and accommodation, advice and support is available where it cannot be avoided

11.1 East Ayrshire Council has met the Scottish Government's target to abolish the priority need test by 2012, meaning all unintentionally homeless households are entitled to permanent accommodation. The main focus of the Council's activities now is preventing homelessness from occurring in the first place, and ensuring the best possible services are made available for those who find themselves in need.

Outcome Five: Homelessness in East Ayrshire is prevented as far as possible and accommodation, advice and support is available where it cannot be avoided

Where we are now

This section details the main issues, key activities, relevant policies and current priorities that we must consider in shaping our priorities for the delivery of this outcome.

Levels of Homelessness in East Ayrshire

11.2 The number of homeless applications has reduced by 36% over the period between 2007/08 and 2011/12, as demonstrated below:

Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Number of applications	1018	973	827	803	651
Homeless or potentially homeless	702	727	664	667	553
% assessed as in priority need	67	91	93	90	89
% (and no.)repeat homeless	12% (87)	8% (62)	9% (64)	6.6% (44)	6.7% (37)
% (and no.)of applications from 16/17 year olds	8.2% (84)	6.2% (60)	6.7% (55)	6.7% (54)	4.7% (31)
No. of repeat homeless with drug/alcohol issues	47	25	19	16	20

Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
% (and no.) lost contact	20% (208)	17% (170)	16% (137)	7.9% (62)	6.5% (43)

Table 11.1 Homeless Applications 07/08 to 11/12

11.3 Although this reduction is a significant one, levels of repeat homeless applications and lost contact cases remain higher than is desirable.

11.4 32% of 2011/12 homeless presentations were from young people under 25. The main reason for youth homelessness presentations is that they have been asked to leave the family home or there has been a non-violent dispute within their household. The Council does, where appropriate, attempt to facilitate the return home of young people, to allow a planned, more structured move to independent living. Specialist mediation services are available to help with this area of work.

Preventing Homelessness

11.5 Homelessness Prevention is central to the delivery of homelessness services, and measures have been developed to ensure as much as possible that individuals are prevented from becoming homeless in the first place.

Housing Options Approach

11.6 Preventing homelessness is a key priority of the Scottish Government/COSLA 2012 Joint Steering Group. One area of focus is establishing how adopting a housing options approach could better help local authorities with their prevention activities. Housing Options Hubs have been established as five regional joint-working partnerships that will take forward and encourage the development of the housing options approach to homeless prevention in Scotland. East Ayrshire Council is part of the South West Hub and work is currently underway to develop the Hub Model for implementation within the Authority. This way of working involves looking at a range of housing options for people rather than simply accepting a homelessness application.

Evictions and Repossessions

11.7 There is close liaison with all landlords in the social rented sector and the Council reacts promptly to all Section 11 notifications of intended court action for repossession with the aim of minimising the number of tenants who are evicted and face homelessness.

11.8 Where an owner occupier is facing repossession, the Council works in partnership with the Ayrshire Housing Advice Partnership (AHAP) who provide advice, information and support in such circumstances.

11.9 The In Court Advice Service at Kilmarnock Sheriff Court has been in place since 2004. Initially one of five pilot schemes established by the Scottish Government, it is now funded by the Scottish Legal Aid Board and managed by East Ayrshire Council. The service is considered a vital measure in ensuring that the number of people losing their homes through legal action is minimised and has contributed to the overall reduction in the level of rent arrears.

11.10 A protocol has been agreed with Strathclyde Police for the exchange of information about illegal evictions. The protocol is under the terms of Section 139 of the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2004. Under the Rent Act 1984 an illegal eviction is a criminal offence. Through this protocol the police will provide information to the private rented sector housing unit to enable them to take action against the registration status of private landlords who carry out illegal evictions.

Prisoners and Accommodation Issues

11.11 The Council's allocations policy has a tenancy surrender option for prisoners. Where a tenant is sentenced to a term of imprisonment that results in their tenancy being unoccupied for any substantial period of time, they can surrender their tenancy, with the Council undertaking to offer an equivalent tenancy on their release, thereby removing the need to present as homeless to secure future accommodation. An independently operated, pan-Ayrshire advice and information service is available for prisoners at HMP Kilmarnock. This is supplemented by a weekly advice surgery provide by the Council's homeless service to assist all prisoners nearing release to resolve accommodation issues.

Partnership Working

11.12 Scottish Government guidance is explicit that the alleviation and prevention of homelessness is not solely the responsibility of housing services. Local Authorities and Community Planning Partners should jointly ensure a positive corporate approach, based on the principles of early intervention. All partners must fully engage in helping deal with the wide range of issues that lead to people becoming homeless or being threatened with homelessness.

11.13 The Council works in partnership with the Health Service through the Health and Homelessness Action Plan to address the health needs of vulnerable client groups and facilitate their access to mainstream services:

- A public health nurse post is jointly funded by Ayrshire and Arran NHS and the Council to work with homeless applicants in hostel and other temporary accommodation, facilitating health screening and immunisation programmes for homeless clients.
- Procedures are in place through the Children's Learning Health and Supported Play Programme (CLHASP) to ensure that homeless families are able to access health and social services.

- Keepwell checks are provided in temporary accommodation. These checks provide access to services in employment, weight management, physical activity, smoking cessation, alcohol and drugs, dental health, mental health, literacy, money, sexual health, domestic violence and support groups.
- Homeless people are also supported to register with GP practices.
- A Health and Homelessness Liberation Protocol is in place to ensure continuity of care for people leaving custody.
- Further Health Service Protocols ensure that no one who is subject to a planned discharge from hospital care will be discharged into a homeless situation.

11.14 The Council has strong links with East Ayrshire Churches Housing Action who provide hygiene packs and age appropriate toy packs for all applicants in temporary or hostel accommodation.

11.15 Passes are made available to enable residents in our temporary homeless accommodation to access leisure facilities at the Galleon Centre in Kilmarnock.

Homeless Support Services

11.16 Where the prevention of homelessness is not possible and people find themselves in housing crisis, a range of support services are available.

11.17 People who have been accepted as homeless or potentially homeless and provided with temporary accommodation are provided with support from Temporary Accommodation Support Officers while they are living there. When they are rehoused into permanent accommodation their support needs will continue to be met by the Housing Support Officer for the area where they are housed.

11.18 The Council provides a range of additional support services to assist formerly homeless people settle in and sustain their tenancies. All new tenants are provided with a comprehensive pack of useful information which enables them to contact the appropriate agency to help them resolve any issues they may have with their tenancy. A decoration allowance is also provided to new tenants.

11.19 Homeless clients with more chaotic lifestyles can access the Ayrshire Intensive Housing Support Service. The service is provided on a pan Ayrshire basis and was originally funded from the Rough Sleepers Initiative. The project is regularly evaluated and periodically re-tendered to ensure both focus and best value. The core aim of the service is to bring stability to the lives of some of the most chaotic and vulnerable people in our society by providing intensive support.

11.20 A lack of positive social influences and social networks among people who are homeless is one of the major drivers identified from research into the causes of homelessness. To address this the Council established a Community Friends Befriending Service.

11.21 A number of initiatives are being delivered to improve the education and employability skills of service users in our hostels and temporary accommodation. For example, residents at St Andrews Hostel in Kilmarnock can access the services of an Employability Officer, there is a referral system in place for 'Pathways to Work' and 'Work For You', and there are direct links to Careers Scotland to identify employment opportunities.

Outcome Five: Homelessness in East Ayrshire is prevented as far as possible and accommodation, advice and support is available where it cannot be avoided

Where we want to be

We have identified the key priorities that we would look to deliver in order to fulfil this outcome:

1. Reviewing existing intervention and prevention measures to identify those at risk of becoming homeless as early as possible.
2. Continuing work with South West Housing Options Hub to implement the hub model in East Ayrshire.
3. Strengthening prevention activities targeted at young people to allow a planned move into independent living.
4. Reviewing the supply of available temporary accommodation for homeless people to ensure there is enough to meet identified need.
5. Improving the existing hostel facility in Cumnock.
6. Maximising the role of the private rented sector in order to provide a range of accommodation options for those in housing need.
7. Providing necessary advice, support and assistance to reduce levels of tenancy failure and repeat homelessness.
8. Raising awareness of homelessness and its impact on individuals and families amongst partners.
9. Working to strengthen joint approaches to tackling homelessness.

10. Developing, with partners, appropriate training and employability initiatives for homeless people.
11. Monitoring the impact of welfare reform on local residents, and working to prevent homelessness resulting from the changes.

Outcome Five: Homelessness in East Ayrshire is prevented as far as possible and accommodation, advice and support is available where it cannot be avoided

How we will get there

We have developed an action plan that sets out the activities that we will undertake to meet the identified priorities and deliver this outcome:

Projected Outputs		Actions	Timescale	Action Owner
Fewer individuals find themselves homeless	5.1	Finalise and Implement Homelessness Prevention Model Action Plan	2013	EAC HES
	5.2	Provide necessary contribution to corporate approach to mitigating the negative effects of welfare reform	Ongoing	EAC HES / PPP
	5.3	Continue to work with Council services and partner agencies to improve awareness and identification of potentially homeless households	Ongoing	EAC HES
There are enough units of temporary accommodation to meet the needs of homeless individuals / households	5.4	Undertake regular review of temporary accommodation provision to ensure it meets current demand levels	Ongoing	EAC HES
	5.5	Develop an improvement plan for existing hostel facility in Cumnock	2015	EAC HES
Homeless Households are	5.6	Work with partner landlords across all tenures to maximise	Ongoing	EAC HES /

Projected Outputs	Actions		Timescale	Action Owner
appropriately re-housed and supported where necessary		access to settled accommodation for homeless households		PLF/ RSLs
	5.7	Establish requirements for housing support services to meet need in response to implementation of Sect. 32b of Housing (Scotland) Act 2011	Await date	EAC HES
	5.8	Ensure that the support needs of those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness are met	Ongoing	EAC HES
Homelessness Services are responsive to identified need and demand	5.9	Continue to monitor collected homelessness statistics to ensure accurate understanding of the patterns of demand on homeless services	Ongoing	EAC HES
Homeless people have access to training and employability Initiatives	510	Review success of current training and employability initiatives for homeless people and develop new approach as necessary	2014	EAC HES

12 Creating Better Neighbourhoods

Outcome Six: People in East Ayrshire live in sustainable communities within safe, clean and attractive neighbourhoods.

12.1 That people should be proud of their neighbourhoods and that these neighbourhoods should be sustainable are key commitments of both this Council and the Scottish Government.

12.2 A person's community should not have a negative impact on their health and well-being. Successful neighbourhoods are about the people who live there. The quality of the local environment needs to be clean, green and safe. Challenges relate to both the day-to-day management and maintenance of areas, as well as the regeneration of areas which may be showing some signs of decline.

12.3 A wide range of factors contribute to the overall sustainability of any area. These include:

- **Housing stock** - properties are in good physical condition and are of the right tenure, type, size and design;
- **Quality of the environment** - the surrounding streets, open spaces etc. are well designed and maintained;
- **Socio-economic profile** - the range and level of employment opportunities are sufficient for the area to have a good proportion of economically active households, and good levels of educational attainment;
- **Sense of community well being** - people living within the area have a sense of belonging and feel safe living in the area;
- **Stability** - a good mix of households (age, size etc.) in an area where households will choose to stay for extended periods.

12.4 Taken together, these factors contribute to making an area either a desirable or undesirable place to live, and will translate directly into the level of demand for housing.

12.5 It is widely recognised that housing improvements alone are not sufficient to securing the sustainability of a neighbourhood in decline. While recognising that stock quality and type can be a factor of declining demand for areas, the impact of socio-economic deprivation has been well evidenced.

12.6 For regeneration to be effective, it needs to tackle the poverty and inequality issues within the wider community. Community Planning Partners in East Ayrshire are committed to tackling poverty and the inequalities which cut across our local communities through collaborative working and early interventions.

Outcome Six: People in East Ayrshire live in sustainable communities within safe, clean and attractive neighbourhoods

Where we are now

This section details the main issues, key activities, relevant policies and current priorities that we must consider in shaping our priorities for the delivery of this outcome.

Neighbourhood Regeneration

12.7 Much activity has been undertaken in recent years to improve the physical amenity of local neighbourhoods, to tackle perceptions of safety and fear of crime and to regenerate communities where particular problems have been identified. A variety of successful initiatives and estate management activities have delivered improved outcomes for local people during the period since the last Local Housing Strategy was produced.

12.8 The Council has a successful record of partnership working with Local Housing Associations and the Scottish Government to address imbalance between supply and demand. A programme of stock rationalisation and re-development has seen obsolete properties replaced with lower density homes better suited to modern aspirations and demands.

12.9 The **Strategic Housing Investment Plan** sets out the Council's investment priorities for ongoing redevelopment of identified areas of decline. However, substantial reductions to the the level of funding, announced in June 2012, will undoubtedly mean some of the planned physical improvements and developments within communities will not be delivered in the short to medium term.

Town Centre Regeneration

12.10 The importance of town centres has been recognised by both national and local policy makers, and town centre regeneration has been the focus of much activity across the authority in recent years.

12.11 Town centre strategies have been published for both Kilmarnock and Cumnock and include a specific commitment to promote town centre living and increase the number of residents living within the town centre. Increased residential use contributes to the vitality of town centres by increasing demand for services and improving perceptions of community safety.

12.12 Achieving town centre living is not solely about building new homes. There is also a vital role for bringing back into use homes that are currently empty, and our approach is discussed in more detail in section 8.

Clean and Attractive Open Spaces

12.13 Tackling low level problems such as litter, graffiti and dog-fouling can have a high impact on the amenity of the local area. The Council has introduced a variety of programmes aimed at improving the visual amenity of neighbourhoods. Historically, pots of funding have been made available by the Scottish Government - e.g. Fairer Scotland Fund - to which the Council has made a successful bid. However, without access to such funding schemes in the future, financing for improvement programmes will be limited.

12.14 Other schemes have involved community volunteers, who have been central to delivering success. Opportunities to expand such activity might be usefully explored further.

12.15 A correlation between the rate of fly-tipping and the cost and inconvenience of the disposal of large items has led to the re-introduction of a free 'bulky-uptift' service for residents.

Estate Management

12.16 Estate management continues to be a vital function of the neighbourhood housing teams. Housing Officers are usefully positioned to identify problems as they arise, and can offer valuable support to households living in disadvantaged areas who may not come into contact with other services. Working with other agencies and partner landlords offers valuable opportunities to deal with neighbourhood issues in an integrated manner to deliver and maintain sustainability.

12.17 Dips in the level of demand and an up-turn in refusal rates for properties in particular areas can offer an early indicator that a community might be exhibiting signs of stress and that intervention might be required to prevent further decline.

Neighbourhood Safety

12.18 Improving Community Safety is a core theme of the Council's Community Plan. Activity is taken forward through the **Improving Community Safety Action Plan** to achieve the following Local Outcomes:

- Crime and anti-social behaviour tackled and the fear of crime an anti-social behaviour reduced
- Preventative and diversionary activity delivered
- Community safety in neighbourhoods and homes improved.

12.19 The Council's **Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy** is currently being finalised and will cover the period 2013-18. This sets out the Council's continued commitment to ensuring anti-social behaviour is tackled quickly and effectively to allow people to enjoy living in their home without experiencing the negative consequences of bad neighbour conduct.

12.20 Dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour is complex and requires coordinated action by community planning partners. Alongside structures for the implementation of these strategies, a **problem solving group** exists that brings together partners to discuss problem residents and other issues, and identify necessary interventions to tackle these.

Resident / Tenant Satisfaction

12.21 The 2011 **Community Planning Resident's Survey** indicated that 86% of people are proud of living in their neighbourhood and 79% of people would rate their neighbourhood as either a good or very good place to bring up children.

12.22 The **Tenant Satisfaction Survey** was also completed in 2011 with a focus on understanding the satisfaction of council tenants with the services they receive and the neighbourhoods that they live in. Similarly high levels of satisfaction with neighbourhoods as a place to live were recorded (**82%** said their neighbourhood was a good or very good place to live).

12.23 Respondents identified loitering, a lack of play facilities, drug and alcohol abuse and problems with dogs amongst the key aspects of their immediate neighbourhood that they particularly disliked.

12.24 With respect to quality of life, respondents indicated issues that should be tackled in their local communities:

- Improved shopping and retail areas
- Grass cutting and litter picking
- Removal of graffiti
- Demolish or upgrade rundown buildings
- Reduce speeding traffic
- Repairs to roads and pavements
- Upgrading council houses

Resident engagement and Involvement

12.25 Central to delivering successful improvements at the local neighbourhood level is the involvement of the people affected. While satisfaction surveys are a useful tool for measuring improvements, meaningful engagement is required to ensure that activity is tailored to address local concerns. This is central to local and national service delivery and will be a growing feature of policy making that affects local communities.

12.26 The **Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC)** was introduced in the **Housing (Scotland) Act 2010** which required Ministers to set standards and outcomes that social landlords should be achieving for tenants and customers through their housing activities.

12.27 The Charter replaces the **Performance Standards for Social Landlords and Homeless Functions** that were set out in guidance issued by Scottish Ministers under section 79 within the **Housing (Scotland) Act 2001**, and it is intended to help improve the quality and value of the services that social landlords provide by:

- Stating clearly what tenants and customers can expect from social landlords and helping them hold landlords to account
- Focusing the efforts of social landlords on achieving outcomes that matter to their customers
- Establishing a basis for the Scottish Housing Regulator to assess and report on how well landlords are performing. The assessment will allow the regulator, landlords, tenants and other customers to identify areas of strong improvement and areas needing improvement.

12.28 In 2011, the Council published **Transforming our relationship with the Communities we serve** which focused upon empowering our communities and neighbourhoods and the need to move away from a culture of dependency to social integration, enhanced community cohesion, co-production and the promotion of local ownership, responsibility and participation. This approach reflects the national focus as set out in the **Christie Report from the Commission on the future Delivery of Public Services** (2011) and the **Scottish Government Regeneration Strategy** (2011).

12.29 Regeneration is no longer something that happens **to** a community, but rather, it is the outcome of action **by** a community, and should respond to local priorities.

Tenant Participation

12.30 The Tenant Participation Strategy 2010-13 sets out the ways in which tenants will continue to be supported and involved in decision making about the delivery of housing services.

12.31 Much progress has been made in Tenant Participation since the first strategy was published in 2004. Of particular relevance are:

- The establishment of the East Ayrshire Tenants and Residents Federation and 16 Local Tenants and Residents Groups.
- The introduction of estate walkabouts, giving Tenants and Residents Groups the opportunity to physically walk around their neighbourhood with estate management staff to identify matters of concern.

- The Development Support Project which supports staff living in areas affected by housing development activity to be involved in aspects of the process.
- Involvement of tenants in determining priorities for local environmental improvements and safety and security improvements.

12.32 Work will begin on the development of a replacement Tenant Participation Strategy in 2013. This will build on the progress made to date and will include a particular focus on tenant scrutiny and tenant involvement in self assessment of the **Scottish Social Housing Charter** .

Outcome Six: People in East Ayrshire live in sustainable communities within safe, clean and attractive neighbourhoods.

Where we want to be

We have identified the key priorities that we would look to deliver in order to fulfil this outcome:

1. Targeting investment in social housing to support regeneration of local neighbourhoods and to increase the number of people living in our town centres.
2. Continuing to support the delivery of initiatives aimed at keeping our open spaces clean and attractive.
3. Strengthening 'preventative' estate management and responding to signals of decline.
4. Improving levels of resident and tenant satisfaction with their neighbourhoods.
5. Improving resident satisfaction in relation to the Council's response to anti-social behaviour and crime and reducing the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.
6. Improving Community safety in neighbourhoods and homes.
7. Growing the role played by tenants and residents in shaping regeneration and improvement
8. Preparing and implementing an updated Tenant Participation Strategy that responds to the requirements of the Social Housing Charter.

Outcome Six: People in East Ayrshire live in sustainable communities within safe, clean and attractive neighbourhoods

How we will get there

We have developed an action plan that sets out the activities that we will undertake to meet the identified priorities and deliver this outcome:

Projected Outputs		Actions	Timescale	Action Owner
Service delivery is in accordance with the requirements of the Scottish Social Housing Charter	6.1	Improve performance monitoring systems in accordance with requirements of the Scottish Social Housing Charter	2014	EAC HES
	6.2	Review continued effectiveness of Problem Solving Group and implement necessary changes	2013	EAC HES
Estate management problems are resolved quickly	6.3	Further develop integrated approach to management and maintenance of estates	2013	EAC HES
	6.4	Work with partners to develop housing projects which would increase the number of people living in our town centres	2013 onwards	EAC HES
Town centre regeneration is supported via increased availability of housing.	6.5	Promote resident involvement in community decision making	ongoing	EAC HES
	6.6	Continue to develop and strengthen the role of tenant participation across housing services	ongoing	EAC HES

Projected Outputs		Actions	Timescale	Action Owner
	6.7	Undertake Tenant and Resident satisfaction surveys	ongoing	EAC HES / CHR
Communities are safer and anti-social behaviour is tackled effectively.	6.8	Monitor and Review Implementation of the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy	2014	EAC HES
	6.9	Monitor and Review Implementation of the Community Safety Action Plan	2014	EAC HES

1 Action Plan

1.1 The Action Plan set out below is structured to include the relevant **Local and National Outcomes** that will be supported through implementation of the Local Housing Strategy Outcomes; the indicators that will be used to measure our success at achieving these outcomes; the individual actions that will be undertaken; and the timescale within which these will be completed.

Outcome One	People in East Ayrshire can find a home that they can afford to live in			
National Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish Society We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations 			
Local Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality and accessibility ensured Sustainable and affordable housing solutions delivered Impact of multiple deprivation and poverty on the health and wellbeing of the most vulnerable individuals and communities addressed Our town centres and villages are sustainable regenerated The natural environment protected, conserved and enhanced, and the negative effects of climate change mitigated 			
Indicator		Baseline at 2012	'End' Target/s Direction of travel	Timescale
1.	Housing Supply Target for new affordable homes achieved	--	100 per annum	2018

Indicator	Baseline at 2012	'End' Target/s Direction of travel	Timescale
2. No of registered private rented homes	5116	Maintain	2018
3. No. of accredited private landlords	13	Increase	2018
4. No. of homes in private sector empty for more than a year	TBC	Decrease	2018
5. % of social rented stock managed from CHR	96%	Maintain	2018
6. Number of long term voids in social rented sector	TBC	Decrease	2018

Projected Outputs	Actions	Timescale	Action Owner
Local Development Plan includes appropriate response to Housing Supply Target	1.1 Ensure forthcoming Local Development Plan includes an effective, quality land supply to meet needs identified in HNDA.	2015	EAC PED
	1.2 Identify opportunities to bid for extra pots of development funding as these are announced	Ongoing	EAC HES
More new-build affordable homes are delivered	1.3 Update the register of effective land in Council Ownership	Annual	EAC HES
	1.4 Work in partnership with private developers who bring forward land (windfall sites)	Ongoing	EAC HES

Projected Outcomes		Actions		Timescale	Action Owner
More households are supported to access low-cost home-ownership	1.5	Deliver Strategic Local Programme	2015	EAC HES	
	1.6	Use HNDA to inform the annual SHIP review process to ensure housing investment addresses identified need.	Annual	EAC HES	
	1.7	Develop supplementary planning guidance (SPG) as part of Local Development Plan setting out details of proposed Affordable Housing Policy.	2015	EAC PED	
	1.8	Engage with developing partners as part of the SPG development process.	2015	EAC PED	
	1.9	Work with private developers to encourage delivery of affordable housing at developments not covered by AHP	Ongoing	EAC PED	
	1.10	Identify a point of contact to deal with enquiries about low cost home ownership schemes who can provide appropriate signposting to the private developers	2013	EAC HES	
	1.11	Ensure HNDA findings are disseminated to Housing Information Partnership in order that private development might address identified need.	2013	EAC HES	

Projected Outputs		Actions		Timescale	Action Owner
The suitability of mid-market rental is established at HMA level.	1.12	Identify potential demand for mid-market rent using HNDA refresh	2013	EAC HES	
	1.13	Work with RSL partners to establish feasibility of variant models of NHT programme	2013	EAC HES / RSL	
Previously empty homes have been returned to the pool of effective housing stock	1.14	Explore opportunities for open-market resale of council stock	2014		
	1.15	Work with homeowners to bring empty private sector properties back into use, particularly in town centres.	2013	EAC HES	
	1.16	Review the reasons for long term voids and investigate feasibility of returning them to the effective allocations pool.	2014	EAC HES	
Social rented homes are allocated quickly and meet identified need.	1.17	Promote low/no demand properties through advertisement and as part of the housing application process	Ongoing	EAC HES	
	1.18	Develop Lettings Plans for each letting area, linked to pressure on housing stock	2014	EAC HES / CHR	
	1.19	Implement a package of initiatives to encourage tenants to 'downsize' where appropriate.	2014	EAC HES / CHR	

Projected Outcomes		Actions		Timescale	Action Owner
Existing social rented stock is protected and remains available to meet future need.	1.20	Undertake regular monitoring of the outcomes of allocations process to ensure it's working effectively	Ongoing	EAC HES / CHR	
	1.21	Work with CHR partners to pilot a register for tenants that facilitates movement via mutual exchange	2013	EAC HES / CHR	
	1.22	Explore options for the application of Pressured Area Status subject to legislative changes.	2013	EAC HES	
The Private Rented Sector is a viable alternative to the social rented sector and owner occupied sectors.	1.23	Increase the number of PRS landlords gaining accreditation	Ongoing	EAC HES	
	1.24	Continue to raise awareness of the expectations and standards in relation to the private rented sector and provide support to achieve these	Ongoing	EAC HES	
	1.25	Take appropriate action to enforce private rented sector standards where breaches are identified or reported by tenants.	Ongoing	EAC HES	
	1.26	Provide applicants to the social rented sector with information and advice about the Private Rented Sector.	Ongoing (from 2013)	EAC HES	

Projected Outputs	Actions		Timescale	Action Owner
	1.27	Provide a package of assistance to support interested owners to become landlords	Ongoing (from 2013)	EAC HES

Outcome Two	People in East Ayrshire live in warm, energy-efficient and well maintained homes
National Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish Society We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations.
Local Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality and accessibility ensured Impact of multiple deprivation and poverty on the health and wellbeing of the most vulnerable individuals and communities addressed Our town centres and villages are sustainable regenerated The natural environment protected, conserved and enhanced, and the negative effects of climate change mitigated

Indicator	Baseline at 2012	'End' Target/s Direction of travel	Timescale
1. % Council stock achieving SHQS	82.8%	100%	2015
2. % RSL stock achieving SHQS	95%	Increase	2015

Indicator	Baseline at 2012	'End' Target/s Direction of travel	Timescale
3. % of homes with urgent disrepair	63%	Decrease	2018
4. % of homes with disrepair	81%	Decrease	2018
5. % of private sector households doing work to home	48%	Increase	2018
6. No. of mixed tenure owners participating in common repairs	35	Increase	2018
7. No. of owners receiving council factoring services	0	Increase	2018
8. No. of owners receiving practical assistance through Scheme of Assistance.	205	Increase	2018
9. % of private sector residents satisfied with dwelling	94%	Maintain	2018
10. % households in fuel poverty	23%	Reduce	2018
11. % of households in extreme fuel poverty	7%	Reduce	2018
12. % private sector properties with NHER score 6-10	79%	Increase	2018
13. % public sector properties with NHER score 6-10	92%	Increase	2018
14. Greenhouse gases - domestic emissions.	TBC	TBC (awaiting guidance from Scottish Government)	2018

Projected Outputs	Actions		Timescale	Action Owner
Property condition in the social rented sector is improved and maintained	2.1	Continue to progress the Council's Standard Delivery Plan to achieve SHQS.	2015	EAC HES
	2.2	Identify the level of exemptions / abeyances across the Social Rented Sector	2014	EAC HES
	2.3	Ensure effective planned and cyclical maintenance programme is in place to ensure standard is maintained	Annual	EAC HES
	2.4	Annually review repairs processes to ensure these remain responsive and effective.	Annual	EAC HES
Information about the condition of property in both the social rented and private sectors is improved.	2.5	Undertake rolling programme of internal and external surveys of all Council housing stock	Ongoing	EAC HES
	2.6	Further Develop the Asset Management Plan for council housing	2016	EAC HES
	2.7	Identify gaps in available secondary data on private sector stock condition and determine whether a Private Sector Stock Condition Survey is required.	2014	EAC HES
Property condition in the private sector is improved and maintained.	2.8	Undertake full examination of HRA designation requirements and funding issues	2015	EAC HES
	2.9	Identify the information and assistance that could be made available to private landlords looking to	2015	EAC HES

Projected Outputs	Actions		Timescale	Action Owner
Levels of Fuel Poverty are reduced as far as practicably possible.	2.10	undertake property/energy performance improvement works		
	2.11	Raise awareness of the support available through the Council's Scheme of Assistance to encourage owners to improve and maintain the condition of their properties.	2013 (update Annually)	EAC HES
	2.12	Provide support to owners participating in improvement programmes in mixed tenure blocks.	Ongoing	EAC HES
	2.13	Continue to use enforcement measures to ensure Private landlords have a valid EPC.	Ongoing	EAC HES / FP Steering Group
	2.14	Identify opportunities to take advantage of bid-funding and other initiatives to alleviate fuel poverty in communities that are off the mains gas grid.	Ongoing	EAC HES / FP Steering Group
	2.15	Ensure information and advice on tackling fuel poverty is widely available to households.	2013	EAC HES / FP Steering Group
	2.16	Maximise resources available locally via government and other funding sources to improve households energy efficiency	Ongoing	EAC HES / FP Steering Group
	2.16	Provide advice and support to households seeking to take advantage of UHS and forthcoming Green Deal.	Ongoing	EAC HES / FP Steering Group

Projected Outputs	Actions			Timescale	Action Owner
Targets on Energy Efficiency and Climate Change have been identified and progressed	2.17	Strengthen local partnerships to tackle fuel poverty and ensure robust referral mechanisms are in place.	2013	EAC HES / FP Steering Group	
	2.18	Continue to identify low income households at risk of fuel poverty and maximise their income where possible	Ongoing	EAC HES / FP Steering Group	
	2.19	Extend role of Fuel Poverty Steering Group to include energy efficiency and climate change	2013	EAC HES / FP Steering Group	
	2.20	Identify targets in relation to energy efficiency and climate change and establish monitoring systems for the same	2013	EAC HES / FP Steering Group	

Outcome Three	People in East Ayrshire are able to live independently in suitable accommodation or with appropriate support
National Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need. We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish Society We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We live longer Healthier lives We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk
Local Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality and accessibility ensured Sustainable and affordable housing solutions delivered Impact of multiple deprivation and poverty on the health and wellbeing of the most vulnerable individuals and communities addressed Our town centres and villages are sustainable regenerated The natural environment protected, conserved and enhanced, and the negative effects of climate change mitigated Older people, vulnerable adults and their carers supported, included and empowered to live the healthiest life possible Protection of children and the safety of vulnerable adults, individuals and families promoted

Indicator	Baseline at 2012	'End' Target/s Direction of travel	Timescale
1. No. of new affordable homes built to meet special needs	-	20 per annum	2018
2. No. of accommodation units for older people	832	Increase	2018
3. No. of amenity homes for social rent	61	Increase	2018
4. No. of private sector home adaptations facilitated by Scheme of Assistance annually	187	Increase	2018
5. No. of council houses adapted annually	220	Increase	2018

Indicator	Baseline at 2012	'End' Target/s Direction of travel	Timescale
6. No. of RSL homes adapted annually	94	Increase	2018
7. No. of households assisted by Care and repair services	955	Increase	2018
8. No. of homes with community alarms	3763	Increase	2018

Projected Outputs	Actions	Timescale	Action Owner
Knowledge of the location and nature of adapted stock in the social rented sector is improved.	3.1 Develop a database of adapted properties across all CHR partners' stock	2014	EAC HES / CHR
The allocation of adapted stock is better aligned to meeting need	3.2 Link adapted property database to common allocation system	2014	EAC HES / CHR
The number of properties suitable for older people and people with physical disabilities is increased	3.3 Work with private developers to identify opportunities to increase the supply of wheelchair standard homes for sale	2014	EAC HES
	3.4 Work with private developers to identify opportunities to increase the supply of housing for older people for sale	2014	EAC HES
	3.5 Increase the supply of new build homes suitable for disabled and older people in the social rented sector	Ongoing	EAC HES

Projected Outputs		Actions		Timescale	Action Owner
	3.6	Review and strengthen the Scheme of Assistance		2013	EAC HES
	3.7	Identify opportunities to incorporate 'future proofing' works in council stock as part of cyclical maintenance and improvements		2014	EAC HES
People are supported to remain in their own home	3.8	Work with the Health and Social Care partnership to provide effective contribution to meeting accommodation needs		Ongoing	EAC HES
	3.9	Continue to support the Care & Repair Project		ongoing	EAC HES
	3.10	Identify costed options for expanding provision of telecare services		2014	EAC HES
	3.11	Continue to prioritise PSHG for the delivery of adaptations for people with physical disabilities.		ongoing	EAC HES
Appropriate plans are in place for the development of services for people with learning disabilities.	3.13	Ensure accommodation provision is in place to support Social Work in planning services for care leavers		ongoing	EAC HES / SW
	3.14	Ensure accommodation is available to support the work of Health / Social Care Partnership.		ongoing	EAC HES H&SCP

Projected Outputs		Actions		Timescale	Action Owner
The Housing Needs of people affected by domestic abuse are planned for and met	3.15	Continue to support Women's Aid and routes to finding safe, secure accommodation.	ongoing	EAC HES / WA	
Appropriate services are available for Gypsies/Travellers arriving in East Ayrshire	3.16	Undertake options appraisal of identified sites to establish suitable location for transit Gypsies / travellers site.	2014	EAC HES	

Outcome Four

People in East Ayrshire are able to access quality housing information and advice and the ways in which housing is accessed are simplified

- We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need.
- We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish Society
- We live longer Healthier lives
- We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk
- Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs

Local Outcomes

- Quality and accessibility ensured
- Connectivity and local transport solutions improved
- Sustainable and affordable housing solutions delivered

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Impact of multiple deprivation and poverty on the health and wellbeing of the most vulnerable individuals and communities addressed ● Older people, vulnerable adults and their carers supported, included and empowered to live the healthiest life possible ● Protection of children and the safety of vulnerable adults, individuals and families promoted ● Resources and services delivered through shared premises; and shared services with shared management arrangements
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Indicator	Baseline at 2012	'End' Target/s Direction of travel	Timescale
1. No. of housing advice cases recorded as part of new housing options hub system.	-	1200	Annual
2. No. of housing options interviews (homelessness prevention)	1165	Increase	Annual
3. % cases where homelessness has been prevented following housing options intervention	44%	Increase	Annual
4. % section 11 referrals who engage with housing advice service	7.5%	Increase	Annual

Projected Outputs	Actions	Timescale	Action Owner
Housing services are accessible to all	4.1 Carry out an EQIA review of all housing service policies and procedures to identify any differential impact	2016	EAC HES

Projected Outputs	Actions	Timescale	Action Owner	
Housing Options model is utilised throughout the Authority Area	4.2	Extend use of Housing Options Model Toolkit	2013	EAC HES
	4.3	Implement a programme of staff training on housing options	2013	EAC HES
	4.4	Implement Prevention Model Action Plan	2013	EAC HES
	4.5	Evaluate and Review the Housing Options Model	2015	EAC HES
	4.6	Update all housing advice literature and electronic media and carry out regular review of its availability	Ongoing (in response to changes in service)	EAC HES
Housing advice literature is current and easily accessed	4.7	Ensure all housing offices are accessible for those with a physical disability	2017	EAC HES
	4.8	Ensure translation and interpretation services are available on request	Ongoing	EAC HES
	4.9	Promote Housing Options within local communities	From 2013 onwards	EAC HES
People know where to go when they need Housing Advice and information	4.10	Develop Multi-agency referral procedures into Housing Options Team	2014	EAC HES
	4.11	Develop a directory of independent housing advice providers	2012	EAC HES

Outcome Five	Homelessness is prevented in East Ayrshire as far as possible and accommodation, advice and support is available where it cannot be avoided.
National Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need. We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish Society We live longer, healthier lives We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk
Local Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality and accessibility ensured Sustainable and affordable housing solutions delivered Impact of multiple deprivation and poverty on the health and wellbeing of the most vulnerable individuals and communities addressed Active, healthy lifestyles and positive behaviour change promoted Older people, vulnerable adults and their carers supported, included and empowered to live the healthiest life possible Protection of children and the safety of vulnerable adults, individuals and families promoted

Indicator		Baseline at 2012	'End' Target/s Direction of travel	Timescale
1.	Number of homeless applications	651	Decrease	2018
2.	No. of households assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness	553	Decrease	2018

Indicator	Baseline at 2012	'End' Target/s Direction of travel	Timescale
3. % cases reassessed as homeless within 12 months of completion of duty	6.69%	Decrease	Annual
4. % of former homeless households who sustain council tenancy for more than 12 months	56%	Increase	Annual
5. % of lets to homeless households	18.3%	Decrease	2018
6. No. Mortgage to Rent applications completed	9	Increase	2018
7. % decisions made within 28 days	100%	Maintain	2018
8. No. of temporary furnished accommodation spaces	80	Maintain	2018
9. Average length of stay in temporary furnished accommodation	38.23(days)	Maintain	2018

Projected Outputs	Actions	Timescale	Action Owner
Fewer individuals find themselves homeless	5.1 Finalise and Implement Homelessness Prevention Model Action Plan	2013	EAC HES
	5.2 Provide necessary contribution to corporate approach to mitigating the negative affects of welfare reform.	Ongoing	EAC HES / PPP

Projected Outputs	Actions		Timescale	Action Owner
	5.3	Continue to work with council services and partner agencies to improve awareness and identification of potentially homeless households.	Ongoing	EAC HES
There are enough units of temporary accommodation to meet the needs of homeless individuals / households	5.4	Undertake regular review of temporary accommodation provision to ensure it meets current demand levels.	Ongoing	EAC HES
	5.5	Develop an improvement plan for existing hostel facility in Cumnock	2015	EAC HES
Homeless Households are appropriately re-housed and supported where necessary	5.6	Work with partner landlords across all tenures to maximise access to settled accommodation for homeless households.	Ongoing	EAC HES / PLF/ RSLs
	5.7	Establish requirements for housing support services to meet need in response to implementation of Sect. 32b of Housing (Scotland) Act 2011	Await implementation date	EAC HES
Homelessness Services are responsive to identified need and demand	5.8	Ensure that the support needs of those homeless or threatened with homelessness are met	Ongoing	EAC HES
	5.9	Continue to monitor collected homelessness statistics to ensure accurate understanding of the patterns of demand on homeless services.	Ongoing	EAC HES

Projected Outputs	Actions		Timescale	Action Owner
Homeless people have access to training and employability Initiatives	5.10	Review success of current training and employability initiatives for homeless people and develop new approach as necessary	2014	EAC HES
Outcome Six	People in East Ayrshire live in sustainable communities within safe, clean and attractive neighbourhoods.			
National Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need. We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish Society We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations. We have strong resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger 			
Local Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality and accessibility ensured Sustainable and affordable housing solutions delivered Impact of multiple deprivation and poverty on the health and wellbeing of the most vulnerable individuals and communities addressed Our town centres and villages are sustainable regenerated 			

- The natural environment protected, conserved and enhanced, and the negative effects of climate change mitigated
- Community capacity, spirit and cohesions developed
- Older people, vulnerable adults and their carers supported, included and empowered to live the healthiest life possible
- Crime and anti-social behaviour tackled, and the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour reduced
- Preventative and diversionary activity delivered
- Community safety in neighbourhoods and homes improved

Indicator	Baseline at 2012	'End' Target/s Direction of travel	Timescale
1. Residents who state their neighbourhood is a very good place or fairly good place to live	82% (2011 TSS)	Increase	Next Survey
2. No of datazones amongst the 15% most deprived in Scotland	32	Decrease	Next SIMD
3. No of datazones amongst the least deprived 15% in Scotland	12	Increase	Next SIMD
4. Residents who do not feel threatened by crime in their neighbourhood	36% (2011 CPRS)	Increase	Next Survey
5. Number of long-term vacant properties in town centre	58	Decrease	2018
6. Number of new affordable homes in town centre	-	Increase	2018
7. Number of Tenant and Resident Associations	16	Increase	2018

Projected Outputs		Actions	Timescale	Action Owner
Service delivery is in accordance with the requirements of the Scottish Social Housing Charter	6.1	Improve performance monitoring systems in accordance with requirements of the Scottish Social Housing Charter	2014	EAC HES
	6.2	Estate management problems are resolved quickly	2013	EAC HES
	6.3		2013	EAC HES
Town centre regeneration is supported via increased availability of housing.	6.4	Work with partners to develop housing projects which would increase the number of people living in our town centres.	2013 onwards	EAC HES
	6.5	Promote resident involvement in community decision making	ongoing	EAC HES
Communities are involved in making decisions that affect them and are satisfied with the services delivered.	6.6	Continue to develop and strengthen the role of tenant participation across housing services	ongoing	EAC HES
	6.7	Undertake Tenant and Resident satisfaction surveys	ongoing	EAC HES / CHR

Projected Outputs		Actions	Timescale	Action Owner
Communities are safer and anti-social behaviour is tackled effectively.	6.8	Monitor and Review Implementation of the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy	2014	EAC HES
	6.9	Monitor and Review Implementation of the Community Safety Action Plan	2014	EAC HES

2 Monitoring and Evaluation

2.1 The Local Housing Strategy Action Plan will drive the implementation of the Strategy's six core outcomes. However, ongoing funding constraints and continuing uncertainty in relation to other factors outwith the control of the key stakeholders may mean that some actions require to be amended or removed.

2.2 It is proposed to monitor and review the implementation of the Action Plan on an annual basis. A LHS Update will be prepared for presentation at the relevant Cabinet meetings and published on the Council's web-site, with interested groups advised of its publication and provided with necessary links.

3 Glossary

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

3.1 Adaptations: Alterations made to a property to make it suitable for a person with disabilities or mobility issues to live in, such as ramps or a stair lift. See also equipment and adaptations.

3.2 Affordable housing: Quality housing which is provided to the occupant at less than its market value or market rent and which meets identified needs. It includes social rented housing, intermediate housing and affordable private housing. Its cost is accessible to people in the lowest quartile of incomes.

3.3 Amenity housing: Housing with additional features to assist its occupants live independently. The features can include a community alarm system, conveniently positioned electrical switches and sockets and barrier free access.

3.4 Antisocial behaviour: Behaviour that causes, or is likely to cause alarm or distress. Also, conduct that causes or is likely to cause alarm or distress to at least one person not in the same household as them.

3.5 Antisocial Behaviour Strategy: It is a requirement of the Antisocial Behaviour etc. (Scotland) Act 2004 that local authorities and Chief Constables prepare a strategy to deal with antisocial behaviour in their areas.

3.6 Asset Management Plan: The coordinated management of all the Council's physical assets such as housing stock, Social Work and Leisure facilities to deliver Best Value.

3.7 Below Tolerable Standard: A property that does not meet the minimum quality standard set down in law. See also Tolerable Standard.

3.8 Brownfield land: Land that has previously been developed or used other than for agriculture.

3.9 Climate change: Significant and lasting change in weather patterns over time. The effects of climate change may include changes to temperatures, rainfall, raised sea levels and more frequent extreme weather events.

3.10 Common Housing Register: In East Ayrshire, a single application form and housing register is used by the Council and the community based Housing Associations that have stock in East Ayrshire (Atrium Homes, Cunninghame HA, Irvine HA and Shire Housing). The register is used by all these landlords to allocate vacancies according to their own lettings policies. The Common Housing Register in East Ayrshire is known as SEARCH

3.11 Community Care:Community care services and support are provided to help someone stay in their own home instead of going into hospital or residential care.

3.12 Community Planning Partnership:This brings together the Council, Police, Health and other public bodies to jointly plan and deliver better services.

3.13 Concordat:The formal written agreement drawn up between the Scottish Government and COSLA on behalf of Scottish local authorities.

3.14 Equipment and Adaptations:Items such as stair lifts, hoists, ramps and hand rails that can be installed to make a property liveable in by someone with a disability or mobility issues.

3.15 Energy Assistance Package:A government funded package of measures to help households out of fuel poverty.

3.16 Energy Efficiency:Reducing the amount of energy needed to achieve the same result. For example, installing loft or cavity wall insulation will reduce the amount of energy used to keep a property acceptably warm.

3.17 Energy Performance Certificate:A document required for all domestic and commercial properties available to buy or rent. They describe how energy efficient the property is, from an A rating (very good) to a G rating (very poor) and describe how the rating might be improved.

3.18 Equal Opportunities:The granting of equal rights, privileges and status regardless of gender, transgender, pregnancy, maternity, age, race, religion, disability or sexual orientation.

3.19 Extreme fuel poverty:Households are considered to be in extreme fuel poverty if they spend more than 20% of their disposable income on fuel costs to achieve an acceptable heating regime.

3.20 Fuel poverty:Households are considered to be in fuel poverty if they spend more than 10% of their disposable income on fuel costs to achieve an acceptable heating regime.

3.21 General Needs housing:Standard accommodation with no adaptations to meet any particular needs.

3.22 Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP):These new joint bodies will bring together the community care role of the Council and the Health Service's primary care sections that deal with adults and older people to improve outcomes and eliminate gaps and overlaps in service.

3.23 Housing Market Areas:Geographical areas that are relatively self contained in terms of housing supply and demand. There are three such areas in East Ayrshire.

3.24 Housing Market Partnership:Led by the Council, this brings together interested parties to plan for housing.

3.25 Housing need:Households who do not have their own accommodation or who live in insecure or inadequate accommodation and who are unable to secure suitable accommodation through the market are said to be in housing need.

3.26 Housing Needs and Demand Assessment:The evidence base to support the local Housing Strategy, Local Development Plan and Strategic Development Plan, developed in accordance with Scottish Government guidance.

3.27 Housing Renewal Area:The Council can designate a Housing Renewal Area if it considers that a significant number of the houses in that area are substandard or if any house is adversely affecting the surrounding area.

3.28 Indicator:A measure that evidences whether or not a particular outcome of the strategy is being achieved.

3.29 Learning Disability:A lifelong condition which involves a reduced ability to understand new or difficult information or learn new skills, it usually reduces an individual's ability to live independently without support.

3.30 Market rent:A rent for a property that is set by market conditions rather than by a public body.

3.31 National Home Energy Rating (NHER):One of the measures used to assess how energy efficient a property is.

3.32 Pressured area:An area with a high demand for housing but limited supply.

3.33 Pressured Area Status:If a Council can evidence that it has pressured areas it can apply to the Scottish Government for permission to suspend the Right to Buy of its tenants in that area.

3.34 Registered Social Landlords(RSLs):A 'not for profit' Housing Association or Housing Cooperative registered with the Scottish Housing Regulator. They aim to provide good quality low cost accommodation for people with a housing need.

3.35 Right to Buy (RTB):Some social housing tenants have the right to buy their home, with a discount on the market price calculated on the basis of how long they have been tenants.

3.36 Scheme of Assistance:This provides information, advice and practical assistance to homeowners and people in the private rented sector to adapt, repair maintain and improve their homes. The overall aim is to encourage people living in the private sector to take greater responsibility for the condition of their homes. Grant assistance is available to help address housing difficulties arising from disability.

3.37 Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS): This sets out a minimum standard that all homes in the social rented sector should achieve by 2015.

3.38 Sensory Impaired: Someone whose sight, hearing or both senses are impaired.

3.39 Single Outcome Agreement (SOA): Required under the Concordat, these are agreements drawn up between the Scottish Government and Community Planning Partnerships to formalise the outcomes that are to be delivered for local communities, reflecting local circumstances and priorities.

3.40 Social Rented Sector: This comprises all housing owned by the Council or Registered Social Landlords.