



23 September 2013

NOTICE OF MEETING

A meeting of the **BUTE AND COWAL AREA COMMITTEE** will be held in the **CASTLE HOUSE, CASTLE GARDENS, DUNOON** on **TUESDAY, 1 OCTOBER 2013** at **10:00 AM**, which you are requested to attend.

Douglas Hendry
Executive Director - Customer Services

BUSINESS

- 1. APOLOGIES**
- 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
- 3. PRESENTATION TO UPPER COWAL BOWLING CHAMPIONS**
- 4. MINUTES**
 - (a) Bute and Cowal Area Committee - 6 August 2013 (Pages 1 - 6)
 - (b) Rothesay Common Good - 6 August 2013 (for noting) (Pages 7 - 8)
- 5. DUNOON GRAMMAR SCHOOL: ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT**
Report by David Mitchell, Head Teacher of Dunoon Grammar School (Pages 9 - 12)
- 6. KIRN PRIMARY SCHOOL**
Report by James Wylie, Head Teacher of Kirn Primary School (Pages 13 - 18)
- 7. FOOTPATH AT HUNTERS QUAY HOLIDAY VILLAGE**
Report by Head of Roads and Amenity Services (Pages 19 - 22)
- 8. PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR**
Report and Presentation by Research and Development Officer (Pages 23 - 52)
- 9. WORLD WAR 1 COMMEMORATION STEERING GROUP**
Extract from Council Meeting held on 29 August 2013 and Report by Executive

Director of Community Services (Pages 53 - 60)

10. PUBLIC AND COUNCILLOR QUESTION TIME

E1 11. DUNOON 5 ASIDE PITCH

Report by Streetscene Area Manager (Pages 61 - 76)

E1 12. POSSIBLE ALLOTMENT SITE AT KILBRIDE FARM, DUNOON

Report by Legal Services Manager (Pages 77 - 80)

The Committee will be asked to pass a resolution in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the public for items of business with an “E” on the grounds that it is likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in the appropriate paragraph of Part I of Schedule 7a to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

The appropriate paragraph is:-

Paragraph 9 Any terms proposed or to be proposed by or to the authority in the course of negotiations for a contract for the acquisition or disposal of property or the supply of goods or services.

BUTE & COWAL AREA COMMITTEE

Councillor Gordon Blair (Vice-Chair)	Councillor Michael Breslin
Councillor Robert Macintyre (Chair)	Councillor Bruce Marshall
Councillor Alex McNaughton	Councillor James McQueen
Councillor Len Scoullar	Councillor Isobel Strong
Councillor Dick Walsh	

Contact: Danielle Finlay, Area Governance Assistant – 01631 567945

MINUTES of MEETING of BUTE AND COWAL AREA COMMITTEE held in the EAGLESHAM HOUSE, MOUNTPLEASANT ROAD, ROTHESAY on TUESDAY, 6 AUGUST 2013

Present: Councillor Robert E Macintyre (Chair)

Councillor Gordon Blair	Councillor Bruce Marshall
Councillor Michael Breslin	Councillor Len Scoullar
Councillor Alex McNaughton	Councillor Isobel Strong
Councillor James McQueen	Councillor Dick Walsh

Attending: Jim Smith, Head of Roads and Amenity Services
 Wendy Brownlie, Principle of Campus
 Shirley MacLeod, Area Governance Manager
 Alan MacDonald, Streetscene Area Manager
 Tom Murphy, Streetscene Area Manager
 Stewart Clark, Contracts Manager
 David Clements, Improvement and Organisational Development Programme Manager
 John Duncan, Childrens Manager
 Michael Casey, Project Officer
 Liz Marion, Community Development Officer

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of the following:-

Douglas Hendry, Executive Director of Customer Services
 Jayne Lawrence-Winch, Area Manager – Adult Care
 Jackie Connelly, Performance Improvement Officer

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor G Blair declared a non-financial interest in Cowal Fiddle Workshop at item 11 by reason of being a member of the group. He remained in the room but took no part in the discussion of this item.

The Chair welcomed the Provost's return

3. MINUTES

(a) BUTE AND COWAL AREA COMMITTEE HELD ON 4TH JUNE 2013

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Bute and Cowal Area Committee held on 4th June 2013 were approved as a correct record.

(b) SPECIAL BUTE AND COWAL AREA COMMITTEE HELD ON 25 JUNE 2013

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Special Bute and Cowal Area Committee

held on 25th June 2013 were approved as a correct record.

(c) **ROTHESAY CHORD PROJECT BOARD HELD ON 1 JULY 2013 (FOR NOTING)**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Rothesay CHORD Project Board held on 1st July 2013 were noted.

(d) **COWAL COMMUNITY SAFETY FORUM HELD ON 28TH JUNE 2013 (FOR NOTING)**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Cowal Community Safety Forum held on the 28th June 2013 were noted.

(e) **BUTE COMMUNITY SAFETY FORUM HELD ON 25 JUNE 2013 (FOR NOTING)**

The Minutes of the Meeting of Bute Community Safety Forum held on 25th June 2013 were noted.

(f) **COWAL TRANSPORT FORUM HELD ON 21 JUNE 2013 (FOR NOTING)**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Cowal Transport Forum held on the 21st June 2013 were noted.

(g) **DUNOON CHORD PROJECT BOARD HELD ON 24 MAY 2013 (FOR NOTING)**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Dunoon CHORD Project Board held on the 24th May 2013 were noted.

4. ROTHESAY JOINT CAMPUS

Members heard from Wendy Brownlie, Principal of Campus, on the recent Education Scotland Inspection Report of Rothesay Joint Campus.

Decision

The Committee noted the information provided.

(Reference: Report by the Principal of Rothesay Joint Campus dated 23 July 2013 – submitted).

5. DUNOON AREA PRIMARY SCHOOLS - OPTION SELECTION

The Members heard from the Project Officer about the proposed approach and methodology for engaging in consultation with the public in respect of the shortlist of options for the improved Dunoon area primary schools.

Decision

The Committee:-

- I. Agreed the proposed process for engaging in consultation with the public in respect of the shortlisted options for the improved Dunoon Area Primary Schools in compliance with the delegation to the Executive Director of Community Services in consultation with the lead Councillor for Education and Life Long Learning and Local Members; and
- II. Agreed to have a discussion on the condition of the old Rothesay Academy building at the September Business Day.

(Reference:- report by Executive Director of Community Services dated 6 August 2013 – submitted).

6. UPDATE ON DELIVERY OF REVENUE ROADS BUDGET

A report following on from the March Business Day setting out the reduction in roads maintenance revenue activities to be delivered in 2013/14 and 2014/15 as a result of a reduced revenue budget provision, was considered.

The report details the current level of expenditure of the roads operations revenue budget.

Decision

The Committee:-

- I. Noted the report; and
- II. Agreed that the Head of Roads and Amenity Services bring a further report to the September Business Day with updated figures and to include street lighting.

(Reference:- Report by Head of Roads and Amenity Services dated 29 July 2013 – submitted).

7. FOOTPATH AT HQ HOLIDAY VILLAGE

Members heard from Stuart Clark, Contracts Manager on the options for funding the completion of the footway connection between Hunters Quay and Sandbank on the A815 and to the update on the progress made since the previous report to the Area Committee in February.

Decision

The Committee:-

- I. Noted the report; and
- II. Agreed to bring a further updated report back to the October Area Committee.

(Reference:- Report by Head of Roads and Amenity Services dated 29 July 2013 – submitted).

8. STREETSCENE BUDGET SAVINGS

A report proposing a draft service delivery model for 2014/15 which has been developed following member workshops previously held was considered.

The report proposes a draft area model and also proposes that a stakeholder workshop event be held.

Decision

The Area Committee agreed that because of the severe impact of the proposed cuts on local environments and townscapes across Bute and Cowal, and the overall small budget savings which would result, no action be taken on this matter at this time. The Committee further requested that discussions take place within the Department with a view to identifying alternatives which would mitigate the anticipated severe impact, and that the council be asked to consider those alternatives as a matter of urgency.

(Reference:- Report by Head of Roads and Amenity Services dated 6 August 2013 – submitted).

Councillor Bruce Marshall left the meeting.

Councillor Robert Macintyre left the meeting and Councillor Gordon Blair took the Chair.

9. DUNOON 5 ASIDE PITCH

A report providing further details to the Committee with regards to options for operating the 5 a-side all weather pitches at Dunoon Stadium was considered.

Decision

The Committee:-

- I. Noted the contents of the report; and
- II. Agreed to bring a draft business plan detailing further development on the project to the October Area Committee.

(Reference: - Report by Head of Roads and Amenity Services dated 31 July 2013 – submitted).

Councillor Robert Macintyre returned to the meeting and took the Chair.

Councillor Alex McNaughton left the meeting.

10. AREA SCORECARDS

Members heard from the Improvement and Organisational Development

Programme Manager on the Area Scorecard with exceptional performance for FQ 1 2013/14.

Decision

The Committee:-

- I. Noted the exceptional performance presented on the scorecard and agreed that a further report come to the September Business Day; and
- II. Agreed to hold a Special Area Committee in early September on Adult Care to highlight issues raised in the scorecard.

(Reference:- Report by the Improvement and Organisational Development Programme Manager dated 6 August 2013 – submitted).

11. THIRD SECTOR GRANTS

Members heard from the Community Development Officer regarding recommendations for the award of Third Sector Grants and informed the Members there was a balance of the allocated budget left over.

Decision

The Committee:-

- I. Noted the contents of the report;
- II. Agreed to award all applicants; and
- III. Agreed to a third round of grants to utilise the remainder of the budget.

(Reference: Report by the Community Development Officer dated 15 July 2013 – submitted).

12. MONITORING OF GRANTS TO THE THIRD SECTOR 2012/13

A report was presented by the Community Development Officer detailing how the Third Sector Grant funding was spent in 2012/13. Not all organisations have submitted the end of project monitoring reports.

Decision

The Committee:-

- I. Noted the report and asked that the Community Development Officer update Members directly by email when any further monitoring reports are received.

(Reference: Report by Community Development Officer dated 17 June 2013 – submitted).

13. TELEPHONE CALL HANDLING IN POLICE SCOTLAND

A report updating Members on the arrangements which are in place for telephone call handling in Police Scotland was outlined by the Area Governance Manager.

Decision

The Members noted the report and complimented the success of the system.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director of Customer Services dated 15 July 2013 – submitted).

14. OLDER PEOPLES CARE AT HOME SERVICE UPDATE

This Agenda item will be heard at a Special Area Committee in September as apologies were given by the service manager at the start of the meeting.

15. PUBLIC AND COUNCILLOR QUESTION TIME

There were no Public or Councillor questions intimated.

MINUTES of MEETING of ROTHESAY COMMON GOOD FUND held in the EAGLESHAM HOUSE, MOUNTPLEASANT ROAD, ROTHESAY on TUESDAY, 6 AUGUST 2013

Present: Councillor Robert Macintyre (Chair)
Councillor Len Scoullar Councillor Isobel Strong

Attending: Shirley MacLeod, Area Governance Manager

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies intimated.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

3. MINUTES

The Minute of the Meeting of the Rothesay Common Good Fund held on 4 March 2013 were approved as a correct record.

The Committee resolved in terms of Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude the public for the following item of business on the grounds that it was likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 6 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

4. APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

(a) BUTE COMMUNITY LINKS

Members heard from the Area Governance Manager on a further application to the Rothesay Common Good Fund from Bute Community Links (BCL) Ltd to help with the costs associated with the minibus, namely an outstanding garage invoice.

Decision

The Committee:-

- I. Agreed to award a grant of £575.00;
- II. Agreed this was a special case as the provision of the mini bus service is critical on the Island of Bute; and
- III. This would be the last time the group would be awarded financial help.

(Reference: Application dated 12 April 2013 – submitted).

Dunoon Grammar School



Examination Performance Analysis

September 2013

Overall performance – S4 cohort

The following table shows the percentage of pupils gaining SVQ level 3, 4 and 5 by the end of S4. The table also highlights the results from 2006.

Year Level	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
5+ level 3	95	95	96	92	94	87	96	95
5+ level 4	72	81	87	81	80	76	84	88
5+ level 5	36	37	38	35	36	31	30	45

The following table shows the National average percentages from 2009.

Year Level	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
5+ Level 3	92	92	93	94	95
5+ Level 4	78	78	79	80	82
5+ Level 5	35	36	36	37	38

Comparison between Dunoon Grammar School and the National average (2013)

	5+ Level 3	5+ Level 4	5+ Level 5
National Average	38	82	95
Dunoon Grammar School	45	88	95

Math and English levels

The table below shows the percentage of pupils who have achieved English and Maths at level 3 by the end of S4.

2013	Maths @ level3	English @ level3	Maths and English
National Average	96	97	96
Dunoon Grammar School	96	99	94

Overall Performance – S5 Cohort

The following table shows the percentage of pupils gaining awards at Higher level by the end of S5.

Year Level	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
1+ Level 6	44	36	45	47	41	45	42	37
3+ Level 6	24	16	22	23	17	18	22	20
5+ level 6	7	5	8	8	6	7	7	11

The following table highlights the National Average figures

Year Level	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
1+ Level 6	41	43	45	47	48
3+ Level 6	23	25	26	27	28
5+ level 6	11	11	12	13	13

Comparison between Dunoon Grammar School and the National Average

2013	1+ Level 6	3+ Level 6	5+ Level 6
National Average	48	28	13
Dunoon Grammar School	37	20	11

Overall Performance – S6 Cohort

The following table shows the percentage of pupils gaining Higher awards by the end of S6.

Year Level	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
1+ Level 6	41	49	44	53	55	53	54	50
3+ Level 6	27	33	27	37	35	32	27	32
5+ level 6	17	20	15	24	22	20	17	19

The table below highlights the national average from 2009.

Year Level	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
1+ Level 6	44	47	50	52	53
3+ Level 6	31	33	35	37	38
5+ level 6	21	22	24	26	26

Comparison between Dunoon Grammar School and the National Average

2013	1+ Level 6	3+ Level 6	5+ Level 6
National Average	53	38	26
Dunoon Grammar School	50	32	19

The table below shows the percentage of pupils gaining Advanced Higher Awards.

2013	1+ Level 7
National Average	17
Dunoon Grammar School	6

20 August 2013

Dear Parent/Carer

**Kirn Primary School and Nursery Class
Argyll and Bute Council**

Recently, as you may know, my colleagues and I inspected your child's school. During our visit, we talked to parents and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We wanted to find out how well children are learning and achieving and how well the school supports children to do their best. The headteacher shared with us the school's successes and priorities for improvement. We looked at some particular aspects of the school's recent work, including the way in which the school provides evidence of children's progress in learning and achievement and its approaches to supporting children with additional support needs. As a result, we were able to find out how good the school is at improving children's education.

How well do children learn and achieve?

Children in the nursery and across the school learn and achieve to a high standard. In the nursery, children have consistently good opportunities to make choices and take responsibility for their own learning. They participate very enthusiastically in a daily 'play, do and review' session which helps them to plan aspects of their learning. They approach their chosen tasks with confidence and achieve success in a variety of contexts. Older children display an exceptionally high level of independence in leading their own learning throughout the session. At all stages, children behave impeccably and demonstrate highly responsible attitudes and respect to staff, visitors and to each other. In all classes, children are motivated and engaged in their learning within the calm, purposeful atmosphere. Highly imaginative displays in classrooms and around the school which are well linked to learning contribute to the stimulating, learning environment. Children enjoy sharing their learning and regularly lead parent workshops where they explain confidently the mathematics and writing strategies that they are using. Children are highly involved in evaluating aspects of their own learning. They can describe what they are good at and talk about the targets they have set themselves with their teacher. Children benefit from carefully planned lessons with clear learning outcomes, skilful questioning, and investigative challenges. This results in high-quality learning and teaching which is impacting very positively on children's confidence and progress.

In the nursery, learning targets are identified for each child and shared regularly with parents. Children are developing their early literacy skills well. Most children can say a few basic words in French such as greetings and colours. A few can recognise and write numbers beyond ten. Within the very positive culture which encourages and

celebrates personal achievement, children at all stages of the school demonstrate their confidence and success in a wide range of ways. These include leadership, teamwork, strategic thinking and problem solving, creativity, learning enterprising skills and how to be a good citizen. Children have undertaken significant work to improve environmental awareness across the school and as a result have achieved an Eco-Schools Scotland green flag. The pupil council and children's activities to support the 'One Planet Picnic' focusing on food sustainability resulted in the school being awarded first prize in a national competition. At the primary stages, children are making very good progress in English and literacy particularly at the early years and upper primary stages. Many at all stages are making exceptional progress in writing. By P6 and P7, most children are using sophisticated research skills to find and share information about their topic 'Earth and beyond'. At all stages, children's spelling, punctuation and grammar are well developed. They take advantage of the very good opportunities to read for pleasure and discuss their reading with real writers. Across the primary stages, children respond very positively to increasingly challenging mathematical tasks. By P7, pupils can use mathematical formulae to calculate the radius, circumference and the volume of spheres. The imaginative outdoor learning programme provides real life opportunities for children to apply a range of numeracy and mathematic skills.

How well does the school support children to develop and learn?

There are major strengths in the way that staff across the school support children to develop and learn. Across the nursery and school, staff use the principles of Curriculum for Excellence to plan children's learning in a well-considered and meaningful way. Higher-achieving children in the nursery have very good opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy skills along with P1 children. Staff in the nursery and P1 plan learning effectively. This is helping to ease children's move from the nursery to P1. Across the primary stages, the curriculum motivates children and increases their self-esteem by providing them with exciting learning experiences and encouraging the development of important core skills and positive behaviour. In P5 to P7, each teacher takes a lead responsibility for delivering specific aspects of the curriculum. This ensures that teachers work closely together, sharing effective approaches to learning and teaching, standards and expectations. As a result, almost all children approach more challenging tasks confidently. Staff show very high-quality care and support to children in the school. The nursery works closely with parents and partners to meet the needs of individual children. Individualised education programmes are in place for children who need them. Staff need to adapt further their daily planning to take account of children's different abilities. When needed, staff work with parents to help them to manage children's behaviour more effectively at home. The headteacher and staff intervene promptly to ensure that children who need extra help and those at risk of missing out receive tailored support. Highly-skilled support staff provide a very wide range of well-targeted support for children including those with learning difficulties, social, emotional and behavioural needs and health needs. Partner agencies contribute very effectively to supporting children with additional support needs.

How well does the school improve the quality of its work?

As a result of very strong processes for evaluating the quality of its work, the school has an accurate picture of what it does well and what it needs to improve. A deep review of learning and teaching facilitated by headteachers of local schools is providing helpful and supportive comment about how well the school is supporting children to make progress. The school aims to further develop its arrangements to assess and track children's progress and achievements. To do this well, staff would like more opportunities to work together to evaluate the quality of children's work. Parents' and children's views and suggestions are sought regularly in a variety of ways and acted upon. The headteacher is inspirational. Highly regarded by all members of the school community, he has a very clear vision for the school for which he has gained the support of all staff, parents and partner agencies. He is highly committed to continually improving the quality of learning which the school provides and encourages dynamic and creative approaches to learning and teaching. The headteacher undertakes rigorous monitoring and evaluation of learning and teaching and provides detailed feedback to teachers. This has led to significant improvements in the quality of children's experiences and achievements. Two principal teachers provide strong and very effective support to the headteacher in leading and developing improvements across the school.

This inspection found the following key strengths.

- Confident, respectful children who have a clear love of learning and great pride in their school.
- Innovative approaches to the organisation of the curriculum to ensure children develop important skills through exciting, deep and coherent learning experiences.
- High-quality support for children who require extra help in their learning.
- Effective partnerships with parents, volunteers, partners and the local community to enrich and extend children's learning.
- Inspirational and strong leadership of the headteacher which drives forward improvements to ensure all children make very good progress in their learning.

We discussed with staff and the education authority how they might continue to improve the school and nursery class. This is what we agreed with them.

- Continue to develop day-to-day planning of learning to take account of differences in children's abilities.
- Further develop opportunities for teachers to work together to evaluate the quality and standard of children's work.

What happens at the end of the inspection?

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that the school's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvements. As a result, we will make no further evaluative visits in connection with this inspection. During the inspection, we identified an aspect of innovative practice which we would like to explore further in order to share the practice with others. As a result we will work with the school and local authority in order to record and share more widely the innovative practice.

Dr Kate Hannah
HM Inspector

Additional inspection evidence, such as details of the quality indicator evaluations, for your school can be found on the Education Scotland website at <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/primsec/KirnPrimarySchoolArgyllandBute.asp>.

If you would like to receive this letter in a different format, for example, in a translation please contact the administration team on the above telephone number.

If you want to give us feedback or make a complaint about our work, please contact us by telephone on 0141 282 5000, or e-mail: complaints@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk or write to us addressing your letter to the Complaints Manager, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Livingston EH54 6GA.

Quality indicators help schools, education authorities and inspectors to judge what is good and what needs to be improved in the work of the school. You can find these quality indicators in the publication *How good is our school?*¹. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers evaluations of three important quality indicators to keep track of how well all Scottish schools are doing.

Here are the evaluations for Kirn Primary School and Nursery Class.

Improvements in performance	excellent
Learners' experiences	excellent
Meeting learning needs	very good

Nursery class

Improvements in performance	very good
Children's experiences	very good
Meeting learning needs	very good

We also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the school and nursery class.

The curriculum	very good
Improvement through self-evaluation	very good

A copy of the full letter is available on the Education Scotland website at <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/primsec/KirnPrimarySchoolArgyllandBute.asp>.

¹ *How good is our school? The Journey to Excellence: part 3*, HM Inspectorate of Education, 2007, http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/HowgoodisourschoolJtEpart3_tcm4-684258.pdf

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ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT AND
INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

BUTE AND COWAL
AREA COMMITTEE

1 October 2013

Update - Provision of footway on A815 at Hunters Quay Holiday Village

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide Members with a further update on the funding options for the potential footway connection between Hunters Quay and Sandbank on the A815 at Dunoon.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members give guidance to Officers, by designating this project as a priority scheme within the area and make application to Full Council for allocation of Roads Capital Reconstruction and Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets budgets, as match funding.

3 DETAILS

- 3.1 Details provided in previous reports:-

- The footpath connecting Hunters Quay and Sandbank has a gap section of some 507 lin. m. either side of the entrance to Hafton House.
- Records indicate that there have been four road traffic accidents in the past three years at this location.
- An initial estimate for the provision of a footway at this location is in the order of £240,000. As such, this is in excess of any available internal budget to finance exclusively.
- Existing landowners, adjacent to the footway, are under no legal obligation to provide a footway on the A815 public road. However, the submission of a recent planning pre-application for this area may allow a proportion of the footway to be provided through the “planning gain” route if the development is taken forward.
- The on-going implementation process for the 30mph zone in this area may allow a reduction in the specification of the footpath.
- A site survey has been carried out on the southern end between Hunters Quay Holiday Village and vehicular access serving Hafton House; some 190 linear metres. There is adequate space to provide a narrow footway on the landward side.

3.2 Latest update:-

- The 'going live' date for the 30mph speed restriction at Sandbank is Friday 4th October. All the necessary signage will be erected beforehand and bagged for uncovering on this date.
- A full survey has now been carried out to ensure that there is sufficient width for the remainder of the footway. This will allow for at least minimum 1.3m wide walkway over the entire length adjacent to the existing boundary walls, within the existing road corridor.
- In advance of any footway construction works, scrub cutting will be carried out in the near future and field drainage and culverts proven; these works will serve as preparation prior to the commencement of any future footway works and will provide a refuge for pedestrians in the interim; these 'maintenance' works will be carried out this financial year under the auspices of the roads revenue budget.
- Special funding for the new footway is still being sourced by officers. The award of Sustrans funding may be conditional on the provision of improvements to both cycling and walking. However, the minimum width achievable may not meet Sustrans specification for an award of funds.
- Adjacent landowners are being contacted and a request made to contribute to the works for the mutual benefit of all but as stated above, there is at present no mechanism to compel them to contribute. An approach will also be made to the Military Covenant Award Board to contribute to this project. This is likely to be subject to competition from other schemes of equal or greater merit.
- The aforementioned planning application has not progressed greatly in the last 6 months and there is no indication that any works will commence in the short to medium term.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The possible procurement of finances to fund the footway proposal is still being investigated by officers. It is likely however, that progress to completion will take some considerable time without a significant contribution from the Councils own budgets , in a similar manner to the A880 Kilmun Footway works of 2012 which remain incomplete at this time.
- 4.2 Preparation works will commence this financial year under the revenue maintenance budget, to improve the use of the existing road verge by removing overgrown scrub and installing positive drainage.

5. IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Policy *Assists in the promotion of health and wellbeing.*
- 5.2 Financial *Requires substantial external contributions to complete the works.*
- 5.3 Personnel *None*
- 5.4 Equalities Impact Assessment *None*
- 5.5 Legal *Land acquisition implications*
- 5.6 Risk *none*
- 5.7 Customer Service *Improves local amenity for residents and tourists*

6. APPENDICES

- 6.1 A815 Location plan

Sandy Mactaggart

Executive Director of Development & Infrastructure

23rd September 2013 revised

For further information contact: Jim Smith, Head of Roads & Amenity Services,
Tel: 01546 604324.

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ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

BUTE & COWAL
AREA COMMITTEE

COMMUNITY SERVICES

1st OCTOBER 2013

RESEARCH INTO THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR IN ARGYLL AND BUTE

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report and the annexed briefing paper summarise the findings of a research study into the Private Rented Sector (PRS) in Argyll and Bute; and also sets this in the context of the Scottish Government's Strategy for the Private Rented Sector in Scotland.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To note the findings of the research study and the implications for the Argyll & Bute Local Housing Strategy.

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1 The Private Rented Sector is currently a high priority on the housing policy agenda at both local and national levels. It has an increasingly important contribution to make in addressing local housing need and supporting economic growth. In May 2013, the Scottish Government published the national strategy "A Place to Stay, A Place to Call Home" which set out an overarching vision for a PRS which: ***"provides good quality homes and high management standards, inspires consumer confidence, and encourages growth through attracting increased investment"***.
- 3.2 The national strategy highlights the increasing importance of the sector in achieving and maintaining affordable, high quality housing in Scotland. To deliver this national strategy as well as the aims and objectives of the Argyll & Bute Local Housing Strategy, a number of key issues must be addressed:
- tackling the minority of landlords and tenants who act unlawfully or antisocially, and have a disproportionate impact on vulnerable communities and the reputation of the sector overall;
 - creating a regulatory framework that works for both tenants and landlords – one that is effective, proportionate and sets standards to ensure quality but is also affordable and does not constrain growth;
 - ensuring that the sector meets the growing demand for private rented housing from a range of different household types;

- encouraging tenants to think of themselves as consumers who can drive improvement within the sector; and supporting landlords to deliver improvements;
- taking account of the needs of vulnerable tenants, particularly in light of the UK Government Welfare Reforms;
- attracting more investment to increase the supply of private rented housing and to improve physical quality, against a backdrop of challenging economic times; and
- responding to the need for improved energy efficiency in PRS properties.

3.3 Research into the PRS in Argyll & Bute: Final Report

The PRS plays a key role in the Argyll & Bute local housing system, given the rural location and shortage of affordable housing, where many local residents have few options but to rely on private renting. It is essential therefore that the Council and its strategic partners have robust and credible evidence on the current operation and potential for growth in the sector to ensure that policy interventions can be programmed to enhance the PRS' contribution to meeting housing need at a local level.

3.4 To this end, in October 2012, Argyll & Bute Council commissioned Arneil Johnston to carry out an extensive and innovative study into the current and future role of the sector. The final report brings together the outcomes and findings from a range of research activities and extensive consultation with stakeholders across the sector. The study provides:

- A credible evidence base on the size, profile, quality, condition, management, affordability and turnover of the sector (based on both primary and secondary datasets);
- A detailed profile of private rented sector tenants and landlords within Argyll & Bute (based on the outcomes of an extensive primary research programme);
- An assessment of the demand for and affordability of private rented accommodation in the context of the intermediate housing sector; and
- A recommended programme of policy interventions for inclusion with the local housing strategy to improve the operation, management and growth of the sector (developed in consultation with local stakeholders).

4.0 CONCLUSION

4.1 The research study generated an extensive evidence base for Argyll and Bute as a whole and the data is also broken down by administrative area. The key results are summarised in the annex to this report.

4.2 Based on the study findings, four high level strategic aims have been developed for inclusion within the Local Housing Strategy. Under each aim, a range of action points have also been developed

to guide the allocation of resources, partnership activity and policy development via the LHS:-

AIM ONE: To improve the affordability of the private rented sector to local households
Explore the feasibility of delivering mid-market rent options with investors & developers
Target income maximisation and welfare rights services to private tenants
Ensure the PRS features in the fuel poverty strategy for Argyll & Bute
Promote budgeting and financial management advice to private tenants
Ensure the PRS features in the developing welfare reform strategy
AIM TWO: To improve tenancy management in the private rented sector
Target multi-disciplinary enforcement activity on disreputable landlords (i.e. housing, building control, environmental health and landlord registration)
Provide training and support to private landlords on tenancy management
Enhance partnerships between the Council, lettings agents and private landlords to identify and eradicate bad practice
Promote mediation service to landlords, tenants and owners
AIM THREE: To improve the condition of properties in the private rented sector
Improve the knowledge of landlords and tenants on the repairing standard
Develop owner associations & the use of property factors to encourage common repair
Support landlords to develop & budget for long term maintenance plans
More enforcement activity to target poor property condition
AIM FOUR: To improve the operation of the private rented sector
Promote new 'Renting Scotland' website and encourage use of best practice materials
Assist landlords to access tenancy sustainment services
Encourage landlords and tenants to negotiate longer term tenancies following an initial successful term
Work in partnership with private landlords to streamline the payment of LHA
Encourage consumers to make informed decisions on private renting through housing options advice
Promote the sharing of good practice through encouraging landlords to link into professional networks
Establish local private landlord forum to promote sharing of good practice
Review the private sector leasing scheme

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Policy – Research findings will inform future updates of the Local Housing Strategy and housing policy at a local level.
- 5.2 Financial – Ultimately, there will be resource implications for the improvement and growth of the Private Rented Sector.
- 5.3 Legal - None
- 5.4 HR - None
- 5.5 Equalities - None
- 5.6 Risk - None
- 5.7 Customer Service - None

6.0 APPENDICES

- 6.1 Research into the PRS in Argyll & Bute: Briefing Paper

Executive Director of Community Services

30th August 2013

For further information contact: Allan Brandie, Research & Development Officer, Housing Services, Dunoon (01369 70 8679). allan.brandie@argyll-bute.gov.uk

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1.1 RESEARCH INTO THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR

In October 2012, Argyll and Bute Council commissioned Arneil Johnston to perform an extensive research study into the current and future role of the private rented sector. As well as detailed desk-based analysis and consultation with local stakeholders; a comprehensive landlord and tenant survey was carried out.

The aim of this survey was to build sound intelligence on the population profile of private tenants, the private rented sector housing stock, the profile of landlords operating in the sector and the quality of both tenancy management and physical condition. A census of private tenants was held, with all registered addresses receiving a postal survey to complete. In total, 968 private tenants responded providing detailed information on their households, homes and future intentions. In addition, 350 local landlords completed a 30 minute telephone interview on their property portfolio. This level of response has enabled the Council to build a robust evidence base to inform decision making at a local level on how the growth and improvement of the private rented sector can be supported.

This briefing paper sets out the key research findings and strategy actions the Council and its partners will take forward as an outcome of the research.

1.2 What did the Survey Outcomes Tell us about the Sector

The survey outcomes provide an interesting profile of the population of private tenants who live in the sector:

What did we already know about the sector?

- 4,885 households live in registered private tenancies
- 10% of all local households live in the sector
- 2/3 private rented homes need urgent repairs
- Fuel poverty is a problem (52% PRS tenants fuel poor)
- 25% of PRS tenants claim local housing allowance (71% in social housing)
- 21% of homeless applicants are private tenants

- 46% are single people
- 21% are over 65 years
- 27% have long term illness or disability
- 44% not economically active
- 42% in full time work
- 33% claiming benefits
- 59% earn less than £25,000 per year
- 44% like/need to move in next 2 years
- 60% see sector as 2nd or only option

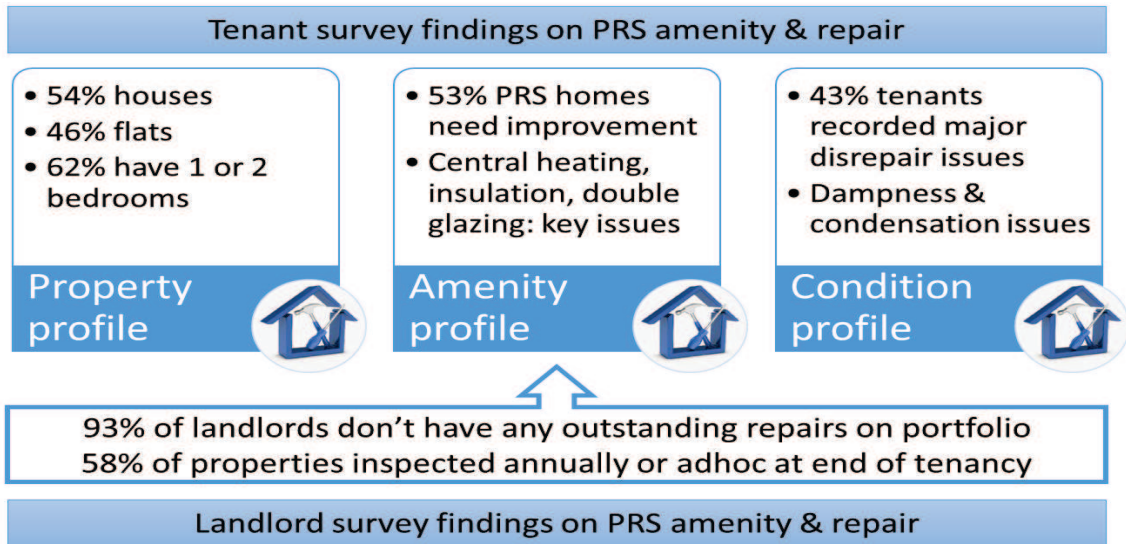
PRS population in Argyll & Bute



With 10% of all local households living in the sector, the private rented sector plays an instrumental role in meeting housing need in Argyll & Bute. The size and influence of the sector is consistent across each housing market area. The population in private rented accommodation is focused on single people (46%) and all adult households (29%); with a fifth of all households over 65. A notable proportion of households (44%) are not economically active, with 33% claiming benefits. Despite, the low income profile in the sector, there is evidence of limited benefit up-take which is likely to exacerbate housing affordability problems.

There is strong evidence that the sector accommodates a significant proportion of households whose housing options are otherwise limited. On this basis, over 40% of current tenants would like or need to move home in the next 2 years.

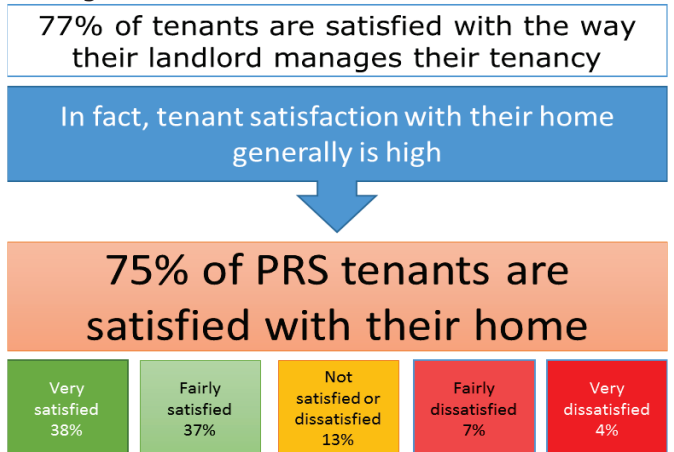
Survey outcomes provide a detailed and interesting profile of private rented sector stock by property type, size, amenity and condition. The sector predominately provides smaller accommodation (62% are 1 or 2 bedroom homes) with a relatively even profile between flats (44%) and houses (56%). There are clearly very different perceptions regarding the condition and quality of the housing stock from a landlord and tenant perspective. However, landlord intelligence on property disrepair tends to be based on an infrequent and ad-hoc approach to maintenance inspections.



1.3 What do we know about Landlords?

The majority of private landlords have a single property to let and almost 50% are letting by default as 'accidental landlords' who cannot currently sell their property.

Whilst there are clearly gaps in the skills and knowledge of local landlords (29% would benefit from training on tenancy law), there are high levels of tenant satisfaction with tenancy management.



Who is a typical private landlord?

- 81% have 1 property
- 48% 'accidental landlords'
- 35% are pension investors
- 9% landlord by profession
- 31% use an agent
- 25% want to leave PRS in 5 years
- 23% of leavers will do so given poor rate of return
- 36% won't take tenants on LHA

Whilst, demand for private rented accommodation is locally strong (85% of landlords report "no problems finding tenants"); there is evidence of a low commercial rate of return in sector, which may be linked to the structure of local incomes particularly in rural areas. 23% of landlords who want to leave the sector are motivated by a poor return on investment.

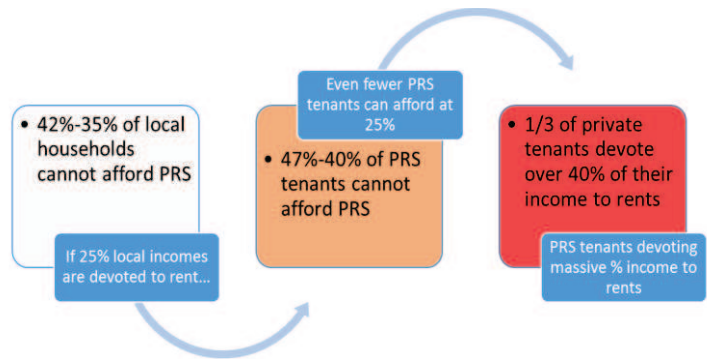


1.4 What do PRS Rents Costs & How Affordable is This?

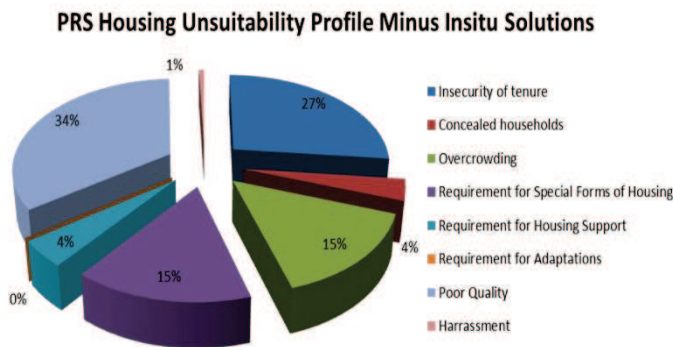
The study also examined the affordability of private rents across Argyll & Bute. Housing affordability was tested by benchmarking local incomes to rental costs.

The average monthly rent for a private tenancy in Argyll & Bute is **£436 per calendar month**. Average rental values are highest in Helensburgh & Lomond at £509 per month (17% higher than average) and considerably lower in Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands at £383 per month (12% lower than average)

An important aspect of assessing housing affordability is to look at the proportion of household income devoted to rent or mortgage costs. A sustainable 'rent to income ratio' for tenants would be in the region of 25%. This was tested on the profile of local private tenants in Argyll & Bute producing the following results.



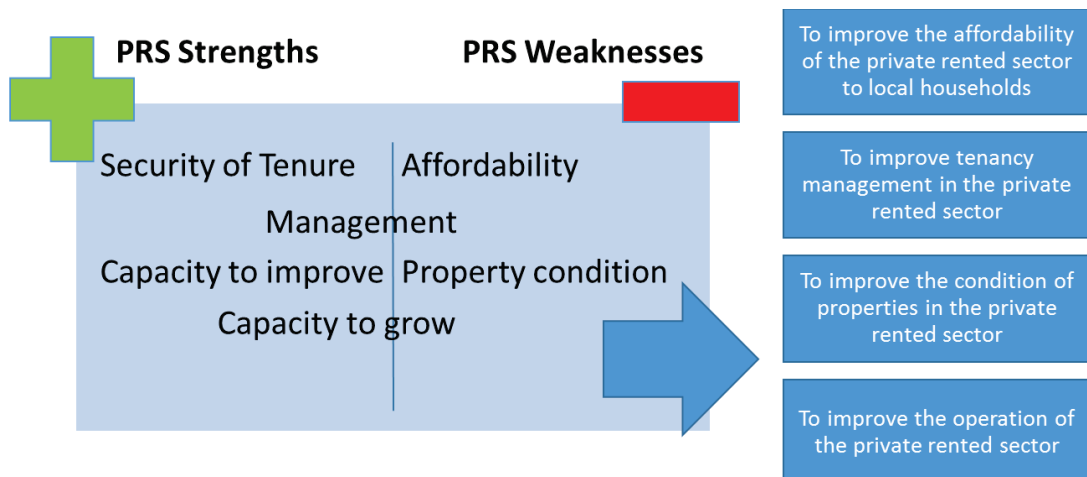
1.5 Is the PRS Effective in Meeting Housing Need?



Analysis was performed to assess the extent to which private tenants were accommodated in homes that are unsuitable for their needs. Survey results suggest that roughly 40% of private tenants (2,000) are in unsuitable accommodation, with the main problems relating to poor condition (34%), insecure tenure (27%), overcrowding (15%) and special needs (15%).

1.6 What Are our Priorities for the PRS Moving Forward?

Informed by an assessment of strengths and weaknesses in the operation of the sector, stakeholders defined four strategic objectives that the Council and partners should pursue through the LHS framework to promote the growth and operation on the sector locally.



1.7 Bute & Cowal: PRS Research Profile

The research findings provide an interesting profile of the private rented sector and the role that it plays at a local area level. The following findings have been prepared specifically for the private rented sector in Bute & Cowal.

The profile of the PRS housing stock in Bute & Cowal is relatively similar to the wider PRS sector. There are slightly more 1-2 bedroom homes (68%) than evident across Argyll & Bute (62%).

- 1,318 properties (27% PRS stock)
- 10% Bute & Cowal housing stock
- 52% houses/48% flats
- 68% are 1 or 2 bedroom properties
- 57% of tenants report no major problems with house condition
- 50% PRS tenants feel amenity of their home needs improved
- 26% want improved thermal efficiency

PRS Stock Profile



Tenant feedback would suggest that PRS homes in Bute & Cowal have better amenities and are in better condition than elsewhere in the PRS:

- 50% of homes in Bute & Cowal need amenities upgraded, improved or replaced in comparison to 53% (Argyll & Bute)
- 57% of homes in Bute & Cowal have no major problems with condition in comparison to 52% (Argyll & Bute)

The private tenant population in Bute & Cowal is different to the wider PRS population in a number of ways:

- More single people (51%) than Argyll & Bute (46%)
- Higher rate of illness & disability (38%) than Argyll & Bute (27%)
- Population over 65 is larger (44%) than Argyll & Bute (21%)
- More households not economically active (58%) than Argyll & Bute (44%)
- Lower incomes (65% earn less than £25k) than Argyll & Bute (59%)
- Higher % of tenants claiming LHA (51%) than Argyll & Bute (34%)



PRS Tenant Profile

- 51% single people
- 17% families with children
- 38% with limiting illness or disability
- 58% retired/not working
- 65% earn less than £25k
- 51% in receipt of LHA
- 40% want or need to move

The economic, age and health profile of the PRS population in Bute & Cowal may suggest a higher level of particular housing needs than elsewhere in Argyll & Bute. The need for homecare, housing support and adaptations may be more evident in this area as a result.

Average monthly rent levels in Bute & Cowal are £410 which is 6% lower than average rents in Argyll & Bute (£436)

30% income spent on rents

32% of PRS tenants in Bute & Cowal can't afford
35% of PRS tenants in Argyll & Bute can't afford

Lower rental values and the structure of local incomes makes housing affordability in Bute & Cowal slightly better than is evident across Argyll & Bute.

PRS tenant satisfaction with their home in Bute & Cowal (75%) is similar to Argyll & Bute (76%)

Satisfaction with the way their landlord manages their tenancy (82%) is better (77%)

Argyll & Bute Council

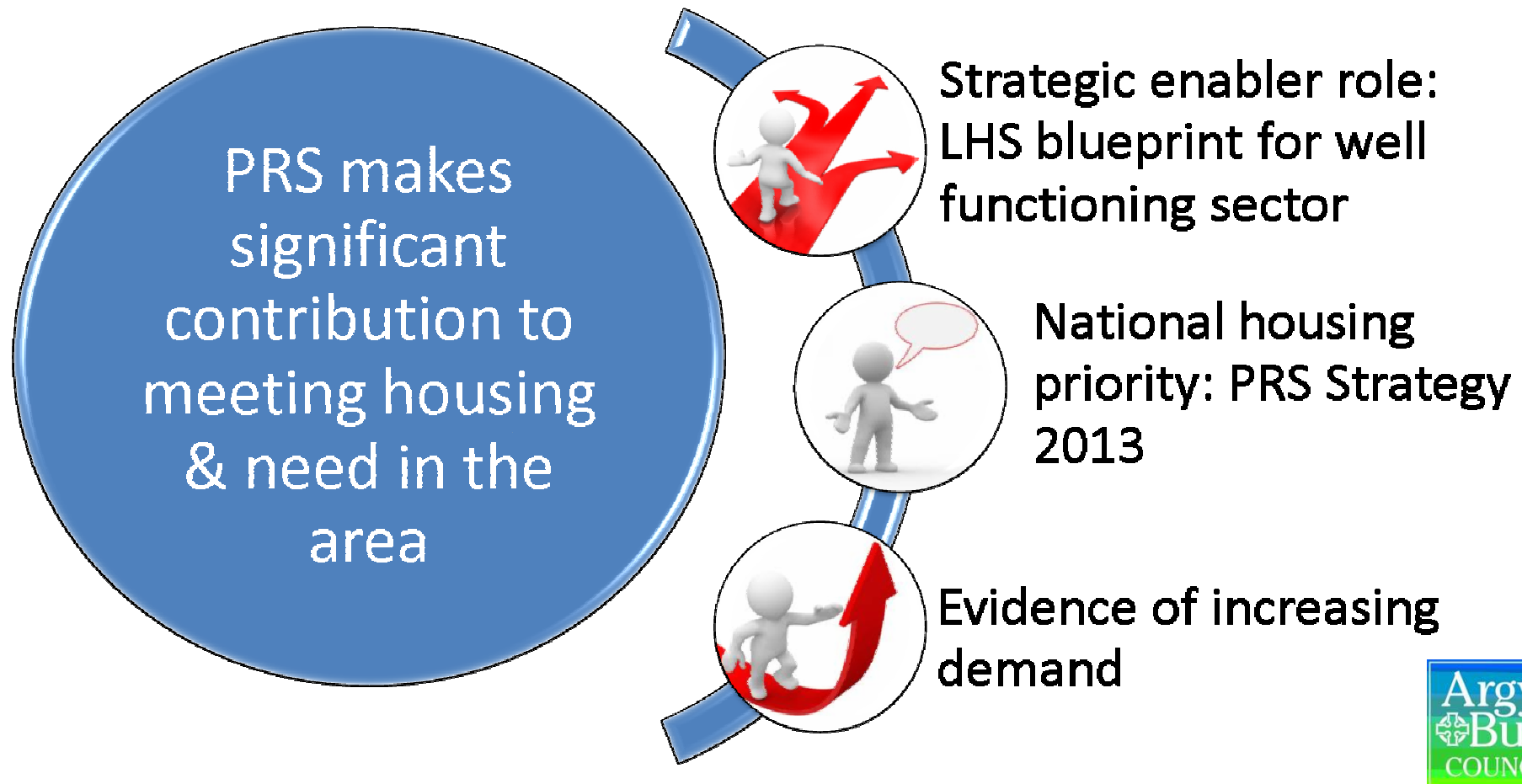
Research into the Private Rented Sector

Area Committee: Bute & Cowal

1st October 2013

Why are Argyll & Bute Council Interested in the Sector?

Project Study Aims...



National Agenda

3 Strategic Aims

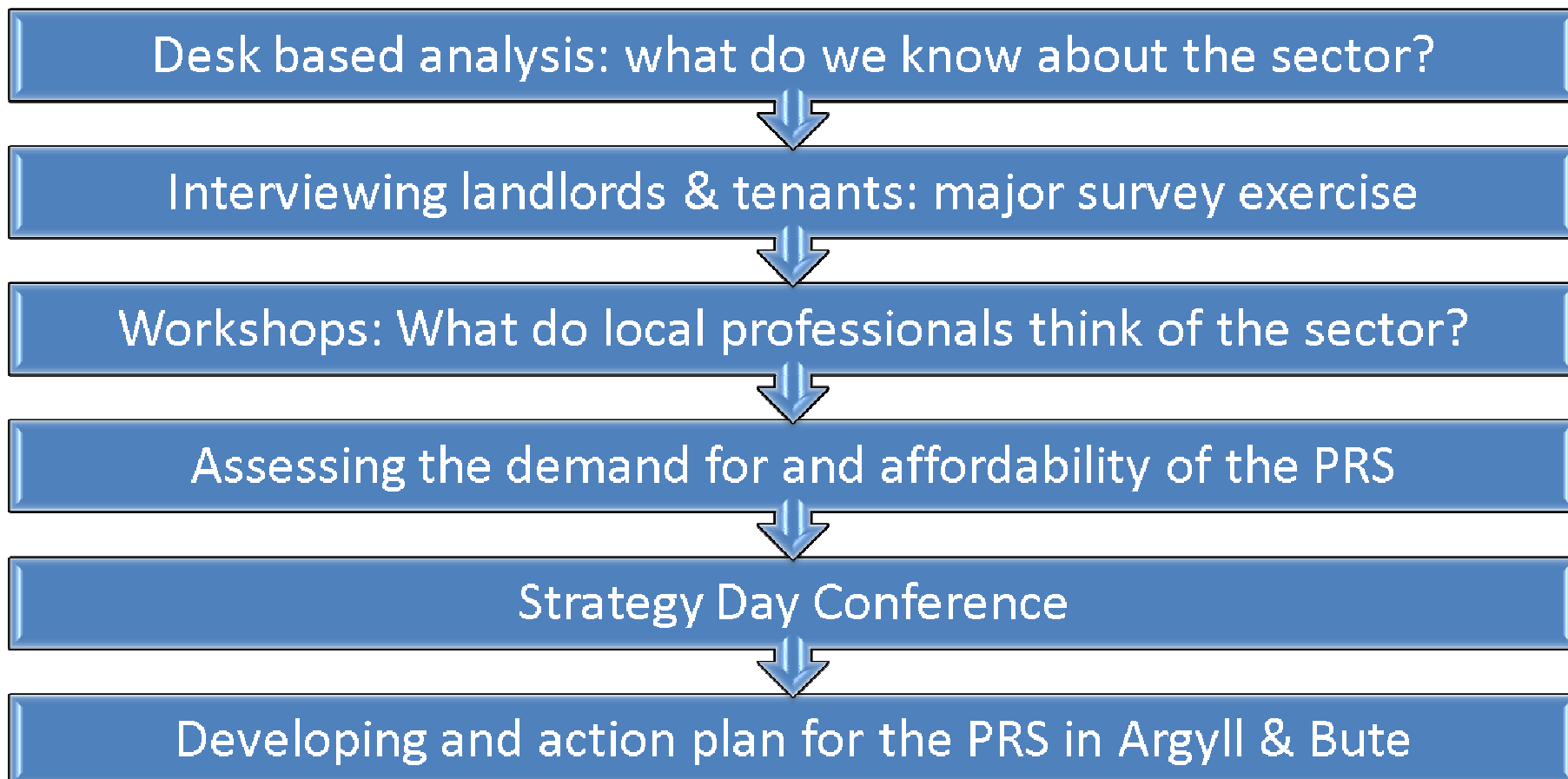
1. to **improve the quality**: of property management, condition and service.

2. to **deliver for tenants and landlords**: meeting the needs of the people living in the sector; consumers seeking accommodation; and landlords committed to continuous improvement

3. to **enable growth, investment**: and help increase overall housing supply

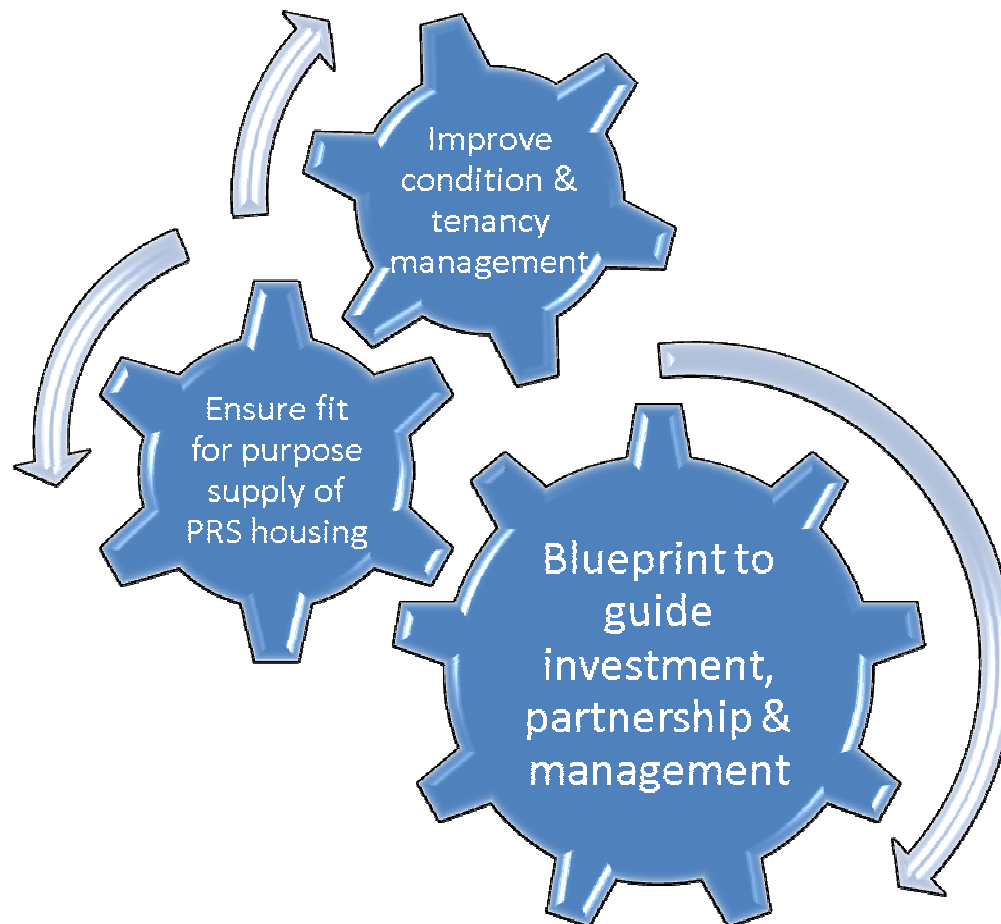
Private Rented Sector Research

Arneil Johnston commissioned Oct 2012



Private Rented Sector Research

Research Outcomes



Informed approach
to planning:
LHS/LDP

Avoid 'one size fits
all' approach to
local sector

Ensure national
vision can be
implemented
locally

PRS in Argyll & Bute

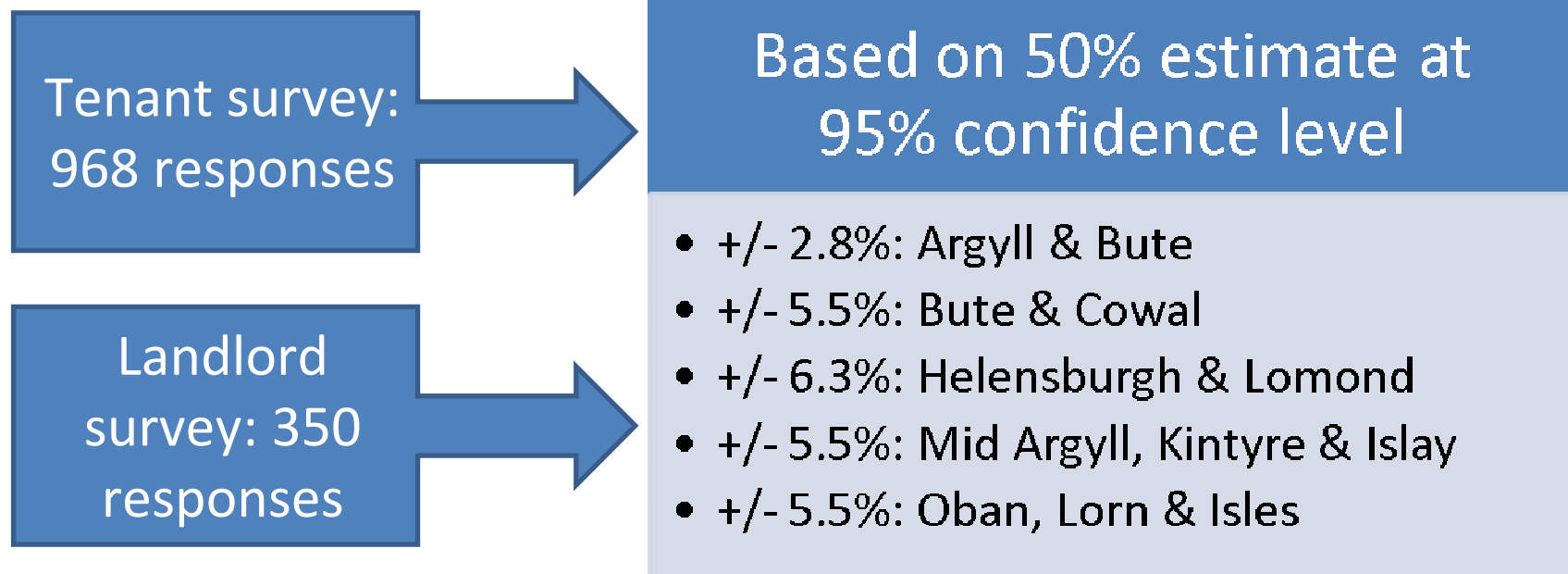
Headline Statistics: Secondary Data



PRS Research Study

Major Primary Research Exercise

- Postal Survey: 4,885 PRS Tenants
- Telephone Survey: 350 Landlords



Strong confidence level: informed decision making

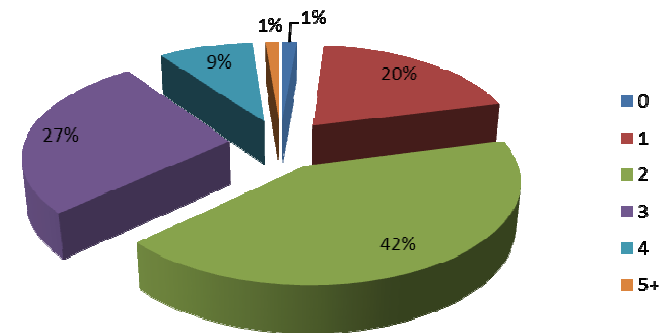
Stock Profile: Property Type

Property Type Profile

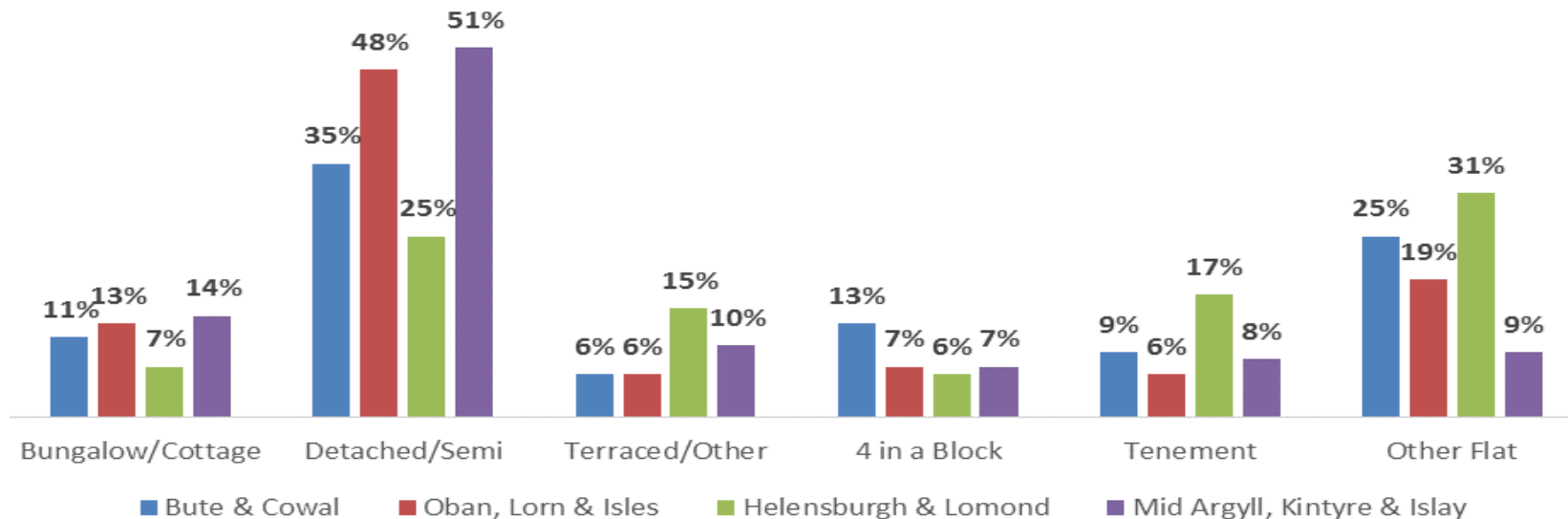
- 54% houses
- 46% flats

Property Size Profile

- 62% dwellings are 1 or 2 bedroom homes



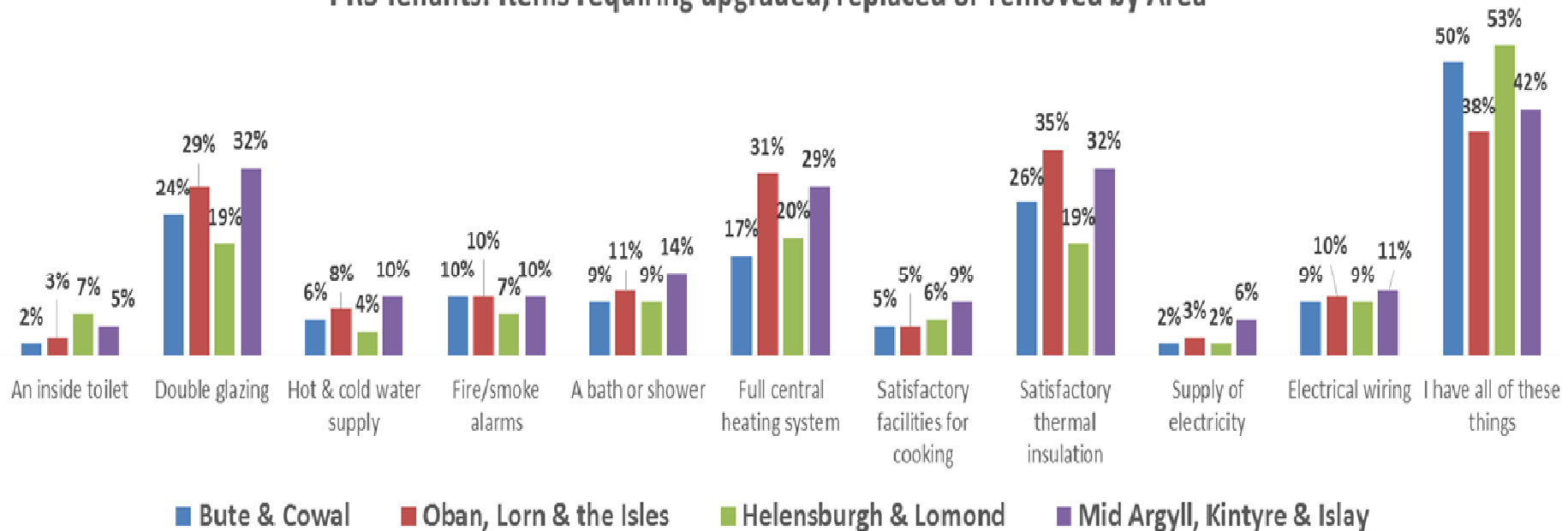
PRS Stock by Property Type and Area



PRS Stock Profile: Amenity

53% of private lets in Helensburgh & Lomond have no amenity problems compared to 38% in Oban, Lorn & the Isles

PRS Tenants: Items requiring upgraded, replaced or removed by Area

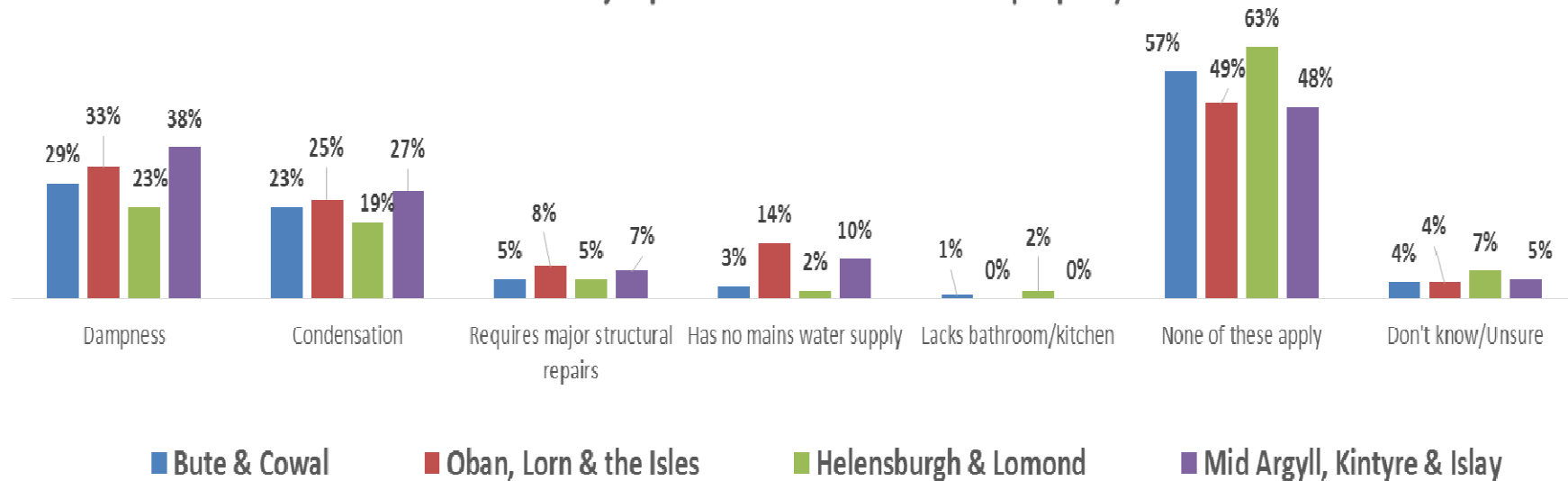


PRS Stock Profile: Condition

Tenant assessment of condition

52% of respondents had no major problems with condition
 43% identified major problems with condition
 5% don't know/unsure

PRS Tenants: Major problems with condition of property

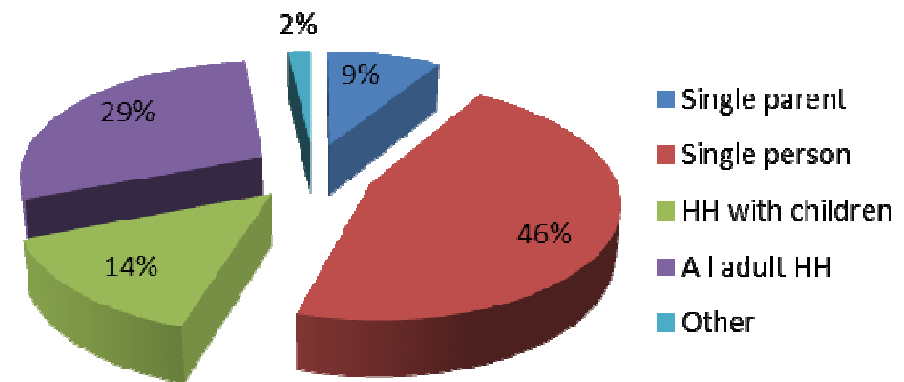


PRS Population Profile

Household Type, Age, Employment Profile



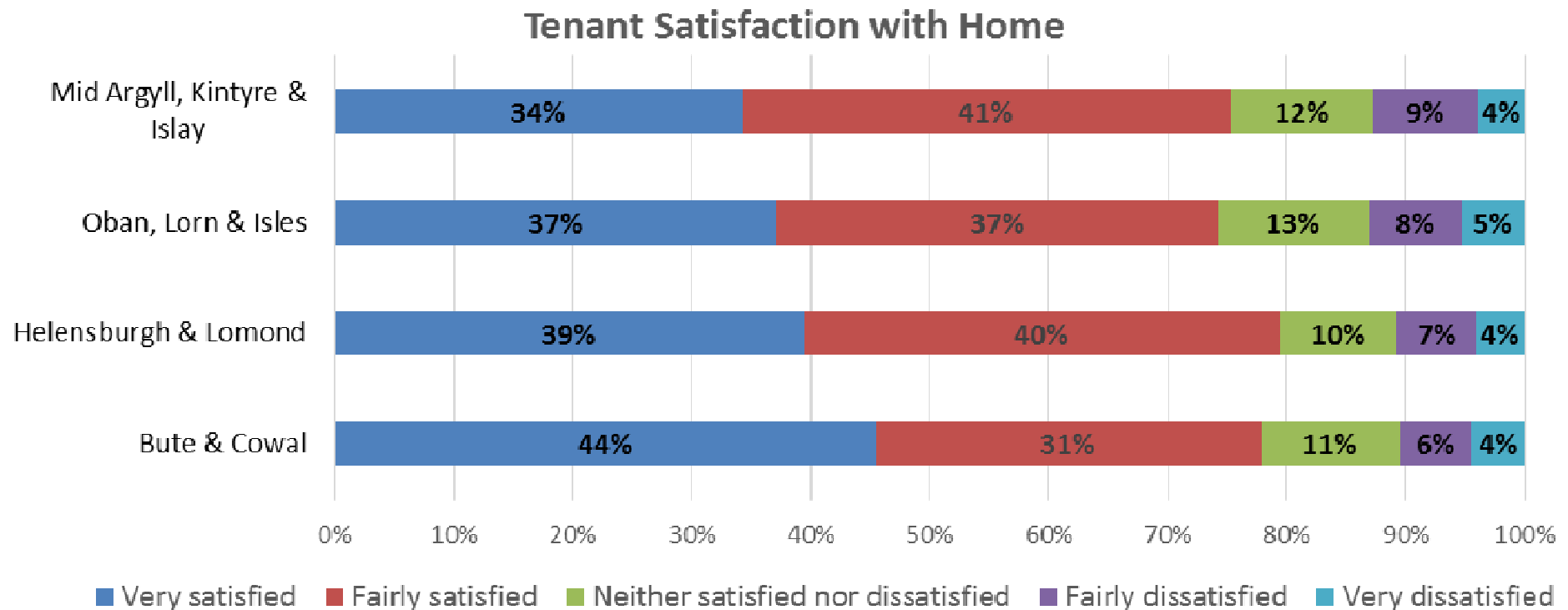
Household Composition of PRS Tenants



- Average Household Size: 1.9
- 21% PRS population >65 (2/3 are single people)
- 27% have long term illness or disability
- 44% PRS population not economically active

Tenant Satisfaction with Home

Tenants most satisfied with their home in H&L area (79%)
Most dissatisfied in MAKI & OLI (13%)



Business Profile of Sector



81% of LLs have single property portfolios

48% are accidental landlords

35% are pension investors

9% professional /property investors

- 31% landlords use an agent to manage homes
- 85% have no problem finding tenants
 - Local network instrumental in sourcing tenants: 35% use word of mouth, 17% only let to friends/family
- 36% will not accept HB claimants
 - 40% place no restrictions on tenants

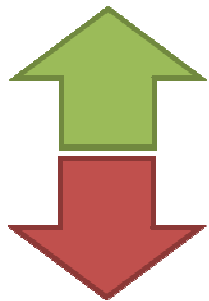
PRS Rental Analysis

Property Size	Argyll & Bute	Bute & Cowal	Helensb & Lomond	Mid Argyll, Kintyre & Islay	Oban, Lorn & the Isles
1	£362	£353	£374	£315	£408
2	£427	£421	£485	£388	£419
3	£474	£428	£593	£408	£497
4	£544	£523	£770	£426	£549
5	£671	-	£886	-	£499
Average	£436	£410	£509	£383	£456

Average monthly PRS rents is £436 per month

H&L rents are 17% above this

MAKI rents are 12% below this



4 bed LHA (£750) is 38% above average rent













1 bed LHA (£351) is 3% below average rent

PRS Rental Analysis

Property Size	Private Rents	LHA Rates	LHA/ Private variance
1 bed	£362	£351	-3%
2 bed	£427	£451	+6%
3 bed	£474	£511	+8%
4 bed	£544	£750	+38%
Average	£436	£516	+18%

Housing Affordability

Affordability: PRS Survey Income Profile

PRS		
	1	2
Inc Affordability	25%	30%
1 Bed	 35%	 25%
2 Bed	 45%	 34%
3 Bed	 53%	 40%
4 Bed	 63%	 49%
5+ Bed	 72%	 64%
Average	 47%	 35%











At 25% of income 47% PRS tenants cannot afford PRS rents

At 30% of income 35% households cannot afford PRS rents

At sustainable income to rent ratios between 35-45% of PRS tenants cannot afford average commercial rents

Housing Affordability

Affordability: PRS Survey Income Profile

PRS		
Scenario	1	2
Inc Affordability	25%	30%
Bute & Cowal	 42%	 32%
Helensburgh & Lomond	 38%	 28%
Mid Argyll, Kintyre & Islay	 35%	 26%
Oban, Lorn & the Isles	 54%	 39%
ARGYLL & BUTE	 47%	 35%

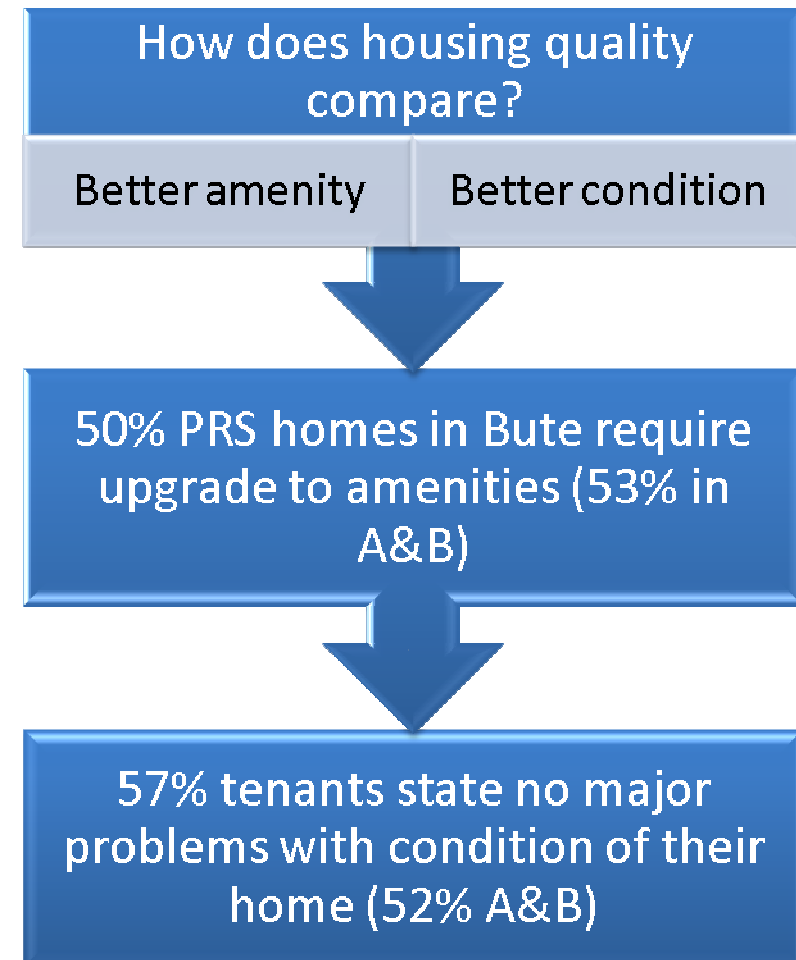
Rent affordability is best in MAKI: 26% cannot afford
 Rent affordability is worst in OLI: 39% cannot afford

PRS in Bute & Cowal

PRS Housing Stock Profile

- 1,318 properties (27% PRS stock)
- 10% Bute & Cowal housing stock
- 52% houses/48% flats
- 68% are 1 or 2 bedroom properties
- 57% of tenants report no major problems with house condition
- 50% PRS tenants feel amenity of their home needs improved
- 26% want improved thermal efficiency

PRS Stock Profile



PRS in Bute & Cowal



PRS Tenant Profile

PRS Tenant Profile

- 51% single people
- 17% families with children
- 38% with limiting illness or disability
- 58% retired/not working
- 65% earn less than £25k
- 51% in receipt of LHA
- 40% want or need to move

Significantly more households not economically active (58%) than A&B (44%)

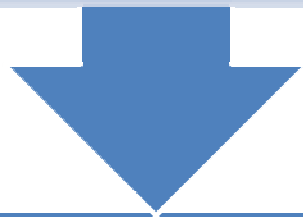
More households claiming LHA (51%) than A&B (34%)

More households over 65 (44%) than A&B (38%)

PRS in Bute & Cowal

Average monthly rent in
Bute & Cowal is £410

6% lower than Argyll &
Bute average (£436)



Is the sector affordable
(30% income to rent)?

32% of PRS tenants can't
afford (35% A&B)

Does the sector provide
security of tenure?

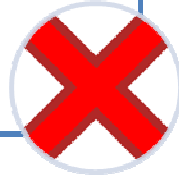
46% consider PRS a long
term solution - highest in
A&B

Is the quality of tenancy
management good?

82% satisfied with the
way their LL manages
their tenancy (77% A&B)

- Income maximisation
- Fuel poverty strategy
- Money advice
- Welfare reform activity

Is the PRS affordable?



- Encourage tenancy term negotiation
- Tenancy sustainment support
- Promoting best practice

Does the PRS provide security of tenure?



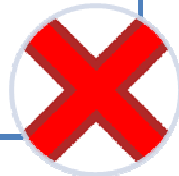
- Enhanced enforcement
- Tenancy management training

Is the PRS well managed?



- Low cost loans for repairs
- Long term maintenance plans
- Owner associations & factors

Does the PRS provide housing in good condition?



- Enhanced enforcement
- Private LL forum
- LHA partnership: ABC, LLs, tenants

Does the PRS have the capacity to improve?



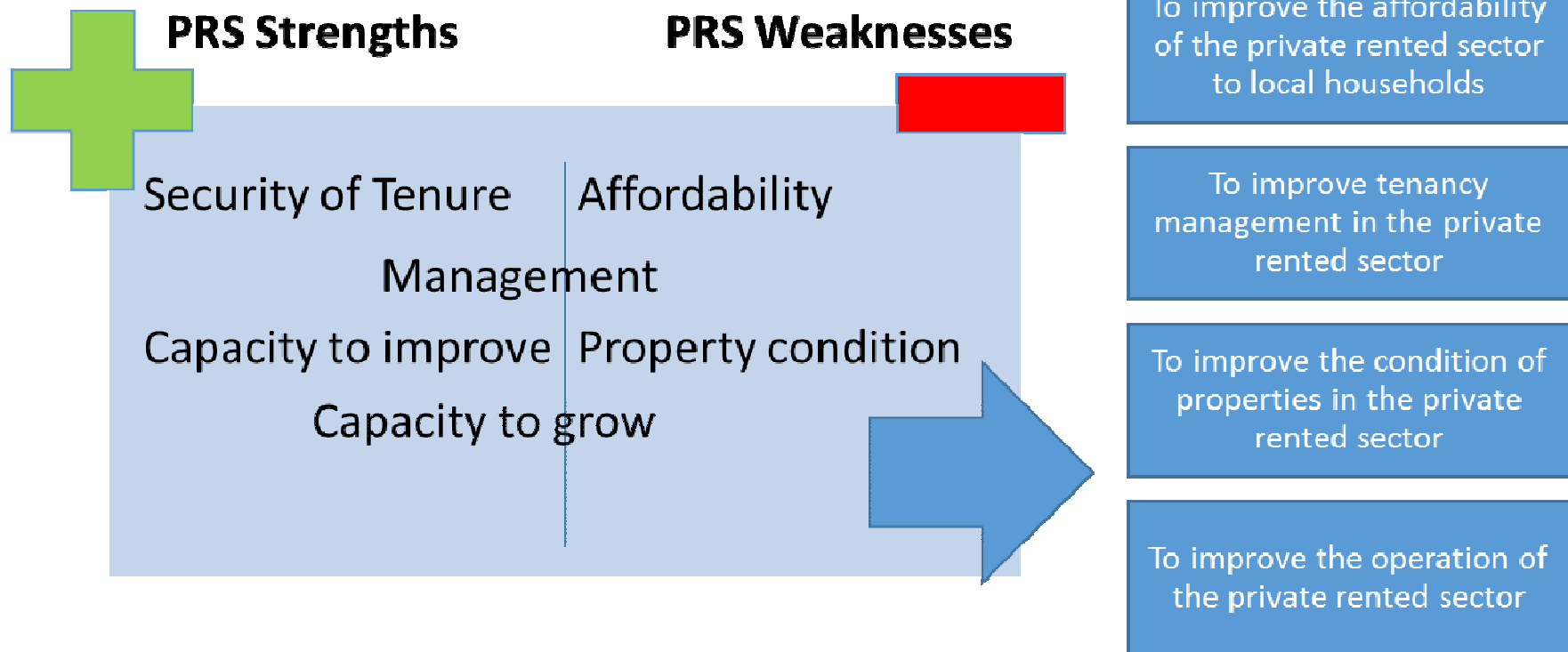
- Institutional investment
- Encourage accidental LLs to remain in PRS

Does the PRS have the capacity to grow?



LHS Strategic Objectives

Inform activity to enhance strengths and improve weaknesses in PRS



ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL**AREA COMMITTEES****CUSTOMER SERVICES**

EXTRACT OF MINUTE OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF 29 AUGUST 2013

7. ARMED FORCES CHAMPION UPDATE

At the Council meeting held on 28 June 2012 the Council appointed Councillor Maurice Corry as the Armed Forces Champion (AFC) to ensure that local service provision was mindful of the needs of Service Veterans.

The report provided an update to Council on the work of the Armed Forces Champion and highlighted a number of initiatives that were underway in Argyll and Bute.

There was also tabled paper "Community Covenant – Groups that applied and amounts requested".

Members noted with appreciation the work carried out by Councillor Corry to date.

Decision

- (a) Noted the progress and activity report associated with the Armed Forces Champion.
- (b) Noted the Community Covenant paper which provided information on the AFCC Grant Funding.
- (c) Agreed to the incorporation of the Highland Reserve and Forces Cadet Association (HRFCA) as a signatory to the Argyll and Bute Armed Forces Community Covenant Partnership.
- (d) Noted the proposal for the establishment of a World War 1 Commemoration Steering Group led by the Royal British Legion and the proposed development of a 4 year commemoration project.
- (e) Agreed to delegate the nomination of a representative elected member from each area to join the steering group to local Area Committees.**
- (f) Agreed that a further report on the establishment of the Argyll and Bute Armed Forces and Community Partnership be submitted to the next meeting of the Council in September 2013.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director – Community Services dated 15 May 2013, submitted and additional paper "Community Covenant – Groups that applied and amounts requested" dated 28 August 2013, tabled)

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ARMED FORCES CHAMPION UPDATE

1. SUMMARY

At the Council meeting held on 28 June 2012 the Council appointed Councillor Maurice Corry as the Armed Forces Champion (AFC) to take on the task of ensuring that local service provision is mindful of the needs of Service Veterans.

This report provides an update to council on the work of the Armed Forces Champion and highlights a number of initiatives that are underway in Argyll and Bute

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that Council :

- a) Note the progress and activity report associated with the Armed Forces Champion.
- b) Agree to the incorporation of the Highland Reserve and Forces Cadet Association (HRFCA) as a signatory to the Argyll and Bute Armed Forces Community Covenant Partnership
- c) Note the proposal for the establishment of a World War 1 Commemoration Steering Group led by the Royal British Legion and the proposed development of a 4 year commemoration project.
- d) Agree to delegate the nomination of a representative elected member from each area to join the steering group to local Area Committees

3. DETAIL

3.1 At the Council meeting held on 28 June 2012 the Council appointed Councillor Maurice Corry as the Armed Forces Champion (AFC) to take on the task of ensuring that local service provision is mindful of the needs of Service Veterans. In addition, the Council considered a report which set out the aim of the Community Covenant Pledge and at its meeting on 20 September 2012, the Council, along with NHS Highland and Argyll Voluntary Action agreed to support the Armed Forces Community within Argyll and Bute by signing the Argyll and Bute Armed Forces Community Covenant.

3.2 The following sections provide an update on a number of initiatives that the Armed Forces Champion has been involved in and highlights a number of initiatives that are underway.

3.3 Community Covenant Grants Scheme Board

By 4th June 2013, the AFC had convened The Argyll & Bute Armed Forces Community Covenant Grants Awards Board(Local), on 2 occasions (November 2012 and February 2013) and considered a total of bids for projects across Argyll and Bute. To date 14 of the bids were for the Helensburgh and Lomond area with only 1 bid from elsewhere. These bids are thereafter submitted for consideration by the (The Armed Forces Community Covenant Grants Awards Board (National), MoD in London) and 1 bid have been successful to date. This project was for (Rhu and Shandon Gala for £5,000).

Of note the decision making on the grant scheme has now been devolved from London to Scotland allowing for more localised decision making.

3.4 The Firm Base Initiative

As agreed at the meeting on the 20th September 2012, the AFC is now moving forward with the establishment of the Argyll and Bute Armed Forces Community Covenant Partnership. The membership will include the Leader of the Council, Provost and The Armed Forces & Veterans Champion, representatives from the signatories of the Community Covenant through the CPP (in respect of NHS Highland and Argyll Voluntary Action); Commodore Clyde from HMNB Clyde (Faslane); and, subject to discussion, the Highland Reserve and Forces Cadets Association (HRFCA) as part of the Firm Base Initiative. Representatives from the Scottish Firm Base Group and The Royal Regiment of Scotland will also attend the meetings.

The first meeting of the partnership will be scheduled for August 2013 and the immediate agenda will include (members, partners, mission and terms of reference, constitution, meeting schedule, community partners, Armed Forces Community Covenant progress update). The incorporation of the HRFCA as a signatory to the Partnership would also take place in August.

3.5 World War 1 Commemoration

The 100th anniversary of the commencement of the first World War will be in 2014 and across the UK and elsewhere there are plans to commemorate the event. The AFC has been in discussion with the MOD in Whitehall regarding the local events that will link in with this commemoration and will look to establish a steering group led by the Royal British Legion in Argyll and Bute. Membership may include:

- the Council Provost and elected member representatives from each area of Argyll and Bute (suggested the nomination be delegated to the relevant local area committees)
- a representative from the 5 Royal British Legion branches in Argyll and Bute
- representatives from the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Army, RAF and cadet forces.

- representatives from 7 Scots Battalion (51st Highlanders) and 5 Scots Battalion (Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders) of the Royal Regiment of Scotland

In conceptual terms the group would look to develop a 4 year project that engages the communities and schools in Argyll and Bute to live through the day to day events of the war on that day/year 100 years before. Communities will be encouraged to investigate and commemorate the impact of the Great War on their communities, develop related displays and working with the Scottish National War Memorial to compile and publish the names of those listed on local community memorials. The group will seek to define the project and to seek support funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund grant programme (First World War Programme -

<http://www.hlf.org.uk/news/Pages/NewFirstWorldWarProgrammeOpens.aspx>)

The Royal British Legion and the AFC have also obtained agreement from the Duke of Argyll to make Inveraray Castle available for the project launch which may be accompanied by a "Parade of a Thousand Colours" by the various uniformed military and non military organisations. The day may also include a commemorative service and event followed by a reception using marquees provided free of charge by the Estate.

3.6 Support for Schools Funding Support

In 2011 the Ministry of Defence launched the Support Fund for State schools with Service Children. The Fund which on current plans is £3M pa for four years starting in 2011, has been made available to schools to mitigate the effects of exceptional mobility or deployment of their Service communities: Regular Armed Forces and Reserve Forces.

The Fund is different from the Armed Forces Community Covenant Grant scheme which seeks to forge closer ties between the community and the Services who form a part of that community and which is open to a wider variety of organisations.

To date Community Services: Education has made three successful bids to this fund:

- £147,320 in 2011 was allocated
- £20,000 in 2012 was allocated
- £63,000 in 2013 was allocated.

The funding was provided for a number of projects: a matching curriculum exercise; training and resources to support vulnerable young people; a part-time youth worker; the creation of a welcome pack for young people; resources for HMS Heroes (in one primary school); extra support teachers; a psychology research assistant to help to evaluate projects; and a steering group with representatives from all stakeholders.

The Steering Group has been set up with representatives from education, parents, Naval Services and elected members. The matching curriculum project is available in all primary schools and the youth worker has completed her placement. The training, some resources, and staff currently funded by these bids are all in place.

Early indications suggest that the impact of the funding has been positive and this is evidenced in a number of ways:

- Strong partnerships are being created
- Schools are in a better position to support transition
- Children are better supported in a way which allows them to become more confident
- Targeted support is being provided to children with SEN

however, the on-going evaluation continues to identify further priorities and areas for development to be reported to the Steering Group.

3.7 Other Funding Programmes

The AFC has been active in pursuing further funding for activities in Argyll and Bute, these include:

- 1) The LIBOR Grant Programme (May funding round) provides funding to support armed forces related projects – the theme in this round is Children and Families – Mental Health. Argyll and Bute Council has submitted a bid for £788,000 to increase support to children across the Council area in relation to emotional wellbeing and positive mental health through raised self esteem, confidence and development of coping mechanisms. This is particularly pertinent for and will be largely targeted to children in armed forces or ex service families. There is no match funding required from the council to access this programme. A further funding round in this programme is expected in October 2013 however the theme for that round is not yet known.
- 2) The Scottish Government has made available a £1m fund to be administered by Historic Scotland to offer financial help to secondary schools considering educational visits to European battlefields. The Battlefield visit fund will provide up to £2,000 per school to help subsidise such educational trips.
- 3) The Heritage Lottery Fund has also announced a grants programme “First World War – Then and Now” (see section 3.5 above) – providing grants of between £3,000 to £10,000 to communities to help them mark the centenary of WW1.

<http://www.hlf.org.uk/HowToApply/programmes/Pages/FirstWorldWarThenandNow.aspx>

3.8 Other Groups Attended

The AFC has also attended:

- the Cross Party Group on Veterans along with other Council champions to feed in information and raise veteran issues with the Scottish Government. It is likely this will be a standing group to continue to link the national government in with the local Firm Base arrangements.
- Liaison meeting with the UK Department of Culture, Media and Sport and has helped influence the development of the WW1 commemoration programme and the development of the national community covenant outcomes framework.
- Liaison meetings with the MOD in Whitehall around the Community Covenant and has helped raise the pro active profile of Argyll and Bute Council.
- Tri lateral meetings at HMNB Clyde (Faslane) with senior Council staff from Argyll and Bute and West Dunbartonshire and the Royal Navy to continue the preparation and planning around the maritime change programme, other areas of potential joint work and associated liaison issues.

3.9 Argyll and Bute Welcome and Information Packs

Work has been ongoing on developing two packs available to active and ex service personnel and their families to assist with resettlement and integration of families affected by the maritime change programme (MCP). The Welcome Pack will be used to raise the profile of Argyll and Bute and the family life and services on offer to those service personnel who may consider relocation from bases throughout the UK as part of the MCP. It is important that an accurate and positive picture of Argyll and Bute is presented and that we encourage as many families as possible to actively relocate into our communities, stimulate their economic and demographic vibrancy and that they feel able to integrate fully into that community life.

Linked to the Welcome Pack is a First Contact Information Pack that will help active and ex service families understand the supports available to them, where to access information and services and ensure they know where to go if they need assistance. This information will be developed in conjunction with the Royal Navy NPFS who provide welfare supports to the armed forces community.

Both packs will be available in electronic format and will be available via dedicated armed forces pages created on the council website for veterans and armed forces personnel. These pages are also currently under development.

3.10 Championing the Rights of Individual Veteran and Armed Forces Families

On contact by the MOD, the AFC has been able to sign post individual families to relevant council services on issues such as housing, education, care services and also health services via the NHS. Additional liaison with a number of relevant charitable and community organisations, other families have been able to access help through specialist organisations such as SSAFA (Erskine Hospital).

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The role of the AFC has provided a number of opportunities to engage the armed forces communities across Argyll and Bute and to help establish a number of initiatives that both secures investment, jobs and grant assistance to Argyll and Bute and also promotes the area as a positive place to relocate to for businesses and families. A number of these initiatives are now starting to move forward and provides a national profile to the approach taken by Argyll and Bute Council in visibly demonstrating our commitment to the Armed Forces Community Covenant.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Policy: in accordance with Council Policy and Community Covenant;

Financial: Note the secured and potential grant assistance for initiatives associated with the Armed Forces Champion role.

Legal: None

Personnel: None

Equal Opportunities: in compliance with the Equal Opportunities Policy

Risk: None

Customer Service: Improved support to active and veteran service personnel and their families

Cleland Sneddon
Executive Director of Community Services
Argyll and Bute Council
15 May 2013

For further information contact: Cleland Sneddon, Tel 01546 604256

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