



LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2016 – 2017

LHS OUTCOME THREE: SPECIALIST PROVISION AND INDEPENDENT LIVING



Delivering a housing system that makes a strong contribution to thriving and sustainable communities and economic growth



INTRODUCTION

LHS Outcome Three aims to ensure that: ***“People are enabled to live independently in their own homes”***. Success will be measured against the key strategic objectives, which include:

- **A range of affordable housing models suitable to meet particular needs**
- **More people supported to remain in their homes and communities**
- **Planning and service delivery coordinated across housing, health & social care sectors**
- **Greater involvement in, and satisfaction with, housing services among equalities groups and those with particular needs**
- **Housing and Health inequalities eradicated**

Housing Services aims to ensure that adequate Specialist Housing Provision is available to enable individuals and families to live well, with dignity and independently for as long as possible. This provision would include purpose-designed or accessible and adapted properties; as well as associated care and support services. In this context, services focus on older people; those with a physical disability; people with a mental health condition or a learning disability; young people; those leaving, or requiring, supported accommodation; and ethnic minorities with particular needs, including migrants, refugees, and Gypsy/Travellers.

The key actions and targets for this outcome include:

- Increasing RSL stock of specialist housing;
- Ensuring 10% of affordable new builds comprise some form of specialist provision; and 100% should be built to life-time standards for varying needs
- Targeting Housing Options services for people with particular housing needs and improving outcomes for elderly and disabled persons;
- Maintaining an effective Care & Repair service;
- Meeting need for adaptations to existing homes across all tenures;
- Prioritizing housing & support activity for those with assessed needs;
- Considering alternative uses of existing stock to suit different client groups;
- Monitoring and encouraging regular engagement with equalities groups, including Gypsy/Travellers, to inform service improvement;
- Upgrading official Gypsy/Traveller sites to meet the new national standards;
- Undertaking further research on specific equalities groups as required to enhance the evidence base and inform future updates of the HNDA.

The following report outlines the progress and achievements of the council’s Housing Service and our partners in relation to Specialist Housing Provision for those with particular needs (LHS Outcome 3) for the first year (2016/17) of the current Argyll and Bute Local Housing Strategy 2016 – 2021.

PARTICULAR NEEDS – PROFILE OF RSL APPLICANTS

The HOMEArgyll waiting list identifies applicants with particular needs and health-related conditions which can be adversely affected by their housing circumstances. As of April 2017, there were almost 2,500 active applicants on the list and over 93% of these either required or would accept mainstream, general needs accommodation. Only 162 applicants definitely required specialist provision and could not accept mainstream housing. However, applicants can request multiple house type options, and therefore there are more households who expressed interest in some form of specialist provision. The following table summarises potential levels of need or demand for the varying models of provision.

HOMEARGYLL WAITING LIST APPLICANTS BY HOUSE TYPE, APRIL 2017

| House Type | Number of Applicants | % of Total Waiting List |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| All Types | 2,493 | 100% |
| General Needs | 2,331 | 93.5% |
| Specialist Provision Only | 162 | 6.5% |
| Housing With Support | 118 | 5% |
| Wheelchair | 115 | 5% |
| Amenity for Older Persons | 244 | 10% |
| Sheltered for Older Persons | 205 | 8% |

(NB. Applicants may appear on multiple lists).

- While more than a quarter of the applicants (654) describe themselves as having a disability, only around 99 of these would actually require specialist provision rather than mainstream accommodation.
- Around 3% of applicants have a learning disability; and just over 1% have an autistic spectrum condition which might benefit from specialist provision.
- Over 6% have a severe health issue and just over 1% have an urgent health issue.
- Around 540 applicants need to move nearer to family and friends to give or receive support.
- There are around 265 individual adaptations of varying types required.
- About 1.6% have mental health issues affected by housing circumstances.
- Over 9% have a disability which requires an extra bedroom space.
- Over 5% require extra care in their homes.
- Almost 14% need assistance or support in their home.
- Over 700 applicants have a medical condition affected by their current housing circumstances.
- 6 applicants were currently in hospital or residential care.

In addition to the HOMEArgyll waiting list, Bield Housing Association have 169 applicants for their properties in Argyll and Bute. The majority are local residents, though 40 applicants currently live outwith the area. There are 33 couples comprising one or more pensioners on the list; 128 single pensioners; and 8 applicants aged 21-60. 116 of the applicants seek retirement homes; 35 seek amenity housing; 8 are seeking very sheltered properties; and the remaining 10 have applied for various housing types.

Currently the RSLs in Argyll and Bute provide over 1,300 specialist homes, amounting to approximately 18% of their total stock. This covers a range of specialist models, including: amenity housing, sheltered and very sheltered accommodation, wheelchair housing, retirement homes, and adapted properties. In addition to the HOMEArgyll landlords (ACHA, Fyne Homes, Dunbritton and West Highland Housing Association), the providers include national organisations such as Bield, Blackwood, Key Housing, and Trust.

The LHS sets out targets for increasing overall specialist provision in the RSL sector, and delivering at least 10% of the affordable new build programme as purpose designed properties suitable for those with particular needs. The SHIP completions in 2016/17 were all mainstream accommodation although they were built to Housing for Varying Needs Standard which means the properties can be adapted to suit the changing needs of tenants over time. It is envisaged that the target for purpose designed specialist provision could be fully addressed over the next four years, but this will entail more proactive engagement with the Health and Social Care Partnership, as early as possible, to identify and confirm specific needs for inclusion in the SHIP programme.

In 2016/17 the HOMEArgyll landlords allocated over 1,000 homes, of which around 8% (81) were for specialist units.

HOMEArgyll Lets by Property Type, 2016/17

| House Type | ALLOCATIONS |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| All Types | 1,019 |
| Amenity for Older Persons | 32 |
| Housing with Support | 3 |
| Sheltered Housing | 32 |
| Wheelchair | 14 |
| General Needs | 919 |
| Gypsy/Traveller Site | 4 |
| Other (General Needs) | 15 |

Bield Housing and Care provides specialist accommodation primarily for older persons and has the largest presence in Argyll and Bute outwith the HOMEArgyll partnership of associations. As of March 2017, Bield had 303 properties in this authority area, including: retirement housing, very sheltered accommodation, amenity properties, wheelchair provision, and a few general needs homes. In 2016/17, the association rehoused 51 households, of which all but two were aged over 60. The lets comprised 48 retirement homes, 1 amenity home, and 2 general needs properties.

Combining HOMEArgyll and Bield lets last year, indicates that over 12% of households allocated permanent new homes were housed in some form of specialist accommodation.

RSL ADAPTATIONS

Adaptations to social rented properties are funded from a separate, central budget administered by the Scottish Government. In 2016/17, we estimate that there were around 230 individual adaptations installed in over 200 properties at a total investment of around £525k. The majority of the RSL tenants receiving these adaptations were disabled adults (81%) while 18% were older persons. There were over 180 internal adaptations (including installation of stair lifts/hoists and alterations to doors, electrics or plumbing); almost 50 external adaptations (including access doors and safety rails); and two major works involving extensions/alterations to bedrooms, kitchen and bathrooms.

The work involved properties throughout Argyll and Bute, and across all the housing associations operating in the area: ACHA, Bield, Cairn, Dunbritton, Fyne Homes, Key Housing, Blackwood, Trust and West Highland.

With regard to private housing, the Council Housing Services continues to deliver its statutory duties regarding the housing improvement programme for disabled adaptations to homeowners and private rented properties in partnership with Occupational Therapy Services and Argyll and Bute Care and Repair. There were 183 installations last year to 160 private sector properties, with total grant of £848,448. Full details of this service and the outputs for 2016/17 are contained in the accompanying annual update for LHS Outcome Four.

INFORMATION, ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE

➤ Housing Options for people with particular needs

The LHS sets out a framework for improving awareness of, and enabling access to, specialist housing options advice and assistance for people with particular needs. Information on housing options casework is recorded via PREVENT1 statistics, and can be disaggregated for certain client groups including the elderly (aged 60+) and those with a disability. Last year 411 older persons received Housing Options advice and assistance, which was more than double the number of older clients in the previous year. In 2016/17 412 disabled persons also received housing options advice and assistance, compared to 484 the previous year.

Housing Options for Elderly and Disabled, 2015/16 – 2016/17

| Client Group | 2015/16 | | 2016/17 | |
|---------------|---------|------------|---------|------------|
| | Number | % of Total | Number | % of Total |
| Older Persons | 201 | 11% | 411 | 23% |
| Disabled | 484 | 25% | 412 | 23% |

Source: Annual PREVENT1 Reports

➤ **Welfare Rights**

Council Housing Services continue to deliver advice on welfare entitlements to vulnerable clients across Argyll and Bute with a team of 9 area based staff. The team also provide support and advocacy for clients, including representation at HM Courts and Tribunal appeals. In 2016/17, the service helped local residents to claim £3.4m in benefits to which they were entitled. The Welfare Rights team also continues to provide training to other council services and external agencies, on the complex and evolving welfare reform agenda, including the roll out of Universal Credit which is due in Argyll and Bute from May 2018.

Measurable annual income generated via Welfare Rights intervention is summarised below.

| Area Team | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Cowal and Bute | £312,234 | £454,678 |
| Kintyre and Islay | £768,998 | £945,442 |
| Lomond | £674,059 | £1,035,513 |
| Lorn | £435,478 | £584,923 |
| Mid Argyll | £361,618 | £418,913 |
| Argyll & Bute | £2,550,387 | £3,439,468 |

Out of 713 claims, reconsiderations or appeals conducted by the Welfare Rights team last year, 629 were successful in achieving a positive outcome, amounting to 88% of cases.

CASE STUDY

A client who lived alone was entitled to DLA higher rate mobility component. She was assisted through the reassessment process to claim Personal Independence Payment (PIP). She was awarded PIP standard rate daily living and enhanced rate mobility components, £112.55 weekly. She also became entitled to a severe disability premium included in her Employment and Support Allowance, gaining an additional £61.85 weekly.

In recent years, the Welfare Rights team have recorded continuing annual increases in referrals for those aged over 65, and in 2016/17 there were 239 referrals involving Attendance Allowance which represented a 50% increase on the previous year. Customer satisfaction continues to be very positive, with 95% of clients who provided feedback being very satisfied and 5% being fairly satisfied.

GYPSY / TRAVELLERS

The Council retains a statutory duty to assess the accommodation and support needs of Gypsy/Travellers, and ensure that appropriate provision is available. The management of the existing official Travelling Persons sites transferred to ACHA in 2006, and the association continues to engage on an annual basis with the site tenants. Generally, satisfaction with services remains very high among this group at 92%. However, although the pitch rents are among the lowest in Scotland a number of residents at Ledaig and Dunchologan (5 out of 12 respondents) do not feel the rent represents good value for money. The main issues relate to site facilities and access roads which the residents feel should be improved and updated. ACHA are reviewing their strategy for Gypsy/Travellers in 2017/18 and sought views on residents' priorities for the new strategy. Suggestions included the provision of play areas for children and a communal facility (e.g. chalet/room) for meetings.

The Council continues to support the upkeep of the official sites with grant award to ACHA from the Strategic Housing Fund, which amounted to £39,660 in 2016/17.

The Scottish Government issued new standards for sites and services to this client group in 2015, and ACHA are currently reviewing these standards and their lease agreements to bring them into line with national recommendations. ACHA's Board agreed in 2016/17 to withdraw the site at Torlochan, near Dunoon, due to the lack of expressed demand, and this was supported in general by the findings of the consultation which the association carried out during the year, albeit a proportion of Travellers did object to this reduction in overall provision. However, with two official sites still providing 22 pitches, an occupancy rate of around 72%, and no applicants turned away during the year, the consensus is that the current provision is sufficient to meet needs.

Travelling Person Sites in Argyll and Bute, 2017

| Official Site and Pitches, 31 st March 2017 | Dunchologan | Ledaig |
|---|-------------|----------|
| (a) Total no. of pitches: | 14 | 8 |
| (b) Total no. of pitches occupied: | 8 | 8 |
| (c) Total no. of pitches unoccupied and available: | 4 | 0 |
| (d) Total no. of pitches unoccupied and not available: | 2 | 0 |

Source: Twice-Yearly Count

HOUSING, HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

Housing engagement with Health and Social Care is an ongoing priority, and over 2016/17 some positive progress was made, however there are still a number of issues around the integration agenda and the formal structures for joint working across the sectors. The Health and Social Care partnership are now full members of the overarching Strategic Housing Forum, albeit ensuring appropriate attendance at the quarterly meetings has proved difficult. Housing Services, and RSL partners, have also engaged with health and social care colleagues on an ad hoc basis, at locality levels and established working groups to explore issues such as “core and cluster” models and other specialist provision in general. A cross-sectoral working group is also considering research into joint needs assessment, provisionally in the Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay administrative area with a view to rolling this out across the wider authority area in due course. In 2017, housing delegates attended a Care Summit in Oban which highlighted a number of housing-related issues for further exploration, moving forward.

At the national level, there were a number of reports and recommendations published regarding Housing’s contribution to the health and well-being agenda, and to local H&SCP Strategic Plans, and it is envisaged that these will help to inform the planning process in the coming years.

Key practice points for reconnecting public health and housing include:

- Clear lines of communication and contact between sectors
- A named lead for housing within local public health teams
- Joint needs assessment and intelligence sharing on demographics, health and care needs, and housing trends to inform strategic planning
- Public health representation in key strategic forums and planning processes relevant to housing
- Collaborative opportunities for Housing and Health officers to undertake health improvement activity in housing settings and to explore potential for housing interventions within healthcare settings
- At a local level, the potential contribution of the private rented sector in regard to public health should also be considered

These points will be explored at strategic and operational level within existing structures and, if necessary, dedicated cross-sectoral mechanisms may also be considered.

Housing Contribution Statements

Housing services are recognized as an integral part of person-centred approaches and the wider delivery of health and social care integration. In preparing their Strategic Commissioning Plans, Integration Authorities must include a Housing Contribution Statement. This statement should address the following:

- ❖ The role of housing in the governance structures
- ❖ The shared evidence base and key housing issues
- ❖ The shared outcomes and service priorities for housing health and social care
- ❖ Current and future housing resource and investment
- ❖ Future challenges and improvements required

In 2016, as part of its review of these plans the Scottish Government noted the role of the Housing Contribution Statement:

“Housing is recognised in most plans as a key component of effectively shifting the balance of care from institutional care to community based services and supports.”

“... There is an opportunity to deepen and broaden the contribution of housing in future iterations of strategic commissioning plans.”

“Strategic Commissioning Plans: An overview of strategic commissioning plans produced by Integration Authorities for 2016 – 2019”, Scottish Government, October 2016

A number of key themes recurred across all local authorities' HCS, and these remain highly relevant in the context of Argyll and Bute moving forward, and should be considered in future revisions and updates of the Strategic Commissioning Plan:-

- More housing with care
- More accessible homes across new build programme
- Reviewing existing models of provision
- Improve health and well-being focus of housing options services
- Improve joint analysis capability for those with housing, care and support needs
- Developing intermediate homebased solutions to care/support
- Reviewing allocation policy/process
- Continue to improve strategic & operational joint working

CONCLUSION

Housing has a crucial role to play in the integrated health and social care agenda, as well as contributing to national health and well-being outcomes. Key linkages are summarised in the following conceptual diagram.

| | | |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Dwellings | Hazards e.g. damp, lead, radon, fire | |
| | Warmth | Energy efficiency |
| | Physical security | Space |
| | Availability and layout | |

| | | |
|-------------------|---|-------------------------|
| Households | Tenure, security and stability | |
| | Occupancy and Overcrowding | Costs and Affordability |
| | Suitability for needs (including health & disability needs) | |

| | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Place & Community | Amenities and public Services | |
| | Work and local economy | Transport and infrastructure |
| | Safety (perceived & actual) | Greenspace, play, recreation |
| | Social relationships & interaction | |

We need to continue to embed joint working into strategic planning across all sectors; and realise the potential health benefits of good housing at a local level through the key strategic processes which include:

- Local Outcome Improvement Plans and locality plans produced by the Community Planning Partnership;
- the local authority's LHS, HNDA and SHIP;
- the Local Development Plans produced by planning authorities (Council and National Park); and
- the Strategic Plans and Housing Contribution Statement produced by the Integration Authority.

Housing Services continue to invest in proactive and preventative measures, and deliver a range of effective services which help to improve the health and social care outcomes and life circumstances of many of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged members of society.