

# **Local Housing Strategy Guidance**

**August 2014**

## Ministerial Foreword



A home is a basic requirement for everyone and providing housing is a key economic driver in Scotland. This is recognised in the Scottish Government's vision, that all people in Scotland live in high quality sustainable homes that they can afford and that meet their needs. Ensuring the delivery of good quality housing, to high energy efficiency standards, in sustainable communities that can thrive and support a healthy and productive lifestyle, is a key responsibility of the Scottish Government and all 32 local authorities.

This guidance has been produced to support local authorities corporately, in their statutory requirement to develop a local housing strategy, which is the sole strategic document for housing of all tenures and for all housing-related services. The guidance is intended to help local authorities, in consultation with their partners in all sectors, to set out a clear vision for housing in their area, over the next 5 years that supports public service reform principles and national and local priority outcomes for local people.

Housing is a key player in so many areas of our lives; the local housing strategy brings all these areas together into one cohesive approach. Areas that the strategy should cover include, the integration of health and social care for adults, fuel poverty and climate change, homelessness and the accommodation needs of Gypsy/Travellers.

Given the scope and pivotal role of the local housing strategy, it will need to be developed through partnership and reflect the priorities identified by the Community Planning Partnership, in the Single Outcome Agreement. Housing developers and housebuilders, Registered Social Landlords, Third Sector organisations, community groups and residents should all have a say.

The development of this guidance, has seen officials from several local authorities, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities and the Association of Local Authority Chief Housing Officers working jointly with the Scottish Government in its preparation. I am very grateful for all their help and advice, and commend this guidance to local authorities across Scotland.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Margaret Burgess". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined.

Margaret Burgess MSP  
Minister for Housing and Welfare

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# 1. Introduction

## The Local Housing Strategy (LHS)

1.1 The Local Housing Strategy (LHS) is a local authority's sole strategic document for housing in its area.

1.2 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 places a statutory requirement on local authorities to produce an LHS which sets out its strategy, priorities and plans for the delivery of housing and related services. The Act also states that the LHS must be supported by an assessment of housing provision and related services, that it must be submitted to Scottish Ministers, and that local authorities must keep their LHS under review. The Act is available at: <http://www.hmsso.gov.uk/legislation/Scotland/acts2001/20010010.htm>.

1.3 This guidance has been produced to support local authorities in the development of their local housing strategy. It aims to build on the collective Scottish Government and local authority experience of developing local housing strategies, supporting areas of strength while encouraging continued improvement. Local authorities will want to build on their existing strategies and are encouraged to demonstrate this continuity when setting out the new local housing strategy for its area.

1.4 Increasing the supply of homes is a national performance indicator and a high profile policy objective for the Scottish Government. The achievement of this objective is at the heart of the housing planning framework. The LHS should set out the joint and strategic approach of the local authority and its partners to delivering high quality housing and housing related services across all tenures, to meet identified need in its area. The Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) is a key part of the evidence base for both the LHS and Strategic and Local Development Plans, and should form the basis for setting the Housing Supply Target (HST). This is covered in more detail in Section 7 and in the HNDA Manager's Guide: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/supply-demand/chma/hnda/ManagerGuide2014>.

1.5 The LHS has a key role to play in contributing to the effective integration of health and social care. It should set out clearly the contribution that housing can make in support of this agenda, through the design and delivery of housing and housing related services, that are capable of responding to the needs of individuals as and where they arise.

1.6 The LHS should also set out a local authority's approach to meeting its other statutory housing responsibilities. These include fuel poverty, house condition, and homelessness; as well as its strategic response to national outcomes, and national housing priorities such as the Scottish Housing Quality Standard, Town Centre living, housing's contribution to the reduction of carbon emissions, improving environmental and design standards, and supporting the development of sustainable communities.

1.7 There are a number of statutory requirements that need to be addressed in the LHS and these are listed in Annex A and are also referenced throughout the text. The LHS is expected to show how actions will support and contribute to achieving the Scottish Government National Outcomes and Targets, including those set out in the Housing and Regeneration Outcomes Framework. It is important that the LHS supports and helps to

deliver national outcomes and targets, whilst reflecting the needs and priorities of the local authority area. The Housing and Regeneration Framework is available at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/reform/HARO>.

1.8 Local authorities are encouraged to undertake HNDAs at functional housing market level and therefore, some local authorities may wish to consider preparing a joint local housing strategy. The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, Section 89(9), enables this to be done, but it should be noted that any joint strategy must cover whole local authority areas.

### **The LHS within the Local Strategic Context**

1.9 The LHS is central to corporate planning activities and allows a local authority to set out its agreed strategic vision and priorities for the future of housing and all housing related services. The LHS should also show how the housing objectives integrate with the local authority's strategic plans across the range of its functions and responsibilities.

1.10 As with other local authority activities, the LHS should be based on the principles of public service reform and the recommendations of the Christie Commission: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/352649/0118638.pdf>

- a decisive shift towards prevention;
- greater integration of public services at a local level driven by better partnership, collaboration and effective local delivery;
- greater investment in the people who deliver services through enhanced workforce development and effective leadership; and
- a sharp focus on improving performance, through greater transparency, innovation and use of digital technology.

1.11 In particular, the LHS should state how the local authority will draw on housing supply, place-making and housing related services to promote good outcomes across a range of social and economic factors, noting that good housing promotes health, education, employment, community safety, social connectedness and community resilience. Alongside this, the LHS should identify where linkages between housing and other services and agencies can help to achieve these wider social outcomes.

1.12 It is important that when preparing an LHS, local authorities should conduct wide and effective consultation with tenants, service users, communities, partner organisations such as housing associations, and other interested parties. An assets and co-production approach may be adopted that builds on local strengths and communities' capacity to drive local change. This should be underpinned by continuous improvement and development.

1.13 Local housing initiatives present a key opportunity to change and redesign services within the broader context of the reform of public services. The production of an LHS every five years and more frequent monitoring and review, should provide a focus for cross-sector strategic planning, improvement and delivery.

## The LHS and Community Planning

1.14 The LHS should be a corporate document agreed and supported by all relevant local authority departments. It should reflect the views and contribution of stakeholders, including members of the Community Planning Partnership (CPP), as well as demonstrating the contribution housing can make to the delivery of wider CPP outcomes.

1.15 An outcome focussed approach is central to development and delivery of an effective LHS and should provide the framework for the co-ordination of joint effort. The outcomes in the LHS can only be delivered through strong partnership and collaborative working at all levels and this partnership commitment should be reflected in the LHS. CPPs should support local communities to become empowered to lead change and build on the assets and potential that already exist within their own area.

1.16 The policy context for this is the March 2012 Scottish Government and CoSLA joint 'Statement of Ambition'. This places CPPs at the core of public service reform. The scope and content of a Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) can be found at: [www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/local-government/CP/SOA2012](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/local-government/CP/SOA2012).

1.17 The subsequent '[Agreement on Joint Working on Community Planning and Resourcing](#)' indicates a need for community planning partners to share information about the collective resources available and to consider prioritising their deployment towards SOA priority outcomes.

1.18 CPPs are required to produce an SOA that is a high level shared 'plan for place', focusing on prevention and reducing inequalities, especially around six national policy priorities:

- economic recovery and growth
- employment
- early years
- safer and stronger communities and reducing offending
- health inequalities and physical activity
- outcomes for older people.

1.19 As well as the six national policy priorities, agreed local priorities are also reflected in SOAs. All SOAs and related development plans were signed off jointly by the Scottish Government and the relevant CPP.

1.20 Housing can make a significant contribution to both national and local priorities. The LHS should provide clear links between its outcomes and the SOA priorities and highlight resource contributions from CPP partner organisations.

1.21 The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill may provide a further opportunity for joint working. Information is available at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/engage>

## **Layout of the LHS**

1.22 The LHS should be a forward looking document that is outcome focused with a clear plan setting out actions for delivery over a five year period.

1.23 The LHS should be clear, concise, easy to read, and able to be understood by a wide range of stakeholders, including local residents. It should also be a stand-alone document which can be read in isolation, with the need to reference related documents only required for a more in depth understanding of a particular topic.

1.24 A suggested Outcome and Action Plan template, using a separate table for each agreed outcome, is provided at Annex B. Local authorities may wish to use this approach for recording actions as well as monitoring progress.

## **Timing of the LHS**

1.25 The development of the LHS is linked to the timescales for Development Plans and the two should be closely aligned, with joint working between housing and planning officers. Local authorities should progress LHS and development plans together, however, they may wish to wait until the MIR is complete and the new development plan adopted, before finalising the LHS, to ensure that any modifications to the plans can be reflected in local housing strategies.

## **Supporting the Development of the LHS**

1.26 Following submission to the Scottish Government, the last round of LHS were each reviewed by a small panel from other local authorities and the Scottish Government. Feedback from the process was positive, with the involvement of local authority colleagues being one of the key elements that was widely thought to have worked well and added value to the process. Local authorities commented however, that they thought the review would have been more helpful had it been undertaken earlier in the process, perhaps at the draft LHS stage.

1.27 The details of the next review process are still to be discussed and agreed with ALACHO and CoSLA. However, the Scottish Government would be keen to build on recent experience and promote a review process which is underpinned by the following broad principles:

- Supports improvement and is early enough in the process to influence change
- Involves local authority colleagues / peer review
- Is proportionate to the task and available resources
- Is based on meaningful criteria

1.28 The details of the review process will be agreed by the Scottish Government, CoSLA and ALACHO.

1.29 As stated earlier, there is a statutory requirement for the LHS to be kept under review and it is for each local authority to decide how this is undertaken. However, it is already common practice for the LHS to be reviewed annually by local authorities and for progress against the agreed outcomes to be recorded. It would therefore, be considered

good practice for local authorities to continue to undertake an annual update of the LHS and publish this on the local authority's website. Such updates could be centred on the action plan and joint working with partners, monitoring what progress has been made in achieving the agreed outcomes.

## **2. Equality Statement**

2.1 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 requires an LHS to state how a local authority will comply with its duty under Section 106 of the Act. Section 106 states that local authorities must exercise the functions conferred on them by the Act in a manner which encourages equal opportunities and in particular the observance of the equal opportunity requirements. The equal opportunity requirements are set out in the Equality Act 2010, <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/legal-and-policy/key-legislatures/equality-act-2010>

2.2 The Act introduced a statutory public sector duty to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

2.3 The statutory duty requires need to be considered in respect of certain protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Sex (including Pregnancy and Maternity)
- Gender reassignment
- Sexual orientation
- Race
- Religion and Belief

2.4 Evidence of the people living locally and their likely needs will be available from the HNDA. This evidence should be used to inform the LHS, alongside other local evidence and intelligence.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

2.5 An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) is required if people are affected by a policy or strategy, either directly or indirectly.

2.6 The EQIA process is not just about identifying and mitigating negative impacts, it is about proactively looking for opportunities to promote equality.

2.7 An EQIA should be started early in the development process, so it can help shape the LHS and it would be considered good practice to refer to the EQIA throughout the LHS, as appropriate.



2.8 The Scottish Government has produced guidance on mainstreaming equalities available at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/topics/people/equality/18507/mainstreamingequalities>

2.9 This LHS guidance has been subject to a full EQIA.

### **3. Strategic Environmental Assessment**

3.1 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 puts a statutory obligation of undertaking a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) on all public plans, programmes and strategies. It is for each 'responsible authority' to make a judgement on whether a plan, programme or strategy is likely to have any significant environmental effects and therefore requires an SEA.

3.2 Given the LHS relationship with the Local Development Plan, it is the informal view of the SEA Gateway, that generally only a pre-screening notification would be required for an LHS. This is based on the assumption that decisions and options surrounding housing would be assessed through the Local Development Plan process and so avoid assessment duplication. Advice on pre-screening can be found in the Scottish Government's latest guidance on SEA, available at:

[www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/environmental-assessment/sea/guidance/SEAGuidance](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/environmental-assessment/sea/guidance/SEAGuidance)

3.3 The judgement of whether an SEA is required or not, is however, for the responsible authority to make, and so we would encourage local authorities, if in doubt, to seek independent legal advice or contact the SEA Gateway at:

[SEA.Gateway@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:SEA.Gateway@scotland.gsi.gov.uk).

### **4. Consultation**

4.1 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 requires local authorities to consult on their proposed local housing strategy. In addition, the statutory Equality Duty on public bodies requires the involvement, consultation and engagement with as wide a range of local residents as possible. *Principles of Inclusive Communication*, may be a useful reference:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/09/14082209/0>.

4.2 Early engagement with key partners and stakeholders is key to identifying priorities and agreeing, through a range of options, how to deal with the priorities identified. The LHS can also draw on information obtained through local authorities' continuous engagement with residents, through tenants organisations, satisfaction surveys and specific topic consultations.

4.3 The LHS consultation should be conducted using a range of media to ensure engagement with as many local communities, interest groups and individuals as possible and that the make-up of the local population is accurately reflected in the process. It is necessary to recognise that some people's views may not be readily heard through using the traditional engagement methods.

4.4 The LHS should be clear on how representative groups and local people were involved and how this involvement in the process has helped influence the LHS and in particular, the agreed outcomes.

### **Co-production**

4.5 The Scottish Government strongly advocates a co-production approach to public services wherever relevant. Co-production is a more inclusive process than standard consultation, involving people at a much earlier stage in the development of the strategy. It supports the empowerment of service users and frontline staff, allowing the strategy to be developed `with' and `by' people rather than `for' them.

4.6 Two Co-production pilots with disabled people were conducted in 2010/11 and the pilot evaluation for using Co-production in the development of an LHS is available at: [www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/365083/0124090.pdf](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/365083/0124090.pdf).

## **5. Local Context and Evidence**

5.1 The LHS should provide a brief description of the local authority area, its location, links with neighbouring authorities, urban/rural split, main population areas (housing market areas (HMAs) and/or Sub HMAs), regeneration areas and any other key features and/or constraints that may influence the strategy.

5.2 The LHS should contain a short summary of the key findings coming from the HNDA and other local evidence and intelligence on which the development of the LHS is based. There should be a clear link between this evidence base and the priorities that inform the agreed outcomes and actions.

5.3 A short explanation of the process chosen by the local authority to help decide on the approach to be taken to address identified priorities should be included in the LHS, for example, the use of option appraisals. However, it is not necessary to include any detail of the process itself.

## **6. Outcomes**

6.1 The LHS should articulate and support the delivery of an effective housing system, with intentions expressed through the use of clear outcomes and actions.

6.2 To set the LHS in context, it would be helpful to provide a short summary showing how effectively outcomes from the previous LHS were addressed and which outcomes continue to be a priority and have, therefore, been carried forward.

6.3 National Outcomes must be taken into account when developing an LHS. The LHS should show how the local authority's outcomes and actions contribute to the achievement of the national outcomes:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Performance/scotPerforms/outcome>.

6.4 Local Outcomes will be agreed by CPPs and articulated through the SOA, as explained earlier, in Section 1.

### **LHS Outcomes**

6.5 The LHS should include outcomes that look forward over a five year period and which relate to national outcomes or to the local position. It should show how these were agreed, including how consultation may have influenced them. The outcomes should be recorded in such a way that actions and progress can be monitored and a suggested template for this purpose is contained at Annex B.

6.6 To achieve an outcome, it is most likely that a range of actions will be required. These actions should be set out clearly, showing timescales and those responsible for taking the action forward.

6.7 For each action, it should be clear what the current position is, i.e. there should be a starting point (baseline) that is based on robust data.

6.8 Each action should have a clear end point set as a target or milestone, which will indicate what success looks like and the timeframe for achieving this.

6.9 To understand progress, indicators or measures should be put in place, and details on progress regularly recorded.

6.10 The outcome & action plan should be used as a monitoring tool for the success of the LHS and the delivery of the agreed outcomes. **Example:**

**Outcome:** All people at risk of fuel poverty have a warm and affordable home

**Actions:**

- a. Publicise information and services available to tackle fuel poverty
- b. Maximise potential funding sources
- c. Ensure energy assistance packages are targeted

**Action a: Publicise information and services available to tackle fuel poverty**

**Baseline:** Leaflets available at all town centre council offices

**Target:** Leaflets available at all public services offices, information on website and leaflets left at people's homes when delivering other services.

**Responsible:** Communications Manager

**By:** March 2016

**Milestone:** Leaflets available at all public services offices and information on website by July 2015

**Indicators/Measures:** Leaflets seen in all public offices and on website

## **7. Supply of Housing and Place-Making**

7.1 A local authority's ability to provide housing of the right types in the right places, to meet the needs of the population is fundamental to the LHS. Local authorities should undertake an assessment of housing need and demand and informed by this evidence, set a Housing Supply Target (HST). In doing so, local authorities should consider the role, capacity and mechanisms available to its housing association partners, the private sector as well as its own ability to meet the need and demand of its population within its LHS.

7.2 Increasing the supply of housing involves the private sector, third sector and individuals as well as the public sector. Local authorities should ensure that stakeholders are fully consulted on the strategy, and share the same overarching vision for ensuring its delivery.

7.3 The provision of specialist housing is an integral part of this requirement, which is discussed separately in Section 9.

7.4 The authority's strategy for increasing the supply of private rented sector housing is also relevant and is covered in Section 10.

7.5 Each section in this LHS guidance sets out the policy context that local authorities will want to be aware of and the key aspects that they will want to give full consideration to when developing their LHS. The key aspects are set out under a sub-heading 'LHS Considerations'.

### **Harmonisation of the LHS and Development Plans**

7.6 Local authorities, as both the statutory housing and planning authority, are responsible for assessing housing requirements, ensuring a generous supply of housing land and enabling the delivery of the both market and affordable housing. This section of the LHS should be consistent with and complement the local authority's Local Development Plan.

7.7 Housing and planning authorities should continue to work closely together to take forward the processes that underpin effective housing planning and the delivery of strong local housing outcomes. The principles for this have been set out in Scottish Planning Policy <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2014/06/5823> and guidance on Housing Need and Demand Assessments <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/supply-demand/guidance/guidance-info>.

7.8 Central to the processes is the agreement of a HST, which should be set out clearly in the LHS.

## **Housing Supply Target**

7.9 The Local Housing Strategy should draw on the findings of the HNDA to inform its approach to housing investment and delivery. The LHS should set out clearly the local authority's view of the type and level of housing to be delivered over the period of the plan in its HST. The HST set out in the LHS should be broadly consistent with the HST set out in the development plan.

7.10 In setting and agreeing the HST, authorities should give full consideration to those factors which may have a material impact on the pace and scale of housing delivery such as:

- economic factors which may impact on demand and supply in particular parts of the area
- capacity within the construction sector
- the potential inter-dependency between delivery of market and affordable housing at the local level
- availability of resources
- likely pace and scale of delivery based on completion rates
- recent development levels
- planned demolitions
- planned new and replacement housing or housing brought back into effective use.

7.11 The HST should be split by market and affordable housing and expressed at both local authority and functional housing market area.

7.12 Those local authorities covering a large geographic area or those with distinct sub-market areas may wish to set out a HST at sub-housing market area.

7.13 Local housing strategies should fully consider the scale and distribution of the affordable housing requirement for their area and where a shortage of affordable housing is identified, set out clearly any role that affordable housing policies are expected to play in addressing this.

## **LHS Considerations**

a) The extent and type of housing need and demand and the role that specific tenures are likely to play, both now and over the longer term.

b) The local authority's strategic vision for the future of housing across all tenures taking into account national priorities.

c) Clear strategic direction for housing investment, and confirmation that development plans support the strategic aims set out in the LHS.

## **Sustainable Places**

### **Context**

7.14 Well-designed, sustainable places increase both physical and mental well-being and housing has a key role to play. Housing helps to shape, maintain and support sustainable places, through both the provision of high quality development and the provision of effective services that assist in maintaining and supporting communities.

7.15 Sustainable communities are generally characterised as those that have a range of services, housing types and people, which promote interaction and integration and create positive, diverse neighbourhoods. They are places designed around people, not cars, encouraging creative activity and social interaction by providing easy access to both cultural amenities and green space. They can make use of green (and blue) infrastructure to deliver environmental and quality of life benefits. More information is available in the Scottish Government's 'Green Infrastructure: Design and Place-making', available at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/362219/0122541.pdf>.

7.16 Sustainable communities help to improve safety by increasing the number of people who use local facilities and generating a real sense of community. They are sustainable places, environmentally, socially, physically and economically. The benefits of well-designed places that include green spaces for recreational and social use are widely recognised as having a positive impact on the health and well-being of both individuals and communities.

7.17 Scotland's policy statement on architecture and place, [Creating Places](#), sets out the comprehensive value that good design can deliver and an action plan that sets out the work that will be taken forward to achieve positive change.

7.18 Designing Streets, published by the Scottish Government in March 2010 provides guidance for practitioners involved in planning, designing, approving and adopting new streets and agreeing modifications to existing ones. The document is available at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/03/22120652/0>.

### **LHS Considerations**

a) Explain the local authority's overall approach to supporting the development and maintenance of sustainable communities, including through the delivery of good quality, sustainable housing.

## **Regeneration and Town Centres**

### **Context**

7.19 Supporting our most disadvantaged communities and creating places which are sustainable and promote well-being is the cornerstone of the Scottish Government's approach to regeneration. To deliver success, a holistic approach to regeneration is required that addresses the social, economic and physical needs of our communities.

[Achieving a Sustainable Future: The Regeneration Strategy](#), was published in 2011 and outlines the wide range of supporting outcomes in place to deliver the Scottish Government's regeneration vision.

7.20 The Scottish Government recognises that town centres are a key element of the economic and social fabric of Scotland. [The Town Centre Action Plan](#) agreed in 2013 sets the conditions for a range of actions to be delivered to help revitalise local town centres.

7.21 The Town Centre Action Plan identifies the role town centres can make in meeting a range of housing needs. Similarly it recognises the contribution that the promotion of mixed use living can play in the creation of vibrant town centres. Local authorities are therefore encouraged to consider the town centre first principle, <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/regeneration/town-centres/TheTownCentreFirstPrinciple> and the role that town centre housing can play in meeting local need and demand as well as promoting and prioritising housing opportunities to support vibrant town centres.

### **LHS Considerations**

- a) Explain the nature and function of town centres within the local authority area
- b) Consider the opportunities that exist for supporting town centre living and the scope that town centres may provide to meet housing need and demand.
- c) Set out how opportunities will be prioritised to support effective delivery.

### **Rural Housing**

#### **Context**

7.22 The character of rural and island communities and the challenges they face vary greatly, from the more pressured areas around towns and cities to the more remote and fragile communities. The challenges faced in ensuring the supply and maintenance of good quality housing as well as the delivery of housing related services that meet the needs of their rural communities, will also vary.

7.23 [Scottish Planning Policy](#) recognises the contribution that development and specifically housing, can make to sustaining remote and/or fragile communities and includes provisions for small scale housing developments or single units to be supported where it contributes to sustainable economic growth.

7.24 Specific arrangements exist for assessing and delivering housing requirements in National Parks. While the National Parks are the statutory planning authority for their area, the statutory housing responsibility remains with the local authority. The requirement for close working between housing and planning responsibilities both within the National Park and the local authority will be critical to ensuring joined up approaches to housing strategy and delivery.

## **LHS Considerations**

a) Ensure that any distinctive issues associated with addressing housing and housing related services within a rural context, are fully taken into account.

## **Empty Homes**

### **Context**

7.25 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 seeks to improve the condition of privately owned homes and to raise standards in the private rented sector (PRS). A review of the PRS in 2009 identified the need for a focus on bringing empty homes back into use. The Empty Homes Partnership, funded by the Scottish Government and led by Shelter Scotland, helps local authorities work with owners to bring their empty properties back into use. The measures that were introduced, aim to tackle this issue via prevention and taking a holistic view towards tackling inequalities and ensuring longer term sustainability for individuals.

7.26 [The Local Government Finance \(Unoccupied Properties etc.\) \(Scotland\) Act 2012](#) and the new powers that became effective in April 2013, allow local authorities to remove the discount attached to certain types of unoccupied homes and to increase the level of council tax payable.

7.27 Local authorities should also consider the use of Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers when working to bring empty properties back into use. The use of CPO powers is explained in Planning Circular 6/2011, [www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/planning](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/planning) with relevant Scottish Government contacts listed at [www.scotland.gov.uk/cpo](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/cpo).

## **LHS Considerations**

- a) Provide information on the extent to which empty properties could play a part in increasing housing supply.
- b) Explain what is being done to bring empty properties back into use, such as employing an empty homes officer to provide advice and assistance to owners and using empty homes loans/grants.
- c) Show how increased income from council tax generation is used to boost housing supply levels.
- d) Set out the approach in using CPOs to tackle the issue of empty properties.



## **Self-Build/Custom Build**

### **Context**

7.28 It is essential to consider a wide range of options when aiming to increase housing supply and deliver housing related support for individuals and communities. Self-build, or on a larger scale, custom build approaches, can be viable options for a variety of households across a range of areas, both urban and rural. Development can be individually driven or community led.

7.29 Custom build projects see a developer working with individuals, or groups of individuals, to bring forward new housing. A number of different models and approaches may be possible. This differs from self-build, where an individual leads in organising the development. Such approaches can be viable alongside mainstream developer activity or as a way of encouraging private sector investment in areas where developers have shown less interest.

7.30 It is for each local authority to determine what demand there is for such development locally; and to consider the potential role that self-build/custom build could play in supporting households to meet their housing requirements through, for example, facilitating access to suitable serviced plots.

### **LHS Considerations**

a) If self-build or custom build are considered to be viable options for increasing housing supply, the LHS should be clear on the local authority's approach. Any existing policy or information related to developing such a policy, should be referenced in the LHS.

## **8. Preventing & Addressing Homelessness**

### **Context**

8.1 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 places a statutory duty on each local authority to carry out an assessment of homelessness in its area and to prepare and submit to Ministers, a strategy (as part of the LHS) for the prevention and alleviation of homelessness. The Scottish Government guidance on prevention of homelessness can be found at [www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/274719/0082198.pdf](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/274719/0082198.pdf).

8.2 Any approach taken to address homelessness should be underpinned by robust, accurate and up to date evidence on the extent and nature of homelessness. This should consist of an overall homelessness figure, broken down by age, gender and household composition, the reason for homelessness and the person's location. Homelessness can be disproportionately affected by gender and age, including those affected by domestic abuse, leaving prison or another type of supported accommodation.

8.3 Local Authorities should work closely with partners, such as Registered Social Landlords and Private Sector Landlords, to ensure that collaboration results in a positive and effective contribution being made to the homelessness agenda at a local level. The main focus should be on the prevention of homelessness before it occurs, potentially

through the use of the housing options approach: [www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/homeless](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/homeless).

8.4 A joined up approach to planning for known milestones is important and particularly relevant for Looked after Children and those leaving prison. Here, a change in circumstances can be anticipated, but a lack of planning and available provision can lead to homelessness. Individuals at risk should be identified early and through partnership working, effective housing provision put in place together with all relevant housing related services, to provide the support required.

8.5 Local authorities should be aware of the Scottish Housing Regulator's Housing Options and Homelessness Thematic Inquiry and the need to consider the recommendations and identify where action may be needed. Guidance (developed by the Scottish Government, CoSLA, ALACHO and local authorities) will assist local authorities in their approaches to housing options and the prevention of homelessness.

### **Temporary and Supported Accommodation - Impact of Welfare Reform**

8.6 Welfare Reform has the potential to impact significantly on homelessness. All changes that are made by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), should be taken into account when making decisions at local authority level in relation to temporary and supported accommodation arrangements.

8.7 Over a period of time, the use of hostels has diminished in favour of other forms of supported accommodation. However, in certain circumstances there is a role for hostel accommodation and an assessment of need for this type of accommodation may be required, particularly in light of the potential impacts from welfare reform.

8.8 Consideration should also be given to the revision of the shared room rate and the implications this may have for people under the age of 35.

### **LHS Considerations**

a) Focus on prevention and the consolidation of the Housing Options approach. The shift towards prevention is key in reducing the impact of budget constraints and to tackling persistent inequality.

b) Identify and explain the appropriate support provision that is in place or being considered, to help those already homeless and those at threat of homelessness. This should include a particular focus on how the requirements of the Housing Support Duty are being addressed: [www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0042/00423606.pdf](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0042/00423606.pdf).

c) Make clear links to the outcomes set out in the Scottish Social Housing Charter: [www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/what-we-do/how-we-regulate/scottish-social-housing-charter](http://www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/what-we-do/how-we-regulate/scottish-social-housing-charter).

d) Give consideration to the accommodation needs of people under the age of 35, due to the revision of the shared room rate.

e) Give consideration to the impact of Welfare Reform on the provision of temporary and

supported accommodation and where hostel provision is used, there should be a clear strategy for its future use.

f) Where appropriate, link agreed LHS actions to those agreed at the Housing Options Hubs, referring to good practice as appropriate.

## **9. Specialist Provision and Independent Living**

### **Context**

9.1 The planned integration of adult health and social care brings opportunities to strengthen the connections between housing, health and social care. To improve alignment of strategic planning, support the shift in prevention and to review, as necessary, any current arrangements for housing support and other housing related services. More information on the Integration of the Health and Social Care agenda is available at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/Policy/Adult-Health-SocialCare-Integration>

9.2 Health and Social care integration covers all activities involved in assessing and forecasting need, planning the nature, range and quality of future services, working in partnership to put these in place and linking investment to agreed outcomes.

9.3 Housing can make a contribution to national outcomes for health and wellbeing at a local level by:

- undertaking effective strategic housing planning
- providing information and advice on housing options
- identifying, facilitating and delivering suitable housing that gives people choice and an appropriate home environment
- providing low level, preventative services which can prevent the need for more expensive interventions at a later stage
- building capacity in local communities.

### **Independent Living**

9.4 Independent living is about freedom, choice, dignity and control for those with a disability or long term health condition, those who have become frail or those in need of support. People should be able to live safely and as independently as possible, in appropriate housing, with control over their care and support. A requirement for support for what may be complex care and health support needs, can occur at any age.

9.5 Wherever possible, independent living should be supported within a person's own home, but in some instances other types of accommodation may be more appropriate. Concern over a person's safety, their ability to cope alone or the level of care and/or support they require, may mean that other accommodation, such as supported accommodation, very sheltered housing or a residential/care home may be the best solution.

9.6 The provision of housing adaptations can assist in the prevention of accidents in the home and reduce the need for care and support services. They can also make a home

ready, earlier, for someone leaving hospital or other type of care facility.

9.7 Planning and prevention are key to supporting independent living and the LHS should reflect the policies that are in place to deal with known milestones in people's lives. Allowing preparation and action to be taken before these milestones are reached can help to ensure that the correct specialist provision or support is in place.

### **Integration of Health and Social Care**

9.8 The Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/9/contents/enacted?view=plain>

sets out the legislative framework for integrating health and social care, requiring local authorities and health boards to establish integrated partnership arrangements. It will facilitate the integration of budgets for adult services in such a way that 'where money comes from, be it health or social care, will no longer be of consequence'. The Act, from April 2015, will transfer responsibility for some adaptation delivery. The adaptations referred to are those required to make a house suitable for a disabled person in relation to accommodation, welfare or employment under Section 71 (2) e of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006.

9.9 Whilst the regulations that will determine which services must be included in integration are yet to be finalised, housing representatives should be fully involved in the integration process and take every opportunity to engage and outline the critical role that housing can play in delivering effective health and social care integration.

9.10 Local Health and Social Care Partnerships should consult with housing colleagues at a strategic level and strategic plans should be clear on how they relate in purpose and scope with existing and forthcoming plans for housing, such as those set out in the LHS and Development Plan.

9.11 Joint commissioning plans take an outcomes approach, based on a joint strategic needs assessment and include a Housing Contribution Statement (HCS). Housing has a key role to play in this agenda and it is essential that housing practitioners have a role in local discussions and in identifying solutions.

9.12 The LHS should be clear on what the integration of health and social care means in terms of providing suitable accommodation and the care and support required to fully support this agenda, whilst enabling people to live independently within their own home for as long as possible. Having the right amount of care and/or support in place can help prevent unplanned hospital admissions and allows people to leave hospital more quickly, benefitting both the individual and the hospital system.

### **Housing Contribution Statements**

9.13 A Housing Contribution Statement (HCS) is required from each local authority. The initial HCS (2013) will need to be revised, potentially in April 2015, to cover a period of at least 3 years. The HCS should be completed by local authority housing practitioners working in close collaboration with social work colleagues and local health professionals to ensure the statement is inclusive and fully supports the integration of housing with health and social care. Joint working will help to build consensus and a wider understanding and

appreciation of each other's needs, issues and resources.

9.14 These publications may provide some useful information:

- Age, Home and Community: A strategy for Housing for Scotland's Older People 2012 – 2021, people  
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/365373/0124256.pdf>
- Reshaping care for older people: A programme for change 2011-2021  
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/Support-Social-Care/Support/Older-People/Reshaping-Care>
- The Keys to Life: Improving the quality of life for people with learning disabilities  
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0042/00424389.pdf>

### **LHS Considerations**

a) Clearly state what action is required during the lifetime of the LHS to ensure that independent living is supported, taking into account the forecast for the increasing number of people living longer, and who are therefore more likely to require specialist provision.

b) Set out the local authority strategy for providing an environment that supports the integration of health, social care and housing, that allows people to remain in their own homes, through the use of care and support packages, aids and adaptations, and that provides clear links to other relevant strategies as appropriate.

c) Set out clearly the sort of services that are provided across the local authority area for all tenures, in relation to care/support services, handy person services/care & repair and the use of Telecare and Telehealth.

d) Be clear, how planning is helping with future specialist provision delivery and show clear links to the Integration of Health and Social Care agenda and the Housing Contribution Statement.

e) Provide some indication of the current and future need for residential and care homes spaces for when independent living is no longer a viable option.

f) Provide some information on how the better use of adaptations and adapted properties are helping to address need and keep people in their own homes. Provide evidence on local initiatives (including the use of adaptations) that both supports the prevention agenda and allows people to leave hospital after treatment, and return to their home environment as early as possible.

### **Specialist Provision**

#### **Context**

9.15 Specialist provision refers to the wide range of accommodation needs and care and support services (housing support) needed, to allow people of all ages, to live well and independently.

9.16 Delivery of specialist provision housing can be achieved through new build or the re-

provisioning or adapting of existing properties. It can also be delivered in non-adapted properties through the provision of aids and/or care and support service through:

- Accessible/Adapted Housing
- Wheelchair Accessible Housing
- Non-Permanent Accommodation
- Supported Accommodation
- Care & Support Services
- Sites and Pitches

### **Accessible/Adapted Housing**

9.17 Accessible housing is housing that can be accessed easily from the outside and allow good freedom and safety of movement inside. These homes can be suitable for a person who uses a wheelchair infrequently and mainly outside of the home. Mandatory Building Standards (Standard 4.1 and 4.2) for new buildings set out clearly the accessibility requirements.

[www.scotland.gov.uk/resource/buildingstandards/2013Domestic/chunks/ch05s03.html](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/resource/buildingstandards/2013Domestic/chunks/ch05s03.html).

9.18 Adapted houses can range from those that have received substantial remodelling to accommodate extra rooms and more minor changes to the internal layout to those where small adaptations have been added.

[www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/access/adaptations](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/access/adaptations)

### **Wheelchair Accessible**

9.19 These are homes suitable for those that need to use a wheelchair most if not all the time to get around both inside and out.

### **Non-permanent Accommodation**

9.20 Non-permanent accommodation will be mainly available in the private rented sector (PRS), and may appeal to those who know that they will be residing in an area for a relatively short time or who are, as yet, unable to commit to a longer period of residence. The accommodation may be a house, flat or rooms within a House of Multiple Occupation (HMO). Non-permanent accommodation is likely to be most suitable for students, migrant workers, asylum seekers or refugees.

### **Supported Accommodation**

9.21 Supported accommodation is for those that need to live somewhere where a level of support is available to help them to live as independently as possible. This could include, care and residential homes for both older people and those with a physical disability, mental health condition or learning disability. Amenity, sheltered, very sheltered and extra care housing are the types of supported accommodation that should be considered to allow people to remain in a home environment and a familiar community for longer.

## **Care & Support**

9.22 Housing support can be delivered through a range of care and support services that enable people to live independently in their own homes for as long as possible. Services are available to people across all tenures and are based on need and the resources available. Care and support can be delivered through the care & repair service, social care and other local authority and agency workers. There is an increasing demand for care and support due to the increase in the elderly population. Advice on the use of aids or the installation of adaptations can help to keep a person living in their own home for longer. The integration of health and social care will highlight the need and benefits of specialist provision.

9.23 The availability of specialist provision should reflect the make-up of the local population and the identified need. The HNDA will be a useful source of evidence for specialist provision but this is an area where more locally based information will be of prime importance to help inform strategy and delivery.

### **LHS Considerations**

a) As a minimum, Specialist Provision should seek to address the needs of:

- Older people
- People with a physical disability
- People with a mental health condition
- People with a learning disability
- Young people – e.g. students
- People leaving supported accommodation – e.g. offenders, looked after children
- People needing supported accommodation – e.g. People fleeing domestic abuse/at risk families, homeless
- Ethnic minorities – e.g. migrants, asylum seekers, refugees, Gypsy/Travellers

b) Clearly set out the current need for specialist provision (accommodation and care/support services) that will help to support people to live independently and the likely requirement for this provision over the next 5 years.

c) Show how current needs are being met using a range of accommodation types and what more is planned to meet future need.

## **Gypsy/Travellers**

### **Context**

9.24 Gypsy/Travellers have been in Scotland for many centuries and still retain their own cultures and customs. The term Gypsy/Traveller refers to distinct groups, including Romanies, Scottish, Irish and Welsh Travellers, who regard the travelling lifestyle as part of their ethnic identity. Gypsy/Travellers are recognised in Scotland as an ethnic minority.

9.25 Today, many Gypsy/Travellers live on authorised council/RSL sites, while others live on private sites or in bricks and mortar housing. However, many Gypsy/Travellers still travel, particularly during the summer months, and therefore require access to suitable sites across their travel area. In some instances Gypsy/Travellers use unauthorised encampments as temporary sites.

9.26 The Gypsy/Traveller lifestyle can mean that access to health, education and social services can be difficult for Gypsy/Travellers. Action being taken to address housing related issues should be clearly stated in the LHS.

9.27 Gypsy/Travellers have a requirement for specialist provision that should be identified in the HNDA. Any identified current or future need for appropriate sites or additional pitches should be reflected in and addressed through the LHS and Development Plan process.

9.28 All sites require a level of site management to ensure that the site is maintained at an acceptable level. Site managers may also ensure that residents have access to relevant housing and related information as necessary and provide support as required. This can include supporting those living on sites to access the services and support (such as education and health services) to which they are entitled.

9.29 Unauthorised encampment in a local authority should be managed in line with Scottish Government guidance, available online at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2004/12/20417/48825>. The number and size of any unauthorised encampments in a local authority area should be taken into consideration when assessing the need for sites and/or pitches. However, due to travel patterns, especially during the summer months, the existence of unauthorised encampments will not necessarily indicate a need for additional year round sites/pitches.

9.30 Sites provide pitches and facilities for use by Gypsy/Travellers, for those who wish to remain on the site and for those that are passing through.

9.31 In the first instance, any findings from the HNDA should be considered through the Development Plan process for the allocation of suitable land for sites. <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2014/06/5823>. The development of the sites, provision of the facilities, maintenance and management of the sites should be addressed in the LHS.

### **LHS Considerations**

a) Provide an assessment of the current level of site and pitch provision and whether the current provision is adequate.

b) Provide an assessment of whether sites and pitches currently provided are of an acceptable standard and of the right type (e.g. are there a large number of pitches on transit sites being provided, when year round pitches would better meet the needs of the Gypsy/Traveller population).



## **Travelling Showpeople**

### **Context**

9.32 Historically, Travelling Showpeople moved around the country, usually between March and October, attending fairs and living in caravans, on the fairgrounds. During the winter months they lived on vacant land, often rented from Local Authorities.

9.33 Many Travelling Showpeople now live on permanent Showpeople sites. These provide a more permanent base to allow their needs to be better met, such as the education needs of their children. Sometimes some family members will live permanently on a site, while others leave during the summer months to attend fairs. The sites are required not just for accommodation but for storage and maintenance of equipment and local authorities should ensure that suitable sites are provided where required.

### **LHS Considerations**

- a) Travelling Showpeople have a requirement for specialist provision that should be identified in the HNDA. Any identified current or future need for appropriate sites should be reflected in and addressed through the LHS (and development plan).
- b) It is important that local authorities are fully aware of the accommodation needs of Travelling Showpeople and try to meet them.

## **10. Private Rented Sector**

### **Context**

10.1 The Private Rented Sector (PRS) has undergone significant change in terms of the overall size of the sector and the tenant and landlord profile. [‘A Place to Stay, A Place to Call Home: a Strategy for the Private Rented Sector in Scotland’](#) was published in May 2013. It sets out a Scottish Government vision for: “a private rented sector that provides good quality homes and high management standards, inspires consumer confidence, and encourages growth through attracting increased investment”.

10.2 Local authorities should reflect on the strategy’s strategic aims when considering how best to meet the local demand for private rented accommodation and to ensure its quality. The strategic aims are:

- To improve the quality of property management, condition and service
- To deliver for tenants and landlords, meeting the needs of people living in the sector, consumers seeking accommodation; and landlords committed to continuous improvement
- To enable growth, investment and help increase overall housing supply

## **LHS Considerations**

- a) Explain the relevant local issues including a description of the extent and location of the sector.
- b) Set out a strategy for addressing issues about supply and quality in the PRS locally.
- c) Include some detail of the powers/products that are being used to help households and landlords.
- d) Ensure that any outcomes and actions set out in the LHS are robust and sufficient to tackle the issues identified.

## **11. Sustainable Housing: Fuel Poverty and Climate Change**

11.1 Addressing Climate change and fuel poverty are key priorities for Scottish Ministers. Local authorities, through both their strategic role and wealth of local knowledge and action, have a significant part to play in ensuring that people live in warm, dry, energy efficient, low carbon homes which they can afford to heat. This guidance should be read in conjunction with the Sustainable Housing: Fuel Poverty and Climate Change Advice Note <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/supply-demand/deliveryframework/lhs/Advicenote>

### **Fuel Poverty**

#### **Context**

11.2 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, Section 89(5)(b), places a statutory duty on Scottish Ministers ‘to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that people are not living in fuel poverty in Scotland by November 2016’. The Act requires Local Authorities to develop an LHS that aims to ensure that, “so far as reasonably practicable, persons do not live in fuel poverty.” This obligation relates to housing in all tenures.

11.3 Section 95 of the Act, defines a household as being fuel poor if it is living in a home which cannot be kept warm at reasonable cost. The Scottish Fuel Poverty Statement refines this definition to say a household is in fuel poverty if, in order to maintain a satisfactory heating regime, it would be required to spend more than 10% of its income, including Housing Benefit and Income Support for Mortgage Interest, on household fuel use. This more precise definition assists the monitoring of progress and is the definition against which Scottish Government fuel poverty policy objectives are developed.

11.4 The currently accepted, satisfactory heating regime means achieving for elderly and infirm households a temperature of 23°C in the living room and 18°C in other rooms, for 16 hours in every 24. For other households a temperature of 21°C in the living room and 18°C in other rooms should be achieved, for a period of 9 hours in every 24 (or 16 in 24 over the weekend) – with 2 hours being in the morning and 7 hours in the evening.

### 11.5 The Scottish Government's Fuel Poverty Statement

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2002/08/15258/9962> identified the 3 main factors that influence the level of fuel poverty as:

- fuel prices
- household incomes
- energy efficiency of the housing stock

11.6 The relationship between these three factors is a dynamic one and a household can move into, or out of fuel poverty at different times and for a variety of different reasons.

## Climate Change

### Context

11.7 The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 created a statutory framework for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. It requires emissions to be reduced by 42% by 2020 and at least 80% by 2050. It also requires Scottish Ministers to set annual emissions targets, as well as including measures relating to adaptation, energy efficiency and waste reduction.

11.8 To achieve Scotland's world leading targets concerted and co-ordinated action is required across the public and private sectors, by central and local government, and at individual and community level. Local authorities have a key part to play in achieving a shift towards a more sustainable, low-carbon economy.

11.9 Section 44 of the 2009 Act places duties on public bodies relating to climate change. The duties require that a public body must, in exercising its functions, act:

- in the way best calculated to contribute to the delivery of the Act's emission reduction targets
- in the way best calculated to deliver any statutory adaptation programme
- in a way that it considers most sustainable

11.10 This echoes the declarations made by all 32 local authorities who signed Scotland's Climate Change Declaration: <http://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/sustainability-climate-change/sustainable-scotland-network/climate-change/scotlands-climate-change-declaration/> in 2007, committing to working with communities to mitigate and respond to climate change.

11.11 The Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Guidance:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/340746/0113071.pdf> recognises the importance of housing in achieving climate change targets. A key message of the guidance is that public bodies should address climate change in their main business planning activities. The LHS has an important role in linking action on climate change with mainstream housing and fuel poverty policies, and in defining the overall outcomes sought in the sector.

11.12 In 2012, greenhouse gas emissions from housing accounted for 13.7% (not including electricity) of Scotland's total emissions. If electricity is included it is closer to 25%. A household's greenhouse gas emissions are influenced by a number of factors:

- property condition – houses in a state of disrepair use more energy to heat and are harder to keep warm
- energy efficiency rating – houses with a poor energy efficiency rating (EPC G and F) use more energy to heat than the most efficient properties (EPC A and B). A property's energy efficiency is affected by the presence (or absence) of measures such as loft and cavity wall insulation.
- property heating – the type of fuel used to heat a property can affect its greenhouse gas emissions e.g. oil heated homes have higher emissions than those heated by gas, whilst low-carbon or renewable heat sources, for example heat pumps, biomass, solar thermal, connection to low carbon or renewable district heating, etc. offer even lower carbon emissions. The age and efficiency of heating devices, e.g. gas boilers, also affects the level of emissions.
- occupant behaviours – the way people operate their homes can affect carbon emissions, e.g. not using the heating thermostat and programmer efficiently, leaving lights on unnecessarily, etc.

11.13 Scotland's Sustainable Housing Strategy sets out the Scottish Government's vision for warm, high quality, affordable, low carbon homes:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/06/6324>

It draws together what is being done to incentivise people to install energy efficiency measures; examines the role of standards in the private and social housing sectors; and considers the potential for transformation of the market for sustainable housing. The draft Heat Generation Policy Statement:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0044/00445639.pdf> sets out the approach to deliver an affordable and effective heating and cooling framework for Scotland through to 2050. This includes targets for district heating including a proposed target of 40,000 homes to be supplied with affordable low carbon heat through district heating and communal heating by 2020.

11.14 Scotland is already feeling the effects of climate change, with rising temperatures and more frequent extreme weather events, and we need to adapt to this changing climate. Adaptation means adjustment to economic, social or natural systems in response to actual or expected climate change, to limit harmful consequences and exploit beneficial opportunities. The UK Risk Assessment provides an assessment of the current and predicted threats and opportunities from climate change facing Scotland up until 2100.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/69487/pb13698-climate-risk-assessment.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69487/pb13698-climate-risk-assessment.pdf). The Scottish Government's Climate Change Adaptation Programme sets the direction for adaptation across all sectors:

[http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/climatechange/scotlands-](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/climatechange/scotlands-action/adaptation/AdaptationProgramme)

[action/adaptation/AdaptationProgramme](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/climatechange/scotlands-action/adaptation/AdaptationProgramme).

## **LHS Considerations**

a) Demonstrate a clear understanding of the national fuel poverty priorities and targets and the links between fuel poverty and energy efficiency and other policy areas, such as climate change.

- b) Show how housing contributes to climate change through house condition, stock characteristics, levels of energy efficiency and set out the improvements needed.
- c) Demonstrate a clear understanding of fuel poverty locally by:
- defining the extent, location and nature of fuel poverty
  - explaining the contributing factors that influence levels of fuel poverty locally
  - highlight the root causes of fuel poverty locally and if appropriate, how these differ from national trends.
- d) Set out how the local authority will use all available resources to achieve the maximum contribution for tackling fuel poverty and reducing greenhouse gas emissions; and maximise uptake in the numbers of householders and property owners benefitting from eligible fuel poverty and energy efficiency programmes.
- e) Set out what will be done to accelerate the rate of improvement in the owner-occupied and private-rented sectors, whilst maintaining rates of improvement in the social sector.
- f) Set out details of the programmes and actions required to meet fuel poverty and climate change targets. Set robust fuel poverty outcomes and targets with indicators to measure progress, making particular reference to the Home Energy Efficiency Programme Scotland: Area Based Schemes (HEEPS:ABS), what the funding will be used for and what it is hoped will be achieved.
- g) Be clear on the implications for housing from any plans for major energy infrastructure, such as district heating.
- h) Show an understanding of how a changing climate may affect the housing stock. Identify threats and opportunities, the vulnerability of different groups to climate risks, and set out and prioritise what needs to be done to manage climate risks.
- i) Show how tackling fuel poverty assists in addressing local issues with BTS housing.

## **12. House Condition**

### **Private Sector**

#### **Context**

12.1 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2006, Section 10 introduced statutory requirements for local authorities to include in the LHS:

- a Below Tolerable Standard (BTS) strategy - for ensuring compliance with section 85(1) (duty to close, demolish or improve houses which do not meet the tolerable standard) of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (c. 26)
- a Housing Renewal Area Policy - for identifying parts of its area for designation

under section 1 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 (asp 1)

- a strategy detailing a Scheme of Assistance - for improving the condition of houses by providing or arranging for the provision of assistance under Part 2 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 (asp 1).

### **LHS Considerations**

Set out how the local authority proposes to meet the above requirements for:

- a) BTS Strategy – evidence of the extent of BTS housing (numbers, location and type); plans in place to collect evidence to inform and update a strategy; how BTS housing will be addressed and repair work enforced in the private sector.
- b) Housing Renewal Area Policy - how will areas be identified and what action will be considered. (Although most local authorities have not yet made use of HRA powers, a policy should be in place and ready to support housing improvement when required).
- c) Scheme of Assistance – how will the scheme be used to address substandard private housing and implement the BTS strategy.

### **Social Rented Sector**

#### **Scottish Housing Quality Standard**

##### **Context**

12.2 The Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) requires all social landlords (local authority and Registered Social Landlords) to achieve a minimum level of housing quality (including energy efficiency) by April 2015. Amongst other things, the SHQS states that local authorities should install effective insulation and full, efficient central heating in their stock.

12.3 The SHQS target is included in the Scottish Social Housing Charter, and progress towards meeting this target is monitored by the independent Scottish Housing Regulator. SHQS is funded through social landlords' investment plans, including prudential borrowing by local authorities.

12.4 The SHQS is measured by the Scottish House Condition Survey at local authority level and this information is available at:

[www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/SHCS/Downloads](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/SHCS/Downloads).

### **LHS Considerations**

- a) Provide details on the extent to which the 2015 target has been achieved.
- b) Set out proposals for dealing with and funding any non-exempt stock which has not achieved SHQS.

c) Set out proposals for reviewing exemptions and abeyance as requested in the current SHQS Guidance, as these are temporary measures which should be reviewed as technology develops and tenants or owners change.

## **Energy Efficiency Standard**

### **Context**

12.5 The energy efficiency standard for social housing (ESSH), published March 2014, sets out the minimum energy efficiency ratings that landlords will be expected to meet across their housing stock. The ratings will vary depending on the accommodation and fuel type used. A milestone has been set for 2020, with future milestones determined as part of a review of the standard, scheduled for 2017.

12.6 The ESSH does not prescribe measures, but leaves it to individual social landlords to identify the most cost effective measures for their stock, to ensure that the required ratings are achieved. Further information is available at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/sustainable/standard>

### **LHS Considerations**

- a) Detail the measures the local authority and its partners intend to take to achieve the required ratings.
- b) Provide information that demonstrates how the measures will be funded.
- c) Provide details of the progress being made towards the 2020 milestone.

## **LHS Statutory Requirements & Scottish Government Targets**

Listed here are the statutory requirements of an LHS and the Scottish Government targets that an LHS should support:

### **Fuel Poverty**

- Strategy to be part of LHS
- Target – to End Fuel poverty in Scotland, as far as is reasonably practicable, by 2016

### **House Condition** (Section 10 of Housing (Scotland) Act 2006)

- Housing Renewal Area Strategy
- Below Tolerable Standard Policy
- Scheme of Assistance

### **Homelessness** - Housing (Scotland) Act 2001

- Assessment of homelessness – extent and nature
- Strategy for prevention and alleviating homelessness in LHS

### **Housing Support (Specialist Provision)** – Housing (Scotland) Act 2001

- Assessment of provision of housing and related services

### **Climate Change** (Scotland) Act 2009

- Mitigation, adaptation and sustainability
- 2020 Milestone

### **Consultation** – Housing (Scotland) Act 2001

- Involve, consult and engage with partners and communities as widely as possible

### **Equality**

- Comply with Section 106 of Housing (Scotland) Act 2001
- Comply with Equality Act 2010

### **SHQS**

- Minimum level of housing quality (including energy efficiency) by April 2015

### **EESSH**

- Milestone set for 2020







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