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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Environment &amp; Regeneration Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>13 January 2022</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Interim Director, Environment &amp; Regeneration</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>ENV003/22/MM</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Martin McNab</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475714246</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Inverclyde Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2022/23 - 2026/27</b>		

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## 1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Committee approval for the new annual Inverclyde Strategic Housing Investment Plan, covering the period from 2022/23 - 2026/27.

## 2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 To secure funding every local authority is required to prepare an annual Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP). The SHIP reinforces the role of the Council as the strategic housing authority for Inverclyde. It sets out the key investment priorities for affordable housing in Inverclyde over a five year period to achieve the outcomes of the Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2017-2022, and help the Scottish Government complete the delivery of 50,000 affordable homes; and deliver a further 110,000 affordable homes by 2032.
- 2.2 All local authorities were required to submit their SHIPs to the Scottish Government's More Homes Division Area Team by Friday 29 October 2021 via the Housing and Regeneration Programme (HARP). HARP is a web-based system designed to store consistent and accurate information about all local authority housing programmes.
- 2.3 As per agreed protocol and due to the date of the Committee meeting, The Scottish Government was advised that Inverclyde Council would submit a draft of the SHIP through HARP by November pending the decision on its approval at today's Committee meeting.
- 2.4 The SHIP 2022/23 - 2026/27 has been prepared in consultation with all our developing RSL partners and includes a full programme of affordable housing development proposals over the five year period.

## 3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the Committee:
- Approves the Strategic Housing Investment Plan for the five-year period from 2022/23 - 2026/27 for submission to the Scottish Government by Inverclyde Council; and
  - Notes the content and projects included in the Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2022/23 - 2026/27 as detailed at Appendix 1.

## **4.0 BACKGROUND**

4.1 The updated SHIP guidance (Guidance on preparing Strategic Housing Investment Plans, 30 June 2021, attached) requires all local authorities to prepare and submit a new five-year SHIP by Friday 29 October 2021. The Scottish Government have been advised that due to scheduling, we submitted a draft SHIP pending the decision on Committee approval of the SHIP at today's meeting. The SHIP 2022/23 - 2026/27 sets out Inverclyde Council's priorities for affordable housing development and presents an overview of what might be achieved throughout Inverclyde over the next five years.

## **5.0 STRATEGIC HOUSING INVESTMENT PLAN 2022/23 - 2026/27**

5.1 Inverclyde has benefitted from significant investment in new affordable housing to address the housing priorities in our area which most reflect the needs of our residents. National and local housing providers have received around £80 million grant funding since 2017 from the Scottish Government's Affordable Housing Supply Programme (AHSP); and the Scottish Government's More Homes Division have notified us that our Resource Planning Assumption (RPA) for the next 4 years is £38.636m

5.2 Housing development was halted in March 2020 due to the outbreak of the Coronavirus pandemic and the resultant national lockdown. Construction sites were closed which resulted in delays to the SHIP programme and underspend of the available Scottish Government grant to deliver affordable housing development. However, the Scottish Government confirmed that grant commitments made prior to lockdown would remain which allowed projects previously identified within the SHIP to be taken forward. The delivery of around 800 units across Inverclyde through projects previously estimated for completion by March 2021 were mainly delayed by 3 to 6 months following the easing of lockdown measures. For units delivered since 2017 and expected completion dates of ongoing projects please see appendix 1.

5.3 The SHIP is the result of ongoing consultation with RSLs, the Scottish Government and HSCP. Similarly, discussions with Council colleagues such as those in Roads, Planning, Property Services and Legal are fundamental in helping to resolve issues and ensure the delivery of development proposals which contribute appropriate housing for the area.

5.4 Efforts are focussed on completing existing projects, however RSLs have put forward a series of proposals for new affordable housing developments across Inverclyde covering the planning period from 2022/23 to 2026/27, and our Acquisition Programme aims to deliver around 40 new affordable homes across Inverclyde each year. The 'Summary of Inverclyde SHIP 2022/23 - 2026/27' table (see Appendix 1) provides details of all projects over the five-year period.

5.5 Depopulation coupled with negative projected household change will result in an increase in the number and proportion of single person households in Inverclyde. 4 out of every 10 households are expected to be single person households by 2029. The majority of these are projected to be inhabited by older persons, who generally wish to continue living independently in home and community settings. This requires serious consideration being paid to future housing provision, including Specialist Provision. By ensuring supply of wheelchair housing; providing specific dementia friendly accommodation; and increased use of technologies such as telehealth and telecare; we are confident that we can address the housing and health needs of our increasing older population and support independent living.

5.6 Scottish Government guidance (Guidance for setting of Local Housing Strategy targets to support the delivery of more Wheelchair Accessible housing, March 2019) requested a greater focus on the delivery of wheelchair accessible housing across each local authority area. A recent Interim Specialist Housing Provision Review highlighted the need for more wheelchair housing in Inverclyde. A key recommendation was for a new cross-tenure Wheelchair Accessible Housing Target seeking the provision of 5% of all new housing in Inverclyde to be wheelchair accessible.

- 5.7 This recommendation was discussed during the consultation process of Inverclyde's Proposed LDP. The Proposed LDP has subsequently received Committee approval for the implementation of a new Wheelchair Accessible Housing Policy: "Policy 21 - Wheelchair Accessible Housing - The Council will seek the provision of 5% wheelchair accessible housing on new build development sites of 20 or more units." Therefore all new developments in Inverclyde are now required to provide wheelchair accessible housing, regardless of tenure.
- 5.8 The methodology which determines which projects are prioritised through the AHSP involves many considerations including suitability of proposed house type/mix; impact new housing might have on older stock in the area; and ownership of the land to be used for development. When asking for SHIP submission forms from our RSLs, Inverclyde Council stipulate that the projects which will be prioritised are those which achieve the best balance between the following categories:
- Reflect LHS outcomes (possible 3 points)
  - Address Housing Need and Demand (possible 6 points)
  - Deliverability (possible 8 points)
- 5.9 We continue to work with RSL and HSCP partners to monitor how successfully the highest priority projects meet the housing need for the area, their efficacy in helping to achieve the LHS outcomes, and their deliverability. This monitoring process ensures that the housing projects delivered in the area are those which best meet the needs of the population.
- 5.10 An Acquisition Programme has been agreed between the council, RSLs and the Scottish Government. Inverclyde will receive up to £2m grant funding (at a rate of 50% of purchase price, up to £50,000 per property) through the AHSP in the 2021/22 financial year. The AHSP funding will be matched by the contributing RSLs: Cloch Housing Association, River Clyde Homes, Link Housing, Larkfield Housing Association and Oak Tree Housing Association. The fundamental aims of the Acquisition Programme are:
1. To consolidate stock for management and improvement purposes.
  2. To secure stock where there is limited supply and limited development opportunities.
  3. To secure stock for households with particular requirements.
- 5.11 The partners involved in the Acquisition Programme aim to purchase around 40 homes to add to the affordable housing stock within areas of existing housing in Inverclyde in 2021/22. The contributing RSLs have all expressed a desire to continue the programme in the 2022/23 financial year.
- 5.12 All stock owned by RSLs must meet Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (ESSH) standards. ESSH aims to improve the energy efficiency of social housing in Scotland and contribute to the Scottish Government target to reduce Scotland's emissions of all greenhouse gases to net-zero by 2045. All of the projects in the SHIP will meet ESSH standards, help to tackle fuel poverty, and ensure that heat is affordable for residents by increasing energy efficiency and reducing the amount of energy required to heat the home.

## **6.0 AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPLY PROGRAMME - ACTIVITY UPDATE**

- 6.1 Most sites have suffered delays due to the difficulties of building through the pandemic. However, a number of sites which commenced during the period of the previous SHIP are expected to be completed by April 2022.
- 6.2 Oak Tree Housing Association - 69 new homes are being delivered in the Tweed Street area of Greenock. The two-storey homes are predominantly houses with a mixture of two, three and four bed accommodation, and 32 of the houses can be readily adapted to accommodate wheelchair accessibility. The 16 two, three, and four bed houses to be built at Strone Farm have experienced some delays but project completion is due early in 2022. 71 of the new

homes at Ravenscraig will be passed over to Oak Tree as a turnkey project by Link Group.

- 6.3 Sanctuary Scotland - Sanctuary Scotland has delivered 4 developments across Greenock and Port Glasgow at Lilybank Road, Dubbs Road, Mount Pleasant Street and Broadstone Avenue, which combined deliver 96 units for social rent. The sites offer a range of house types with cottage flats, family homes, wheelchair housing and 24 units of amenity housing.
- 6.4 Cloch Housing Association - Cloch Housing Association has provided 57 homes at King's Glen including large family homes and cottage flats, with some homes on split level due to the topography of the site. Consultation with colleagues in HSCP identified a requirement for Throughcare accommodation in the area and this has been taken into account in the housing mix proposals. The four 2 bedroom cottage flats provided for this purpose are now occupied.
- 6.5 Blackwood Group - The remodelling of the MacLehose Court care home has resulted in 22 additional homes being brought to the west end of Greenock, with a mixture of 1, 2 and 3 bed flats including 3 specialist wheelchair units on the ground floor. All flats have an element of accessibility, utilise the technology aspects of the Blackwood Design Guide, and meet Housing for Varying Needs Standards.
- 6.6 River Clyde Homes - River Clyde Homes have continued to deliver their new build affordable programme in 2021/22 across Greenock and Port Glasgow. The Slaemuir site with 96 one, two, and three bedroom homes, and the 137 one and two bedroom homes at James Watt Dock have now been completed. Wheelchair accommodation is provided on both sites.
- 6.7 The 224 homes at the old St. Stephen's school site includes a variety of homes from one bedroom assisted living properties to family homes and also provides wheelchair accessible properties. Handovers have continued throughout 2021/22 with all handovers expected to be completed by June 2022. River Clyde Homes are developing proposals for a potential 20 unit development at Cumberland Walk which will include technology enabled assistance for older people.
- 6.8 Link Group - The 149 unit 'phase 1' development at the Ravenscraig Hospital site by Link Group in partnership with Oak Tree Housing will help meet the demand for one bedroom and family homes. Handovers will continue throughout 2022, with all handovers expected by December 2022. 71 of the properties will be handed over to Oak Tree on completion and the remaining 78 will be managed by Larkfield Housing Association. The development benefits from Link's target of providing 10% wheelchair housing and includes two bespoke three-bedroom bungalows, and 11 ground floor flatted dwellings with fully accessible private gardens. The site will also include 25 amenity cottage flats.
- 6.9 Ravenscraig 'phase 2' achieved site start in November 2021 with final handovers expected by March 2023. The type of housing mix Link are delivering across the 198 unit Ravenscraig development will support residents to live independently for as long as possible in their own homes and communities; it will improve community cohesion, lift local asset values and assist future regeneration.

## **7.0 IMPLICATIONS**

### **7.1 Strategic**

The SHIP 2022/23 - 2026/27 addresses all 6 outcomes of the Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2017 - 2022.

### **7.2 Financial**

The Scottish Government's More Homes Division have notified us that our Resource Planning Assumption for the next 4 years is £38.636m.

### One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Year	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

### Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

### 7.3 Legal

There are no legal implications for Inverclyde Council arising from this report.

### 7.4 Human Resources

There are no HR implications arising from this report.

### 7.5 Equalities

(a) Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

Yes - See attached appendix

No - This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.

NO

(c) Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

YES – This report involves data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.

X	NO
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#### 7.6 **Repopulation**

The provision of new affordable good quality housing is intended to support and complement the work on Repopulation, which is seeking to stabilise the existing population and to attract new people to the Inverclyde Council area by improving the housing quality and expanding the housing options available across Inverclyde.

### 8.0 **CONSULTATIONS**

8.1 This report has been prepared in consultation with the following:

- Developing RSLs operating within the Inverclyde Council area;
- All other RSLs operating within the Inverclyde Council area;
- Inverclyde Council's Roads, Planning, Property Services and Legal departments;
- Inverclyde Health & Social Care Partnership; and
- Scottish Government More Homes Division, Glasgow and Clyde Area Office

### 9.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

9.1 None

# Inverclyde Draft Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2022 – 2027



## Introduction

In March 2021, the Scottish Government published its first long-term national housing strategy 'Housing to 2040' which outlines what it wants housing and communities to look and feel like for the people of Scotland. Housing to 2040 reinforces the Scottish Government's commitment to continue to invest in the supply of affordable housing with an ambition to deliver a further 110,000 affordable homes by 2032, with at least 70% of these for social rent.

The Scottish Government has committed to invest over £3.44 billion in affordable housing over this parliamentary term to deliver more affordable and social homes, continuing to ensure the right types of homes in the right places, reflecting and supporting Local Housing Strategies and regional development priorities.

To secure funding, every local authority is required to prepare an annual Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP). The SHIP reinforces the role of the local authority as the strategic housing authority. It informs the Scottish Government of the key investment priorities for affordable housing in Inverclyde to achieve the outcomes of the Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2017- 2022; and informs the preparation of a Strategic Local Programme Agreement that sets out the planned programme across the local authority for the year. Affordable Housing Supply Programme (AHSP) funding is available to deliver:

- new build units (which could include 'off the shelf' purchases from developers)
- acquisition of 'second hand' stock for sale on the open market
- remodel/ rehabilitate/ convert existing properties where this is considered a strategic priority

The Scottish Government's More Homes Division have notified us that our Resource Planning Assumption (RPA) for the next 4 years is £38.636m and is split as follows:

Year	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Total
Inverclyde RPA	£ 9.623m	£ 9.595m	£ 9.629m	£ 9.789m	£38.636m

More Homes are aware that there are some local authority areas for whom it may be very challenging to spend their full RPA allocation. Any RPA which is not spent in one area will be reallocated to another local authority as necessary.

Delivery of the housing projects included in the SHIP requires close collaboration between a range of stakeholders including Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), the Scottish Government's More Homes Division, the Health and Social Care Partnership and other services within the council, including Planning, Roads and Property Services. Assumptions and forecasts are based on information available at the time of preparation and are therefore subject to refinement and alteration as projects are developed. It is not uncommon for a project to fall out of the SHIP due to any number of development constraints.

Covering the 5 year period, 2022/23 - 2026/27, this SHIP Supporting Statement and corresponding programme table (Appendix 1) sets out the key investment priorities and projected grant requirement to deliver affordable housing in the Inverclyde area. The Affordable Housing Supply Programme process can be found at Appendix 3.

## Demographics

Net migration, continues to be a major contributor to depopulation across Inverclyde. National Records of Scotland 2018-based population and household projections shows a 10% decline in number of households in Inverclyde by 2043. Broken down by age group, 16-29 year olds will reduce by 32%; 30-44 year olds by 18%; 45-59 year olds by 29%; and 60-74 year olds by 15%. However there will be a 59% increase in those over 75 years old. Latest mid-2020 population estimates, published in June 2021 estimated Inverclyde's population as at 30 June 2020 at 77,060. This is a 740 (-1%) decrease compared to the 2019 mid-year population estimate (77,800), and the largest percentage population decrease in Scotland.

The reducing and ageing population leads to a reduction of family-sized and working age households, and will have serious implications for the local economy in terms of lower tax contributions and an increase in the required provision of care. It will put further pressures on already stretched services.

Reversing population decline is a priority of the Inverclyde Outcome Improvement Plan. A series of actions has been identified to address depopulation, including in 2019/20 the development of a Repopulation Strategic Investment Framework and Action Plan.

Depopulation coupled with negative projected household size will result in an increase in the number and proportion of single person households in Inverclyde. 4 out of every 10 households are expected to be single person households by 2029. The majority of these are projected to be inhabited by older people, who generally wish to continue living independently in home and community settings. The changing demographics requires consideration on future housing provision, including Specialist Provision, and has informed the housing size and type being delivered in Inverclyde through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme.

## Local Housing Strategy

The Inverclyde LHS 2017 - 2022 sets out the strategic policy approach of the Local Authority and its partners to deliver high quality housing and housing related services across all tenures to meet identified need in Inverclyde.

The Inverclyde LHS was designed to overcome many of the challenges that face social tenants, private tenants, home owners and homeless people of Inverclyde; and help us to achieve our vision, aims and outcomes by 2022.

It identified 6 outcomes which the SHIP will help the council and its partners meet:

- Outcome 1: Provide a supply of good quality affordable housing solutions across all tenures
- Outcome 2: Sustainable, attractive and well-designed communities with well-functioning town centres
- Outcome 3: Prevent homelessness where possible through provision of ongoing support to meet the needs of individuals
- Outcome 4: People supported to live independently for as long as possible in their own homes and communities
- Outcome 5: Tackle fuel poverty and contribute to meeting the climate change target
- Outcome 6: Improve stock condition across all tenures

The LHS sets out Housing Supply Targets (HST) for private and affordable housing and the SHP establishes priorities to achieve the affordable HST and related outcomes. Considering all determining factors, it was calculated that a realistic and deliverable HST for Inverclyde would be 90 affordable units and 170 private sector units per annum over the lifetime of the LHS.

Inverclyde is one of the few local authority areas with a population which is projected to decrease, however the annual HST reflects the continued need to replace poor quality, unsuitable and unsustainable stock and to provide additional choice in the private sector.

Ongoing stakeholder consultation incorporating the Scottish Government's Housing to 2040 vision and principles will determine the key housing issues for Inverclyde and inform development of the next Inverclyde LHS throughout 2022, to be in place for the 2023 - 2028 period.

## Housing Need and Demand Assessment

A Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) has a prescribed form and function in statutory guidance. It is a key evidence base for strategic development plans and housing strategies.

The LHS was informed by the HNDA co-produced by the Strategic Development Authority for the region, Clydeplan, and the eight Glasgow City Region Housing Authorities who collaborate through the Glasgow Clyde Valley Housing Market Partnership. The HNDA provides a robust and credible evidence base to support each authority's LHS and Local Development Plan. The LHS is prepared every 5 years, and requires the evidence base included in the HNDA to be regularly reviewed and updated.

While the HNDA is firmly rooted in evidence and has helped inform local housing requirements, it has also highlighted areas where further local research needs to be conducted in order to fully understand local needs and demands, and to address them appropriately through inter-agency work and partnership arrangements. For example, the current HNDA (HNDA2) recommended further local research on the impacts of poor quality and lower demand housing in Inverclyde, and on the availability of wheelchair accessible housing.

Inverclyde's Housing Strategy and Planning Policy teams are partners within the GlasgowClyde Valley Housing Market Partnership which is responsible for developing the new Glasgow and Clyde Valley HNDA (HNDA3). Work on HNDA3 has been ongoing throughout 2021 with completion expected in winter 2021. This will provide the Housing Strategy team with a robust and credible evidence base to develop the next iteration of the Inverclyde LHS.

## Local Development Plan

The Local Development Plan (LDP) sets out the Council's strategy, policies and proposals for the use of land and buildings within Inverclyde and is the document the Council uses to determine planning applications and provide advice on development proposals.

Developers appealed Inverclyde Council's decision to adopt our LDP in August 2019 on the basis that it did not provide sufficient land for housing. In July 2020, the Court of Session decided to uphold the appeal and quash Chapter 7 of the LDP ('Our Homes and Communities'). This left the Council without a planning policy framework for housing development, residential areas and community facilities and a decision was made to prepare a new LDP. Inverclyde Council is now at final stages of preparation of a new LDP to supersede the 2019 Plan.

Within the Inverclyde villages (Kilmacolm, Quarriers Village, Inverkip and Wemyss Bay) there is limited supply of affordable housing and no land identified for affordable housing development. Therefore, in order to increase the supply of affordable housing in these areas, the proposed Inverclyde LDP includes a 25% affordable housing requirement on any greenfield development sites in the Inverclyde villages. Any of the housing types (tenures) listed below can contribute to affordable housing provision:

- Social rented
- Subsidised low cost housing for sale
- Unsubsidised low cost housing for sale
- Mid-market or intermediate rented

The LDP recommends that developers engage in early discussions with the Council's Housing Strategy Team and Registered Social Landlords to determine the appropriate unit number and type required in the local area. The proposed LDP also includes a new Wheelchair Accessible Policy to help to increase the supply of wheelchair housing in Inverclyde.

## Affordable Housing Supply Programme - Activity Update

Most sites have suffered delays due to the difficulties of building through the pandemic. However, a number of sites which commenced during the period of the previous SHIP are expected to be completed by April 2022. Appendix 2 details the affordable housing completions from 2017-2022 in Inverclyde.

*Oak Tree Housing Association* - 69 new homes are being delivered in the Tweed Street area of Greenock. The two-storey homes are predominantly houses with a mixture of two, three and four bed accommodation, and 32 of the houses can be readily adapted to accommodate wheelchair accessibility. The 16 two, three, and four bed houses to be built at Strone Farm have experienced some delays but project completion is due early in 2022. 71 of the new homes at Ravenscraig will be passed over to Oak Tree as a turnkey project by Link Group.



*Oak Tree's Tweed Street site in development, Greenock*



*Sanctuary's Dubbs Road development, Port Glasgow*

*Sanctuary Scotland* - Sanctuary Scotland has delivered 4 developments across Greenock and Port Glasgow at Lilybank Road, Dubbs Road, Mount Pleasant Street and Broadstone Avenue, which combined deliver 96 units for social rent. The sites offer a range of house types with cottage flats, family homes, wheelchair housing and 24 units of amenity housing.

*Cloch Housing Association* - Cloch Housing Association has provided 57 homes at King's Glen including large family homes and cottage flats, with some homes on split level due to the topography of the site. Consultation with colleagues in HSCP identified a requirement for Throughcare accommodation in the area and this has been taken into account in the housing mix proposals. The four 2 bedroom cottage flats provided for this purpose are now occupied.



*Cloch's Kings Glen development, Greenock*

**Blackwood Group** - The remodelling of the MacLehose Court care home has resulted in 22 additional homes being brought to the west end of Greenock, with a mixture of 1, 2 and 3 bed flats including 3 specialist wheelchair units on the ground floor. All flats have an element of accessibility, utilise the technology aspects of the Blackwood Design Guide, and meet Housing for Varying Needs Standards.



*River Clyde Homes' James Watt Dock development, Greenock*

**River Clyde Homes** - River Clyde Homes have continued to deliver their new build affordable programme in 2021/22 across Greenock and Port Glasgow. The Slaemuir site with 96 one, two, and three bedroom homes, and the 137 one and two bedroom homes at James Watt Dock have now been completed. Wheelchair accommodation is provided on both sites.



*River Clyde Homes' St Stephens development, Port Glasgow*

The 224 homes at the old St. Stephen's school site includes a variety of homes from one bedroom assisted living properties to family homes and also provides wheelchair accessible properties. Handovers have continued throughout 2021/22 with all handovers expected to be completed by June 2022. River Clyde Homes are developing proposals for a potential 20 unit development at Cumberland Walk which will include technology enabled assistance for older people.

**Link Group** - The 149 unit 'phase 1' development at the Ravenscraig Hospital site by Link Group in partnership with Oak Tree Housing will help meet the demand for one bedroom and family homes. Handovers will continue throughout 2022, with all handovers expected by December 2022. 71 of the properties will be handed over to Oak Tree on completion and the remaining 78 will be managed by Larkfield Housing Association. The development benefits from Link's target of providing 10% wheelchair housing and



*Link's Ravenscraig site in development, Greenock*

includes two bespoke three-bedroom bungalows, and 11 ground floor flatted dwellings with fully accessible private gardens. The site will also include 25 amenity cottage flats.

Ravenscraig 'phase 2' achieved site start in November 2021 with final handovers expected by March 2023. The type of housing mix Link are delivering across the 198 unit Ravenscraig development will support residents to live independently for as long as possible in their own homes and communities; it will improve community cohesion, lift local asset values and assist future regeneration.



*Link's Ravenscraig site architects impression, Greenock*

## Homelessness and RRTP

The Covid-19 pandemic has fundamentally changed the homelessness picture within Inverclyde with an increase in homelessness presentations due to people no longer being able to remain in their previous accommodation for a variety of reasons; in particular with increasing numbers of young people presenting as homeless through family breakdown.

In order to respond to the increased presentations, a greater number of temporary furnished flats was required and local RSLs have supported this by providing additional flats to the Homelessness service.

Local Authorities must produce a Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP), and develop the plans in collaboration over a planned and costed phase of 5 years (2019 -20 to 2023-24).

An RRTP governance structure has been created involving a range of stakeholders to oversee the delivery of the RRTP in Inverclyde, to tackle the ongoing impact of Covid-19, and to ensure that strategic housing priorities are aligned and are consistent with RRTP priorities. The RRTP Steering Group leads the governance relating to the RRTP and in October 2020 a Rapid Rehousing Partnership Officer was employed to coordinate delivery of the RRTP.

In association with RSLs, and to address a key requirement of the RRTP of reducing time spent in temporary accommodation, Inverclyde Homelessness Service commenced a process of 'flipping' temporary furnished accommodation into permanent tenancies. Considerations must be made on the homeless applicant's preferred location, and the inherent difficulties of replacing flipped properties to ensure an appropriate supply of temporary accommodation is maintained.

The Homelessness Service are members of the Acquisition Programme Delivery Group which enables them to highlight properties for sale on the open market to RSLs, and be informed when RSLs purchase properties suitable for their client group. This will help to maintain an appropriate supply of emergency temporary accommodation while continuing to quicken access to local settled housing options.

The Homelessness Service is considering further housing options to address homelessness through discussions with owners of currently empty homes; increasing access to the private

rented sector by working collaboratively with private landlords; and by investigating a programme of leasing private rented tenancies.

## Independent Living

All of our new build stock will benefit from the requirement to align with Housing for Varying Needs standards which will ensure that properties can be more easily adapted to suit the needs of our older and mobility impaired populations.

We have also been exploring different ways of supplying housing more suitable to older residents with our RSL and HSCP partners. By providing specific dementia friendly, amenity and wheelchair accommodation; and utilising 24 hour care services allied to technologies such as telehealth and telecare; we will continue to address the housing and health needs of our increasing older population.

Around 100 wheelchair or amenity units suitable for older or mobility impaired residents are due to be completed this year. This number doesn't include the dementia friendly units included at St Stephens.

## Wheelchair Accessible housing

The Scottish Government are committed to reviewing the Housing for Varying Needs design guide, and to introducing new building standards from 2025/26 to underpin a Scottish Accessible Homes Standard which all new homes must achieve. In the meantime, our wheelchair housing will, as a minimum, comply with the design criteria indicated as a 'basic' requirement for wheelchair users, as outlined in the current Housing for Varying Needs design guide. We also work closely with our RSLs and HSCP to ensure bespoke wheelchair accessible housing is delivered where required, and that we meet our wheelchair accessible housing target.

A recent Interim Specialist Housing Provision Review highlighted the need for more wheelchair housing in Inverclyde. A key recommendation was for a new cross-tenure Wheelchair Accessible Housing Target seeking the provision of 5% of all new housing in Inverclyde to be wheelchair accessible. This recommendation was discussed during the consultation process of Inverclyde's Proposed LDP. The Proposed LDP has subsequently received Committee approval for the implementation of a new Wheelchair Accessible Housing Policy: "POLICY 21 - WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE HOUSING - The Council will seek the provision of 5% wheelchair accessible housing on new build development sites of 20 or more units." Therefore all new developments in Inverclyde are now required to provide wheelchair accessible housing, regardless of tenure.

RSLs are delivering more than 40 affordable wheelchair accessible homes in Inverclyde through the AHSP, however the new Wheelchair Accessible Housing Policy now also requires private developers to provide wheelchair accessible homes on future sites in Inverclyde. Further, Inverclyde's Acquisition Programme aims to secure stock in areas of existing housing, providing additional housing options where households have particular requirements.

## Child Poverty

As set out in 'Every Child, Every Chance', the Scottish Government's Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan, access to warm and affordable housing for families living on low incomes is a key factor in tackling child poverty.

All stock owned by RSLs must meet Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH) standards. EESH aims to improve the energy efficiency of social housing in Scotland. It will help to reduce energy consumption, fuel poverty and the emission of greenhouse gases. All of the projects proposed and delivered through the SHIP will meet EESH standards, help to tackle fuel poverty, and ensure that heat is affordable for residents by increasing energy efficiency and reducing the amount of energy required to heat the home. Further, our housing partners will target net zero emissions from affordable housing delivered through the AHSP over the next few years.

Inverclyde Council have been successful recently in delivering the Scottish Government's Energy Efficiency Scotland: Area Based Schemes (ABS) programme. From 2013 to date over £13m ABS funding has been awarded to Inverclyde from the Scottish Government. This includes £1,462,261 awarded for 2021-22. This has helped the council in collaboration with RSLs to provide external wall insulation to over 2300 properties in Inverclyde, making homes more energy efficient and cheaper to keep warm and dry. The latest Scottish House Condition Survey (SHCS) figures show that instances of fuel poverty have reduced from 38% (SHCS 2014-2016) to 31% (SHCS 2016-2018) in Inverclyde due in part to ABS, and AHSP funding.

The high quality, energy efficient new affordable homes delivered through the AHSP plus the success of the ABS programme is improving communities; assisting future regeneration; and most importantly helping to tackle child poverty.

## Quality affordable housing solutions across all tenures

The Council is committed to ensuring that the housing available within Inverclyde meets the needs of existing and new residents. Affordable Housing includes homes for social rent, low cost home ownership/shared equity, shared ownership, mid-market rent and private sector housing delivered below market cost. We continue to investigate a number of low cost housing options and their viability across various sites to address repopulation by increasing the supply of good quality affordable housing solutions across all tenures.

Repopulation is a priority of the Inverclyde Outcomes Improvement Plan. The reasons for population changes are varied and complex, however the availability of good quality housing in places where people want to live is a significant factor. We are discussing the possible delivery of a variety of affordable housing options alongside private homes on an as yet undesignated site. Providing a mix of private and affordable housing on the same site will help to deliver an intergenerational, sustainable community. It would cater for younger people and families who require affordable housing but do not qualify for or simply do not wish to live in socially rented properties; and for older people who may want to downsize or move to more supported accommodation. A variety of appropriate affordable housing allied to proposals for additional private housing will help to retain and attract residents and maintain sustainable communities as part of a wider effort to address population decline.

Delivering new housing is not always the most appropriate method of meeting housing need. Improving housing is the third top priority for people in Scotland after education and the economy, however the condition of some of the private stock in Inverclyde is substandard. This can contribute to public health issues and make the area less appealing to private developers.

We have been aware that a lack of factoring arrangements within some mixed tenure areas has led to difficulties in delivering common repairs and improvement works and investigated with local

RSLs whether acquisition of 'second hand' stock for sale on the open market might be the most appropriate method of meeting housing need. We have now managed to secure AHSP funding to contribute to an Acquisition Programme which will help us to improve stock condition and management, and positively impact on public health and community cohesion. It also enables us to more proactively address an emerging requirement for additional housing options for those with particular housing needs.

Inverclyde Council commissioned planning and property consultants to produce a development strategy for the 'Eastern Gateway' area of Port Glasgow. The strategy identified options and actions that will support mixed use development including housing, business and industrial uses, active travel improvements, public realm and green network enhancements. The Eastern Gateway has now been designated as one of a number of Priority Places in the Proposed LDP due to the importance that the Council places on delivering development on the site, and its potential to have a transformational impact on the surrounding area.

## Acquisition Programme

Housing Strategy discussed with partners the benefits of using a proportion of AHSP funding to help purchase stock for sale on the open market as an appropriate method of meeting strategic housing objectives in Inverclyde.

It was decided that an Acquisition Programme would complement the new build programme and provide additional affordable housing in areas of existing housing. Buying properties from the market allows us to repair, renovate and regenerate; while also continuing to address the need for additional specialist provision and homeless accommodation in areas where new homes cannot be built.

An Acquisition Programme business case and accompanying evidence base was sent to More Homes in March last year detailing our rationale for the programme, suggestions for how we could proceed, and stating the fundamental aims of the Acquisition Programme:

1. To consolidate stock for management and improvement purposes.
2. To secure stock where there is limited supply and limited development opportunities.
3. To secure stock for households with particular requirements.

The Acquisition Programme was subsequently agreed between the council, RSLs and the Scottish Government. With terms that Inverclyde would receive up to £2m grant funding (at a rate of 50% of purchase price, up to £50,000 per property) through the AHSP in the 2021/22 financial year with AHSP funding to be matched by the contributing RSLs: Cloch Housing Association, River Clyde Homes, Link Housing, Larkfield Housing Association and Oak Tree Housing Association. The partners involved in the Acquisition Programme aim to purchase around 40 homes to add to the affordable housing stock within areas of existing housing in Inverclyde in 2021/22.

More Homes also confirmed that where a property would meet identified specialist provision needs but the usual grant limit would not be sufficient to purchase the property, consideration will be given to a higher grant contribution. As part of Inverclyde Council's commitment to the Acquisition Programme it was agreed that the Affordable Housing Fund could be used to support

any acquisitions where partners agreed a purchase would address a significant need but where market value exceeds £100k.

An Acquisition Programme Delivery Group was established with membership from Housing Strategy, RSLs, HSCP and Homelessness, to ensure that all 3 strategic objectives are considered, and to provide a swift response to suitable opportunities on the market. The contributing RSLs have all expressed a desire to continue the programme in the 2022/23 financial year.

## Methodology

The decision making process which determines what projects to prioritise involves many considerations including proposed house type/mix; impact new housing might have on older stock in the area; and ownership of the land to be used for development. When asking for SHIP submission forms from our RSLs, Inverclyde Council stipulate that the new projects which will be prioritised are those which achieve the best balance between the following categories:

- Reflect LHS outcomes (possible 3 points)
- Address Housing Need and Demand (possible 6 points)
- Deliverability (possible 8 points)

We have developed a matrix to determine the priority of each of the proposed sites in the current SHIP. Points are awarded for meeting criteria which relate to each of the three categories. The project with the highest number of points achieves the top position in the SHIP table at Appendix 1. All other projects are listed in order of priority.

Though projects in the SHIP often roll forward from previous submissions, we continue to work with RSL and HSCP partners to monitor how successfully the highest priority projects meet the housing need for the area; their efficacy in helping to achieve the LHS outcomes; and their deliverability. This monitoring process ensures that the housing projects delivered in the area are those which best meet the needs of the population.

Within the SHIP guidance, the Scottish Government stress the importance of applying a minimum slippage factor of 25% to the first year of the SHIP period. Where slippage occurs on our higher priority sites, we have 'slippage projects' which can replace other projects as needed. We have historically benefitted from accelerating alternative projects due to slippage, however we are now entering a leaner period in terms of RSL new build proposals following a recent high number of completions.

## Consultation

This SHIP is the result of ongoing consultation between Housing Strategy, RSLs, and the Scottish Government. Regular programme meetings take place with representation from each of the RSLs and the More Homes division of the Scottish Government to ensure that sites are progressing as they should. This affords the partners the opportunity to highlight any programme delays or complications and formulate solutions.

Similarly, discussions with council colleagues such as those in Roads, Planning, Property Services, Legal and HSCP are fundamental in helping to resolve issues, highlight housing need, and ensure the delivery of development proposals.

In Inverclyde, Housing Strategy, HSCP, and RSLs regularly meet as the Housing, Health & Social Care Group. One of this group's key functions is to analyse the need for specialist housing and housing for particular needs to be included in projects included in the SHIP and upcoming sites.

The ongoing work of the Housing, Health & Social Care Group and the regular programme meetings between Housing Strategy, RSLs and the Scottish Government helps to shape the methodology and determine strategic housing investment priorities for Inverclyde.

## Development Constraints

We strive to identify and highlight potential development constraints very early on by engaging with internal local authority stakeholders including Roads, Planning, Environmental Health, and our Contaminated Land Officer. We also engage with external public bodies as required.

The former Ravenscraig Hospital site received adverse reaction locally due to a number of negative reports in local press relating to contamination levels on the site and a new pedestrian crossing. This situation highlighted to us that public perception due to negative press allegations can be a very real development constraint.

The volume of work involved in responding to queries has highlighted a key lesson to be learned: clear public communication is essential to timely progress of a site. We are now investigating the efficacy of requesting a communications strategy with each SHIP submission form and issuing purposeful, clear and informative press releases at a very early stage of any future major SHIP development project.

The Housing Infrastructure Fund aims to assist key strategic housing projects which have been blocked or unable to proceed due to the extent and costs/financing of infrastructure works involved. The Ravenscraig site has benefitted from this additional funding on offsite works to two junctions which allow entrance to the site for general use on the A78 and emergency vehicular access across a bridge owned by Network Rail. Just under £2 million provided through the Scottish Government's Housing Infrastructure Fund has helped to alleviate these development constraints.

Completion of the current development programme remains our priority but the Council and our stakeholders will continue to identify the most appropriate way for additional affordable housing to meet the outcomes of the Local Housing Strategy. We will continually address additional housing requirements necessitated by the impact of the ongoing pandemic; whether this is in the form of providing additional new build units or open market acquisitions.

## Community benefits

Together with providing contributions to local community groups, all of the RSLs' developers deliver benefits to the community proportional to the value of the development contract. They provide local jobs for local people, apprenticeship opportunities and educational support. They also provide a number of site based work experience placements and contribute to employment fairs throughout the Inverclyde area.

## Council Tax on second and empty homes & Developer Contributions

We received £581,000 from Council Tax on Second and Empty Homes for 2020/21, a slight decrease on the previous year's collection of £593,000. However the figure collected in 2018/19

was £459,000 and the increase in subsequent years is due to a combination of increased long term empty homes levy, the work of our Empty Homes Officer, and more efficient debt collection procedures. From the 1st April 2019 Inverclyde Council introduced a 200% Council tax for properties which have been unoccupied for 12 months or more (it was previously set at 150%).

Inverclyde Council, River Clyde Homes and the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership (Shelter Scotland) jointly funded the role of Inverclyde Empty Homes Officer from 2017/2018 to 2020/21. To date, the Empty Homes Officer has provided over 400 owners of empty homes with advice and information and through direct engagement has brought over 50 empty homes back into use. Moneys from the long term empty levy are redirected into affordable housing in the area. The highest priority for investment with these funds lies in tackling the current degraded condition of the housing stock and contributing to the regeneration of Clune Park.

As a condition of the stock transfer agreement, monies generated from the sale of assets by River Clyde Homes are returned to the Council and distributed to assist in affordable housing delivery. In 2014/15 we received £66,124 from River Clyde Homes due to the sale of land. £15,076 of this was paid to the Scottish Government for knotweed remediation and the remainder was used to pay for unforeseen roads works in phase 3 of the Woodhall development. £70,412 was received from RCH in 2020/21 from the sale of land and sits within the Affordable Housing Fund.

A commuted sum of £150,000 is due from the developer of the navy buildings site in Eldon Street, Greenock. Payment of the commuted sum was dependent on the number of private units the developer was able to complete. 38 of the 98 proposed units were built in 2019/20 which delivered a commuted sum of £60,000 to the council. We received £54,000 in 2020/21, and the final £36,000 has been received in 2021/22 and will be recorded in next year's SHIP. The sums received from River Clyde Homes and from commuted sums are lodged in the Affordable Housing Fund within the Council's Housing Repairs & Renewals Fund and will be made available to assist in the purchase of homes through the Acquisition Programme.

Inverclyde Council previously received £40,000 from a development at Auchneagh Road, and used the sum to buy out the lease of a commercial property at Cumberland Road to allow for the construction of affordable housing. The original flats have now been demolished, the site is now cleared and ready for site investigation and feasibility stage works, and River Clyde Homes are developing proposals for a potential 20 unit project including technology enabled assistance for older people.

## Affordable housing projects for Gypsy/Travellers

Inverclyde Council and Inverclyde HSCP are committed to ensuring equality and diversity. In conjunction with our partners in Police Scotland, we fully recognise the rights and responsibilities of the Gypsy/Traveller community, and the rights of all residents of Inverclyde to enjoy equity of access to services in an atmosphere free from prejudice and discrimination.

We will at all times adopt an approach of co-operation and assistance in response to encampments to ensure that the rights of Gypsy/Travellers and those in the broader community are mutually respected. The responsibility for co-ordinating Inverclyde Council's services to Gypsy/Travellers lies within the HSCP.

Inverclyde Council has no current official site provision for Gypsy/Travellers, either independently or in conjunction with neighbouring authorities and does not believe there is a requirement for any in Inverclyde. This being the case, the council fully recognises Scottish Government

Guidelines for Managing Unauthorised Camping by Gypsy/Travellers. There have been no unauthorised encampments in the area in the past year.

## Equalities and Environmental Assessments

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) was undertaken for the LHS2017-2022 and highlighted that the LHS is likely to have an impact on a range of people who share protected characteristics. It is clear that those who were experiencing homelessness and those in need of an affordable housing solution will benefit from this strategy given the range of measures to enable vulnerable households to access affordable housing.

The development of the SHIP has taken into account the outcomes of the equalities impact assessment and current strategic environmental assessment undertaken within the current Inverclyde LHS and Local Development Plan. The SHIP aims to improve access to housing and housing related services for everyone including those at risk of social exclusion and disempowerment.

In their SHIP submission forms RSL's describe various measures they will take which will meet the equalities agenda such as homes being built to Housing for Varying Needs standard and consideration of homes suitable for older people. The RSLs have developed high specification wheelchair and amenity housing to provide a more complete response to the housing needs of some residents, and their Allocations Policies will also take account of the requirements of equalities legislation.

A Pre-screening report was submitted to SEA Gateway under Section 9(3) of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, indicating that there is no likelihood of significant environmental effects through the LHS2017 -2022. Also in November 2020 an EqIA was completed for the LDP Main Issues report. It was concluded that adoption of the plan which includes a new wheelchair accessible housing policy would have a positive impact on the Protected Characteristic of Disability.

October 2021

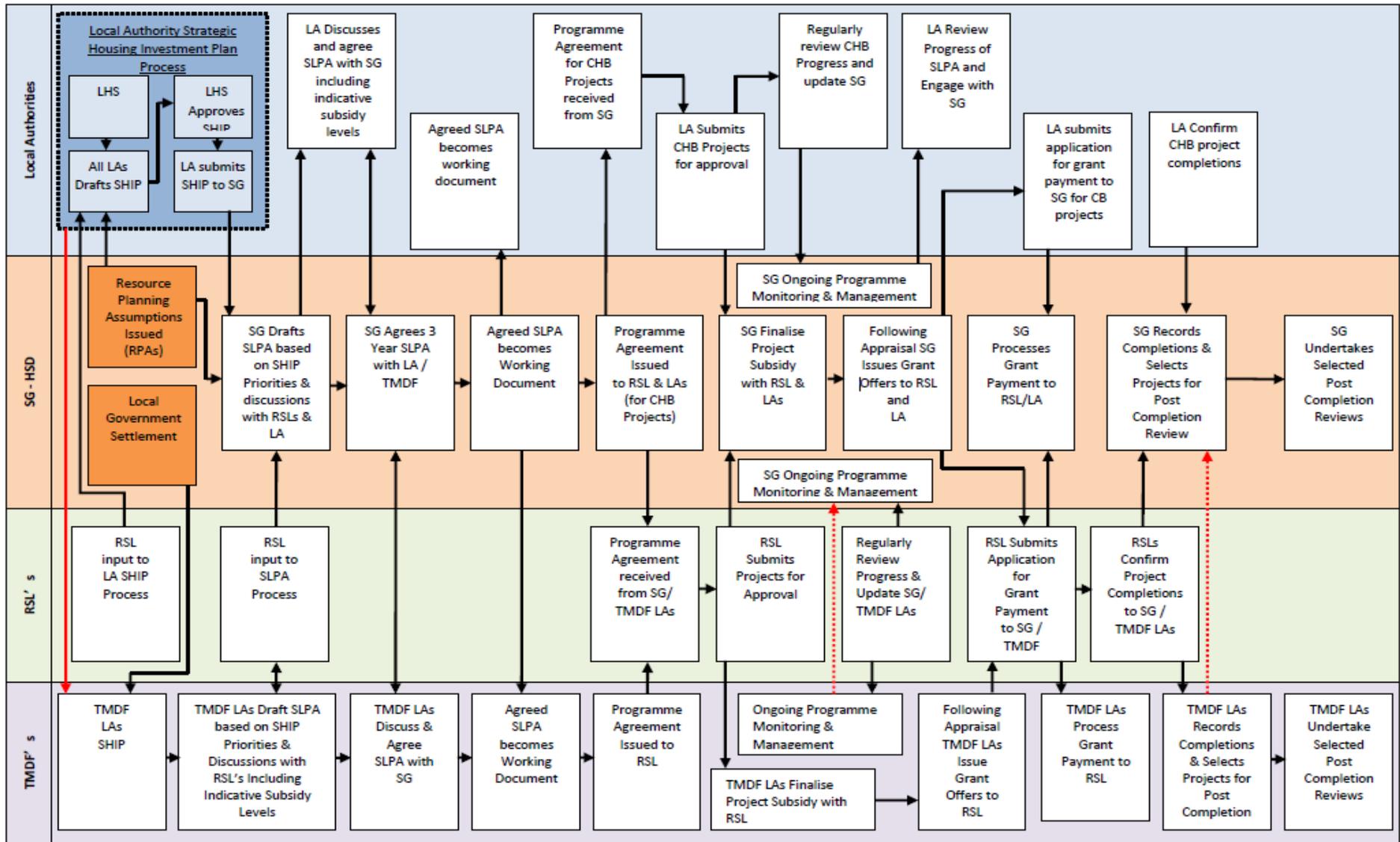
Appendix 1 - Summary of Inverclyde SHIP 2022/23 - 2026/27

PRIORITY PROJECT	AREA	DEVELOPER	UNITS TYPE					COMPLETION DATE					AHSP FUNDING REQUIREMENT			
			Total Units	Type	GN	Specialist Provision	Type of Specialist Provision	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	Total funding required to complete project (£m)	Est. total spend by Mar 22 (£m)	Est. grant requirement Yrs 1-3 (£m)	Est. grant requirement yrs 4-5 (£m)
Ravensraig Hospital	Greenock	Link	149	SR	108	41	16 Wheelchair Accessible / 25 Amenity	149	0	0	0	0	15.382	15.382	0	0
Ravensraig phase 2	Greenock	Link	49	SR	37	12	3 wheelchair & 9 Amenity	49	0	0	0	0	5.643	1.500	4.143	0
Strone Farm	Greenock	Oak Tree	15	SR	15	0		15	0	0	0	0	1.198	1.198	0	0
Acquisition Programme	Inverclyde	Various	40	SR	TBC	TBC	Wheelchair Accessible / Amenity	40	40	40	40	40	2.000	0	6.000	4.000
Former Greenock Health Centre	Greenock	Sanctuary	65	SR/SE	TBC	TBC	Wheelchair Accessible / Amenity	0	65	0	0	0	5.700	0.800	4.900	0
Bay Street	Port Glasgow	Trust	24	SR/SE	0	24	Amenity	0	24	0	0	0	1.728	0	1.728	0
<b>Total</b>			<b>342</b>		<b>160</b>	<b>77</b>		<b>253</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>31.651</b>	<b>18.880</b>	<b>16.771</b>	<b>4.000</b>
<b>SLIPPAGE PROJECT</b>																
West Stewart St./Argyle Street	Greenock	TBC	24	TBC	22	2	2 Wheelchair Accessible / Amenity	0	24	0	0	0	1.205	0	1.205	0
Cumberland Walk	Greenock	RCH	64	SR	61	3	Wheelchair Accessible	0	34	30	0	0	4.608	0	2.160	0
To Be Confirmed	TBC	Loretto	30	TBC	28	2	Wheelchair Accessible	0	0	30	0	0	2.160	0	2.160	
An Other 1	TBC	Oak Tree	30	TBC	28	2	Wheelchair Accessible	0	0	30	0	0	2.160	0	2.160	0
An Other 2	TBC	Oak Tree	15	TBC	15	0		0	0	15	0	0	1.080	0	1.080	0
An Other 3	TBC	Oak Tree	30	TBC	28	2	Wheelchair Accessible	0	0	0	30	0	2.160	0	0	2.160
An Other 4	TBC	Oak Tree	15	TBC	15	0		0	0	0	15	0	1.080	0	0	1.080
<b>Total</b>			<b>208</b>		<b>197</b>	<b>11</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14.453</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8.765</b>	<b>3.240</b>

Appendix 2 – AHSP completions throughout current LHS Period, 2017 to 2022 (projected completion date)

PROJECT	AREA	DEVELOPER	UNITS / TYPE				COMPLETION DATE					AHSP FUNDING REQUIREMENT		
			Total Units	Type	Specialist Provision	Type of Specialist Provision	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	Total Completions (& projected completion date) May 2017 - May 2022	Total Projected Completions Jun 2022 - Mar 2023	Total funding required (£m)
Garvald Street	Greenock	OTHA	45	SR			x					45		3.041
Braeside Road	Greenock	Link	23	SR	2	Wheelchair	x					23		1.713
Acquisitions	Greenock	Cloch	3	SR			x					3		0.064
Bay Street	Port Glasgow	RCH	41	SR	1	Wheelchair		x				41		2.684
Slaemuir Phase 1 & 2	Port Glasgow	RCH	72	SR	2	Wheelchair		x	x			72		4.896
Mallard Bowl	Larkfield	RCH	20	SR				x				20		1.635
Ravensraig Gardens	Greenock	OTHA	36	SR	2	Throughcare			x			36		2.893
Ravensraig Hospital	Greenock	Link	149	SR	41	16 Wheelchair / 25 Amenity							149 (Dec '22)	15.382
Ravensraig phase 2	Greenock	Link	49	SR	12	3 Wheelchair / 9 Amenity							49 (Mar '23)	5.235
St Stephens	Port Glasgow	RCH	224	SR	48	8 Wheelchair / 40 Amenity							224 (Jun '22)	16.128
Kings Glen	Greenock	Cloch	57	SR	4	Throughcare				x		57		4.502
JWD phase 1 & 2	Greenock	RCH	137	SR	8	Wheelchair					x	137		9.936
Multisites	Greenock & PG	Sanctuary	96	SR	24	6 Wheelchair / 18 Amenity				x		96		6.580
Slaemuir Phase 3	Port Glasgow	RCH	24	SR							x	24 (Oct '21)		1.728
Tweed Street (Bow Farm)	Greenock	OTHA	69	SR	2	Wheelchair					x	69 (Dec '21)		5.045
Strone Farm	Greenock	OTHA	16	SR	0								16 (Jun '22)	1.278
MacLehose court remodel	Greenock	Blackwood	22	SR	3	Wheelchair					x	22 (Mar '22)		1.584
Acquisition Programme	Inverclyde	Various	40	SR							x	40 (Mar '22)		2.000
<b>Total</b>			<b>1123</b>		<b>149</b>							<b>685</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>86.323</b>

Appendix 3 - Affordable Housing Supply Programme process



### Inverclyde SHIP Specialist Housing Glossary

*Accessible Housing* - The construction of housing to enable independent living for persons with disabilities. Accessibility is achieved through architectural design, but also by integrating accessibility features such as modified furniture, shelves and cupboards, or even electronic devices in the home.

*Adaptable Housing* - Dwellings with design features that are easily adapted at a later date to flex with the changing needs of the occupants.

*Amenity Housing* - Self-contained accommodation designed to meet the needs of people with an accessible housing need. E.g. no stairs inside (for example, a bungalow); raised electric sockets and lowered switches; handrails in the bathroom; lever handled taps; slip resistant flooring in the kitchen and bathroom etc.

*Assisted Living Housing* - A type of 'housing with care' allowing for independence with assistance with tasks such as washing, dressing, going to the toilet or taking medication.

*Dementia Friendly Housing* - Housing design which minimises risks and enhances wellbeing for people living with Dementia. E.g. no trip hazards; flush thresholds; flat, plain, non-slip flooring & paving; handrails in clear colour contrast to walls; sitting areas where natural light can be introduced etc.

*Housing For Varying Needs* - A design guide which new housing must meet to receive SHIP funding. It describes the concept of designing all housing to accommodate the needs of less able people and has become widely accepted as an essential part of the provision of housing for the majority of older and disabled people. Due to HFVN requirements, all new homes in the SHIP are adaptable.

*Specialist Provision Housing* - There is a range of specialist housing to meet the specific needs of people with disabilities and people with particular needs wishing to live as independently as is practically possible. Housing for people with particular needs is designed or adapted to meet their needs and can include specific or additional support. Usually it involves either specially built or adapted housing, for example, housing for older people or people with disabilities, or houses linked to a support facility.

*Through Care Housing* - Housing for looked after children supported by HSCP.

*Wheelchair Housing* - A home that is fully manageable by wheelchair users and maximises their independence. Wheelchair housing will, as a minimum, comply with the 'basic' requirement for wheelchair users outlined in the Housing for Varying Needs design guide. In addition, Housing Strategy and HSCP work with developing RSLs to ensure bespoke wheelchair accessible housing is delivered where required.

## Social Housing New Build Standards

Across the 8 local authorities in the Glasgow city region, different social housing new build standards are applied depending on where in the region a property is being built and whether the new build is by a local authority or by a Housing Association. The different standards applied include but are not limited to:

- Minimum floor areas
- Housing for Varying Needs (HFVN part 1 and 2)
- Sustainability Level - Building Standards technical handbook level (Bronze, Silver, Gold)
- Storage area requirements (kitchen, wardrobes etc.)
- Wheelchair housing (accessible, readily adaptable and full wheelchair)
- Secure by Design (bronze, silver, gold)
- Digital connectivity
- Home office space

Inverclyde Council do not currently employ our own standard required for the design of specialist provision affordable housing over and above the minimum national requirements currently set by the Scottish Government through the Housing for Varying Needs design guide.

Our developing RSLs have used a number of interchangeable terms to refer to wheelchair housing provision such as wheelchair enabled, wheelchair adaptable, wheelchair exemplar, wheelchair ready, accessible living, lifestyle homes and wheelchair standard. This lack of harmonisation of wheelchair housing categorisation reflects the absence of a national standard and has led to much misunderstanding on what type of 'accessible' housing is being delivered.

To alleviate this lack of clarity over the design of wheelchair housing being delivered, and ensure that the Affordable Housing Supply Programme meets the needs of wheelchair users in Inverclyde, Housing Strategy and HSCP work with developing RSLs to ensure bespoke wheelchair accessible housing is delivered where required.

The 2020 Programme for Government published in early September indicates that the Scottish Government is preparing a National Standard; the government will also soon produce a revised Housing for Varying Needs design guide. This should help clarify exactly what constitutes wheelchair housing, amenity housing etc.

Housing and Social Justice Director  
More Homes Division

Martin McNab  
Inverclyde Council

via email

9 March 2021

Dear Martin

### **INVERCLYDE COUNCIL STRATEGIC HOUSING INVESTMENT PLAN 2021 – 2026**

Thank you for submitting the Inverclyde Council Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2021/22-2025/26.

Housing is embedded in so much that we want to achieve. It has a vital role to play in meeting many of our aspirations, including eradicating child poverty and homelessness, ending fuel poverty, tackling the global climate emergency, promoting inclusive growth and improving the health and wellbeing of our communities.

The 2021/22 draft Scottish budget allocates £831.615 million to support the delivery of more affordable homes and is part of the £3.444 billion outlined for affordable housing over the next five years...

We are grateful for the incredible amount of work that has been undertaken to date by a wide range of partner organisations towards delivering the 50,000 affordable homes target, particularly over this last challenging year when construction was halted for a number of months and local authorities had a range of additional pressures to manage and deliver. It has been encouraging to see that despite the challenges of homeworking that regular open communication between your team and the More Homes Division Area Teams has continued to take place.

As you know, the Scottish Government places significant importance on the SHIP as the expression of the local authority's strategic investment priorities, and as the plan for the effective local delivery of the Affordable Housing Supply Programme in line with your Local Housing Strategy (LHS), in consultation with stakeholders and delivery partners. The Scottish Government will continue to seek updates to SHIPs annually, and will therefore be seeking an update to the SHIP by 30 October 2021. It remains important that all local authorities continue to secure the appropriate corporate buy in to these plans and that there is full corporate and stakeholder support to deliver the projects included in the SHIP. The SHIP forms the cornerstone of Strategic Local Programme Agreements (SLPAs), and the Inverclyde Council SLPA for 2021/22 will be issued next financial year.

We have now reviewed the SHIP submitted by the Council for the period 2021 to 2026 and our feedback comments have been structured around four overarching themes, together with some general comments.

### **SHIP fit with LHS Outcomes**

The SHIP clearly demonstrates a fit with the identified 6 outcomes in the Council's LHS and the LHS outcomes are referred to throughout the document including highlighting which outcomes are being met. It is noted that work on a revised LHS will commence in early 2021, following completion of a new HNDA, which will address the lack of land supply for new housing which led to Chapter 7 of the LHS, "Our Homes and Communities" being refused by the Court of Session. It is noted that as part of this a 25% affordable homes quota will apply to greenfield developments within the 4 Inverclyde villages. It is encouraging to note that the Council is considering options for delivering affordable housing alongside new private housing to assist in delivering intergenerational, sustainable communities. .

Despite the decreasing population within the authority the SHIP identifies the need to continue to replace poor quality, unsuitable and unsustainable housing. Considering these factors a Housing Supply Target of 280 new homes per annum has been set, of which 90 would be affordable homes.

The SHIP highlights that 4 out of every 10 households within the authority is expected to be a single person household by 2029 with a projection that the majority will be inhabited by older people. This demographic will inform what is being delivered from the Affordable Housing Supply Programme, including the potential future requirement for specialist provision. It is encouraging to note that around 100 wheelchair or amenity units suitable for older or mobility impaired residents will be completed during 2021 which will contribute homes most in need for the authority's demographic. Of this 42 wheelchair accessible homes will be provided during the course of the year which well exceeds the 3% target.

Like elsewhere, COVID-19 has led to an increase in homeless presentations and in particular there has been an increasing number of young people presenting as homeless following family breakdown. It is encouraging to note that RSLs have recently increased the number of temporary furnished flats available to homeless

people from 25 to 60, although it is noted this is insufficient for current demand. The joint initiative between the Homeless service and RSLs to help determine additional affordable rented supply requirements is welcomed.

### **Prioritisation and Deliverability**

This SHIP provides helpful detail on new affordable homes which have been provided in Inverclyde since the last SHIP, as well as information on those projects due to complete over the coming year. There is little detail on the future priorities of the Council in relation to new affordable supply over the period of the SHIP, and in particular it is noted that only 4 sites, which could provide 128 new homes, have been detailed in the summary Appendix 1. Of these, 3 are highlighted in the slippage programme and it is not clear whether these are strategic priorities for the authority, or indeed what the strategic focus of the authority is for the supply of new affordable homes.

Appendix 1 details an AHSP requirement of £59.539 over the SHIP period however the majority of this funding has already been claimed against identified projects. For example, a requirement of £16.128 is noted for St Stephens but this funding was fully drawn down by RCH in 2019/20. Similarly funding for JWD has been fully spent, Kings Glen will be fully spent by the end of 2020/21 and a large proportion of funding identified for Ravenscraig Phase 1 and Tweed St will also have been claimed by the end of the current financial year. Funding for Slaemuir Phase 3 is also included but this support, from the Charitable Donation programme, was drawn down by RCH 2 years ago.

As the SHIP is intended to be an indication of the potential demand on the Affordable Housing Supply Programme over a 5 year period, it is important that the Council presents accurate information. The SHIP as currently presented does not achieve this, rather it overstates the financial demands from already approved developments, by a significant margin. This means that, at face value, it might appear that there is little or no scope, within likely Resource Planning Assumptions going forward, to incorporate new opportunities to address housing need, which is clearly not the case. As a result of the inaccurate spend assumptions contained within the SHIP the identified new programme going forward is substantially less than Inverclyde has achieved over recent years.

In view of this, and the more modest HST of 90 new affordable homes, we would welcome early further discussion with you about the Council's new affordable homes priorities over the next SHIP period and I would be grateful if we could get a meeting in the diary as soon as possible.

We are aware that the Council is considering, in conjunction with partners, the potential benefits of utilising AHSP funding to support a programme of off the shelf purchases as a means of repairing homes, regenerating target areas and addressing the need for additional specialist provision. I would welcome an early discussion with you on the reasons the Council has for identifying this as a strategic imperative. It is understood that the Council will, in consultation with RSL providers, the Homelessness

Service and HSCP, prepare an Acquisition and Refurbishment Strategy for a rolling programme to consolidate ownership, secure stock where there are limited development opportunities and secure house types for households with particular requirements.

While no indication has been provided of the level of resource the Council would propose to direct to an acquisition strategy, we would highlight that while strategically agreed purchase of existing stock can be included in the programme, particularly where there are limited opportunities for new build options, at this time the focus of the AHSP is new provision. It should also be pointed out that our agreed system of benchmark grant levels relate to the provision of new build properties, built to Housing for Varying Needs standards. It would therefore be helpful to include us in the development of your plans for off the shelf purchases. We can include discussion on such a potential acquisition strategy with you when we have our meeting to discuss your wider programme.

### **Local Authority Contribution / Engagement**

The SHIP is the result of continuing consultation with RSLs, the HSCP and Scottish Government officials as well as relevant Council departments such as Roads, Property Services, Planning and Legal Services.

It highlights that regular meetings of the Housing Partnership Group, attended by representatives from the Council, the HSCP and RSLs, are held as the key means of analysing the need for specialist housing and identifying suitable projects for inclusion in the SHIP. It is not clear whether this Group has continued to meet virtually since March 2020 and SG officials would be happy to attend and input at these meetings as required.

It was highlighted in the feedback to the previous SHIP that there is no evidence of any wider community consultation on the SHIP and there is no reference to such consultation in this SHIP. While it is appreciated that the circumstances in the past year would have made wider community consultation more challenging, this is an aspect we would encourage the Council to address in the preparation of future SHIPs.

### **Equalities**

We note that an Equality Impact Assessment was carried out on the LHS 2017-22 which indicated the strategy would have a positive impact on a range of people who share protected characteristics. In particular it is highlighted in the SHIP that those who experience homelessness and are in need of affordable housing will benefit from implementation of the SHIP given the range of measures to enable vulnerable households to access affordable housing.

It is welcomed that the section on the SHIP on sites for the Gypsy/Traveller community has been expanded and clarification provided that the Council fully recognises the Scottish Government Guidelines for Managing Unauthorised Camping by

Gypsy/Travellers. It is noted that there have be no authorised encampments over the past year.

### **General comments**

- We note that the Inverclyde SHIP 2021/22 - 2025/26 was approved at the Council's Environment and Regeneration Committee on the 14th January 2021 and that it has been loaded onto HARP as a "Live" SHIP.
- The SHIP makes reference to the impact of the Covid pandemic on delivery of the affordable housing programme in Inverclyde. It is also highlighted that Covid resulted in "escalating construction costs", we would welcome any specific knowledge you have regarding this. To date only one RSL in Inverclyde has requested an uplift in funding to cover a small contractor's additional costs as a result of Covid.

I hope that you find these comments helpful as you take the SHIP forward. I would be grateful if you could contact Caryn McDade ([caryn.mcdade@gov.scot](mailto:caryn.mcdade@gov.scot)) to set up meeting to discuss your affordable housing programme.

Please continue to ensure that the SHIP is an available plan that is published on the Inverclyde Council website, it would be helpful if you could confirm this has been done.

Yours sincerely



**Anne-Marie Thomson**  
**Area Manager - Glasgow and Clyde**  
**More Homes Division**