
Report To:	Policy & Resources Committee	Date:	16 September 2025
Report By:	Interim Director – Regeneration	Report No:	PR/24/25/NM/JH
Contact Officer:	Jennifer Horn	Contact No:	01475 715573
Subject:	Repopulation Strategy 2025-2028		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 ☒ For Decision ☒ For Information/Noting
- 1.2 This report presents the Proposed Inverclyde Repopulation Strategy 2025-2028 (Appendix 1) for approval.
- 1.3 The Strategy is intended to provide a programme of activity on tackling depopulation, utilising Inverclyde Council and Scottish Government funding, the latter being provided as part of a national programme of activity to combat population decline within a programme of funded pilot areas, which includes Inverclyde, to trial initiatives to combat population decline. The Strategy also identified links with other key policy documents that will be delivering impact in tackling population decline and seeks to provide a coherent mapping of activity.
- 1.4 The report seeks approval of the Repopulation Strategy 2025-2028 including action plan, which will become a live document; and to update the Alliance Board of the Strategy for information and to support co-delivery of the strategy.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- i) approves the Repopulation Strategy noted in appendix 1;
 - ii) agree to present an update to the Alliance Board to advise partners and secure support for the delivery of the strategy.

Neale McIlvanney
Interim Director – Regeneration

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 Inverclyde has experienced one of the most sustained patterns of depopulation in urban Scotland over several decades. Since 1981, the area has lost approximately 22,000 residents. More recently, between 1998 and 2021, Inverclyde's population declined by 8.9%, making it the local authority with the highest negative change in Scotland, compared to a national population growth of 8.2%.
- 3.2 The most recent decade (2011 and 2021) saw a further 5.6% decrease. As of 2022, Inverclyde's estimated population was 77,280. This figure is projected to fall to 72,280 by 2028, a decrease of 6.1% over six years. While there has been a small rise in net migration in recent years, this has not been enough to offset natural population decline. Without intervention, longer terms forecasts suggest an additional 13% decline by 2040.
- 3.3 The drivers of depopulation in Inverclyde reflect complex, urban specific challenges including the legacy of deindustrialisation, economic restructuring, housing issues and outward migration of younger residents.
- 3.4 It is not only the fall in population that presents challenges, the demographic makeup also presents future challenges. Inverclyde is experiencing significant demographic shifts, with over one in five residents aged 65 or older (22.8% in 2023), compared to the Scottish national average. The number of children under 16 is projected to decline by 15%, while the working-age population is also expected to fall by 15% over the coming decades. Young adults, particularly those under 25, continue to leave Inverclyde in steady numbers, often for work or education. Additionally, 39.5% of households are single-person households, a figure linked to an ageing population and declining birth rates.
- 3.5 The shift in demographics and declining population has wide reaching implications for the area's economy, public services, housing and community wellbeing.
- 3.6 The Scottish Government's Addressing Depopulation Action Plan (2024) identifies Inverclyde as a key urban area for targeted repopulation activity. Inverclyde Council has strengthened its approach by embedding population sustainability within the 2023-2028 Council Plan. Aims to address depopulation in Inverclyde can be seen throughout many of the Council's strategies and plans.
- 3.7 To support the delivery of the agenda, a dedicated Community Repopulation Officer was appointed in March 2025, part funded through the Scottish Government's Addressing Depopulation Grant. This has been supported through Inverclyde Council.
- 3.8 There has been an evaluation of previous studies, interventions, and recommendations from the 2019 Repopulation Strategy, along with current activity aimed at addressing depopulation within Inverclyde. This includes reviewing updated data sources, the 2022 Census, mid-year 2024 statistics, local benchmarking indicators, stakeholder feedback, and national, regional and local council policy documents and plans to assess whether the underlying drivers of depopulation have changed.
- 3.9 Though it is clear progress has been made since 2019 but also highlighted areas where further action is needed as well as some actions remaining outstanding, and which have been adopted under the proposed Strategy.

4.0 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 It is recommended that Committee approve the proposed Repopulation Strategy (Appendix 1) which sets out strategic actions for 2025–2028).
- 4.2 The actions set out in this strategy are within the following key themes:
- Undertaking focused research to advance the Council’s strategic understanding of the drivers of depopulation and short, medium and long term interventions to progress sustainable population increase together with a clear understanding of the resources required to respond to depopulation in the medium to long term to inform future strategies.
 - Development of a coordinated view of the network of plans, policies and strategies that can positively support repopulation and influencing future policies to ensure all policy levers are being utilised and coordination of activity is taking place through development of an effective monitoring toolkit.
 - Implementation of tangible initiatives to tackle population decline in the short term – including place marketing, business support and support for families moving to Inverclyde and support for new to Scotland residents across economic development, communities and education services.
- 4.3 To achieve the actions budget for repopulation is a total of £120k which comprises of £90k from Inverclyde Council Earmarked Reserves and a £30k grant from Scottish Government which must be spent by the end of the financial year. The Scottish Government grant has already supported £30k of investment in activity contained in the Action Plan during financial year ending March 2025.
- 4.4 The Community Resettlement Officer is already in post and has assembled the Strategy and engaged widely with partners to inform interventions. The residual funding is allocated within the Strategy to actions aligning with the strategic objectives set out in 4.2. It is recognised that while the resource/funding available through the programme is welcome and will make a difference, there will require to be future iterations and potentially further and more significant resources allocated to addressing depopulation. As such, the strategy seeks to inform the future through research, partnership working and direct interventions. As a result of the funding timescales (i.e. 2 years), the Strategy has been developed with a short lifespan in order that the output of the programme informs the next iteration of the Council Plan – and other strategic policies. It is intended that the Action Plan within the Strategy will be ‘live’ so that periodic updates can be provided to government, partners (e.g. through Alliance Board) and so that as the officer advances proposals in collaboration with partners, any new identified actions or resources can be added to the Plan.
- 4.5 It is also clear in the challenge, that this cannot be ‘solved’ by the Council alone and requires multi-service, multi-agency and community support. Population decline can only be reversed with everyone working together, in their policies and practices, to embed solutions that promote repopulation, and do not negatively impact re-population efforts. As such, it is also recommended that this work is presented to the Alliance Board to update community planning partners and seek buy in and support to a co-delivery model whereby partners all work to address depopulation.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial	x	

Legal/Risk		
Human Resources	x	
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)	x	
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing	x	
Environmental & Sustainability		
Data Protection		

5.2 Finance

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
	Repopulation	2025-2027	£30k of Scottish Government Funding £63k of Council allocated EMR		

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

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

5.3 Legal/Risk

None.

5.4 Human Resources

A temporary post was created and recruitment was successful for the Repopulation Officer.

5.5 Strategic

De-population has far ranging consequences across Council services and beyond.

5.6 Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People

(a) Equalities

This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process with the following outcome:

x	YES – Assessed as relevant and an EqIA is required.
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	NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, assessed as not relevant and no EqlA is required. Provide any other relevant reasons why an EqlA is not necessary/screening statement.
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(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

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 – Assessed as not relevant under the Fairer Scotland Duty for the following reasons: Provide reasons why the report has been assessed as not relevant.

(c) Children and Young People

Has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – Assessed as relevant and a CRWIA is required.
X	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve a new policy, function or strategy or recommends a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy which will have an impact on children's rights.

5.7 Environmental/Sustainability

Has a Strategic Environmental Assessment been carried out?

	YES – assessed as relevant and a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required.
X	NO – This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme, strategy or document which is like to have significant environmental effects, if implemented.

5.8 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 – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 Throughout the delivery of the Strategy, broad engagement will be vital to success. It is envisaged that the programme of work will have its own governance model to coordinate activity within the Council, and to allow the Government monitoring and evaluation to be complete. However, it is also envisaged that this item should be presented to a future Alliance Board to update partners and to seek cooperation from partners to delivery.

In addition, within the research it is envisaged that lived experience focus groups will be established to focus on young people, new Scots, and population groups that are most likely to leave Inverclyde or be attracted to move to Inverclyde. This research will be critical to focusing future interventions on areas of biggest impact.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 Appendix 1: Inverclyde Repopulation Strategy 2025-2028

Appendix 1

INVERCLYDE COUNCIL – REPOPULATION STRATEGY 2025-2028



Introduction

This strategy provides a focus for supporting strategic effort to stop population decline in Inverclyde.

The continued natural decline, people moving to other parts of Scotland, and a heavy reliance on international migration have all had a long-term impact on Inverclyde's socio-economic profile and taking action to stop population decline is vital to creating a sustainable and prosperous Inverclyde.

The Council has embedded population sustainability as a key focus of its **2023–2028 Council Plan** and it is an accepted priority within a wider network of policies and strategies at a local, regional and national level. In particular, the **Scottish Government's Addressing Depopulation Action Plan (2024)** has a focus on Inverclyde as a key area for repopulation, recognising that the requirement to support the reversal of population decline in Inverclyde is of national significance.

This strategy seeks to align the collective efforts of those policy drivers and our partners to make a difference and provide a coherent work programme for the Community Repopulation Officer, appointed in 2025, partly funded through the Scottish Government's Addressing Depopulation Action Plan.

This timeline for the strategy has a short-term horizon (2025-2028) to reflect that funding availability through the Addressing Depopulation Action Plan provides funding for the recruitment of a population officer for two-year period; that the funding available, inclusive of Council funding, provides a basis to deliver some small-scale interventions alongside research to advance our understanding of strategic medium-long terms interventions which may require significant resource to deliver.

While this strategy sets out how Inverclyde Council, working with partners, will use this opportunity to build a strong, coordinated approach to tackle depopulation, it is intended that a strategy refresh is undertaken for beyond 2028 and to tie in with the Council Plan refresh that will take place, looking beyond 2028, building on research, lessons learned and successes of short-term interventions.



This Repopulation Strategy is about creating the right conditions for change. It focuses on coordinating policy, attracting investment, and directing effort where it can have the biggest impact in housing, economic opportunity, place-making, and community well-being. It also outlines a plan for focused community engagement highlighting the need to work with residents and partners to design solutions that are relevant, inclusive, and sustainable.

Vision and Strategic Objectives

Our vision is **to reverse population decline and foster a vibrant, inclusive, and economically resilient Inverclyde that attracts and retains residents of all ages and backgrounds.**

Underpinning the vision, a series of strategic objectives have been identified to coordinate policy development and interventions to tackle population decline. The Strategic objectives for this strategy are set out as follows:

1. **Enhance Inverclyde's appeal as a place to live, work, and invest.**
2. **Support sustainable communities with improved infrastructure and housing options and services.**
3. **Promote inclusive economic growth and job creation.**
4. **Strengthen local identity and pride through culture, heritage, and community engagement.**
5. **Undertake a phased approach to action by establishing strategic priorities and a short-medium programme of action, while undertaking research and analysis to inform medium to long term interventions.**

Vision: To reverse population decline and foster a vibrant, inclusive, and economically resilient Inverclyde that attracts and retains residents of all ages and backgrounds.

Background

Inverclyde has seen one of the most sustained urban depopulation trends in Scotland for decades. Since 1981, the area has lost approximately 22,000 residents. Between 1998 and 2023, Inverclyde’s population declined by 8.5%, the sharpest decline of any Scottish local authority over that period. This contrasts with national growth of around 8%. Notably, the decade between 2013 and 2023 saw a further fall of 5%.

After decades of decline, new data from the National Records of Scotland shows that Inverclyde’s population has grown for two years in a row. The mid-2023 estimate is 78,780, up 0.5% from 2022. By mid-2024, the population reached 78,880, a 0.6% increase since Census Day 2022. While these are small gains compared to other areas in Scotland, they represent a significant shift for Inverclyde.

“Between 1998 and 2023, Inverclyde’s population declined by 8.5%, the sharpest decline of any Scottish local authority over that period. This contrasts with national growth of around 8%.”

Drivers of Population Change

Analysis of the NRS components of population change highlights the following:

- Natural change remains negative: From 2022 to 2024, deaths outnumbered births, causing a loss of 1,051 people (2022–23: -548; 2023-24: -503).
- Migration is driving growth: During this period, net migration added 1,580 people, more than offsetting natural decline.
- International migration contributed most, with a net gain of 950 in 2022–23 and 730 in 2023-24.
- Migration within Scotland led to a small net loss (-80 in 2022-23; -160 in 2023-24).
- Migration with the UK was slightly positive (+80 in 2022-23; +30 in 2023-24).
- Inverclyde’s population grew by 530 between 2022 and 2024, despite ongoing natural decline.

Demographic Profile

Inverclyde’s demographic structure continues to reflect long-term trends of ageing and outmigration of young adults:

- 15.4% of the population is aged under 16 (Scotland: 16.2%).
- 61.6% are of working age 16–64 (Scotland: 63.3%).
- 23% are aged 65 and over (Scotland: 20.5%).

This means Inverclyde has an older population than the national average. Although every Scottish council area has seen an increase in people over 65 in the last decade, Inverclyde depends more on international migration to balance its numbers, making its population structure more vulnerable.

Why is it important to reverse depopulation?

A shrinking and aging population puts pressure on services, housing, and the local economy. This reduces the number of working-age residents needed to support the economy.

If young people continue to leave and fewer families choose to stay or move to the area, schools, businesses, and community facilities will likely struggle to thrive.

By creating a demographic balance that attracts and retains younger people, families, and working-age residents, along with supporting older residents, Inverclyde can build more sustainable communities. This will help safeguard services and create a stronger foundation for future growth.

Strategic Case

A comprehensive strategic case has been prepared to outline work that has been undertaken over the last decade on population decline in Inverclyde, covering various research and analysis pieces. The Strategic Case provides information on key trends causing decline, drivers, mitigation and opportunities, and reviews best practice in other areas. It also provides an overview of the range of activities that have already taken place or are planned. The Strategic Case analyses gaps in delivery from previous strategic recommendations, and this has been critical to underpinning the Action Plan in this strategy, which seeks to take positive short-term action to implement those priorities.

The Strategic Case is presented as Appendix 1 to this Strategy and provides extensive additional background information.



Policy Context

Tackling depopulation in Inverclyde is an established strategic priority that is reflected in local, regional and national strategies.

A summary of the policies delivered through existing policies and strategies is provided as follows:



Policy	Key Policy Provisions
Inverclyde Council Plan 23/28	<p>The Council Plan focuses on housing led regeneration, creating jobs, improving local services and tackling inequality under themes of People and Place to combat population change.</p> <p>The Council Plan identifies as a key challenge that from 2023 there is “an anticipated population reduction of 5% over the next 5 years, driven by there being fewer births than deaths”.</p> <p>The Council Plan lifecycle to 2028 provides an appropriate timeline to match the cycle of this strategy. Given the funding support for repopulation is short term, and the actions in this strategy have been aligned to that, it is considered that there will be benefit in aligning the outcomes from this strategy with the development of the next Council Plan.</p>
Inverclyde Alliance Plan	<p>The Alliance is a partnership including a range of local partners (Council, NHS, college, police, third sector). The plan commits to making Inverclyde a healthier, fairer place where people want to stay or move to.</p> <p>The Alliance Plan 2023-33 includes a strategic objective of “Growth in our working age population by encouraging people to stay here and attracting new people to settle here”.</p> <p>It is recommended that feedback and updates to the Alliance Board is a critical element of the strategic approach to tackling population decline as it depends on action across the range of partners on the Alliance. This is considered further in the Action Plan.</p>
Inverclyde Socio Economic Taskforce	<p>A special partnership to deal with job losses and population decline. It identifies projects and investments that can bring more jobs and skills, support for business and homes. While only some key asks of the Taskforce have to date been met, the existence of the Taskforce has been useful in gaining special regional priority status for Inverclyde and the Taskforce is evolving to continue to ensure partners contribute to the socio-economic challenges facing Inverclyde, including population decline.</p>

Local Housing Strategy	<p>The Local Housing Strategy guides the management and delivery of strategic housing in Inverclyde. This covers provision of new development of all tenures, housing-led regeneration and fuel poverty. It is governed by a strategic partnership of registered social landlords, development interests and community partners. It works allied to the LDP in meeting strategic housing needs.</p> <p>It is recognised that there are systematic challenges in the housing sector in Inverclyde and the recent Housing Summit sought to gain traction amongst partners to reinvigorate development interest and apply innovation solutions to stimulating the housing market. It is recommended that the Action Plan within this strategy identified effective means of monitoring progress as the influence this population will have is significant.</p>
Inverclyde Economic Growth Strategy (2025) - Draft	<p>The draft Growth Plan is intended to stimulate economic growth by prioritising key actions that will transform and grow our economy. Within a series of missions, Mission 3 explicitly focuses on reversing population decline and linking this to affordable housing, fair work (Real Living Wage), and Community Wealth Building. The draft Plan is currently undergoing engagement with partners and key agencies to build support to delivering actions in the key theme areas of the Plan, and the drafting of this was predicated on their being identified actions emerging from the repopulation strategy.</p>
Inverclyde Local Development Plan	<p>This is the 'land use' plan, which sets out rules for new development. It aims to make Inverclyde more attractive by improving town centers, transport, and infrastructure, encouraging people to live and work here. The currently adopted LDP is dated 2019 and a refreshed LDP is underway. This will require to align with NPF4 (below). One of the key challenges facing the LDP is stimulating housing delivery from a baseline of near zero. Currently the Council has a land supply that is greater than estimated need and it is anticipated the LDP will review whether the right land allocations are made to stimulate delivery. It is recommended that the repopulation officer works closely with the LDP team to integrate and embed repopulation principles in key policy strands of the LDP.</p>
Glasgow City Region – Economic Strategy	<p>The regional economic strategy recognises that some communities within the city region are suffering from depopulation, whilst others are suffering from too much demand. It looks to work with partners on targeted programmes that address local challenges by providing jobs for local residents, access to the right skills needed for local employers, connectivity to employment opportunities and resilient housing provision.</p> <p>Inverclyde Council is working with the City Region to adapt the regional economic strategy to reflect that Inverclyde was recognised as having special priority status within the city region to combat the range of socio-economic challenges affecting Inverclyde, including depopulation.</p>
Supporting and enabling sustainable communities: An Action Plan to Address Depopulation	<p>Depopulation within urban communities in Scotland is most apparent in Inverclyde, where a 5.6% population decline has been observed between 2011 and 2021. As set out in the opening chapter of this Action Plan, it is generally considered that the drivers of depopulation are different in urban settings compared to rural areas. The effects of post-industrialisation and deprivation are understood to have played a pivotal role in driving demographic and population change in the area, but the Scottish Government recognises the opportunity, through this Action Plan, to set out initial action which will be delivered in partnership with Inverclyde Council, focusing on locally identified priorities to enable future population attraction and retention measures to be successful. The work of the Inverclyde Socio-Economic Taskforce has identified a number of investment proposals to generate growth in the local economy, with the aim of stabilising the population. The Scottish Government participates in the Taskforce and will consider all proposals for action in detail. That work complements the wide range of other work being delivered by the Scottish Government and partners which will support wider strategic objectives for the area, such as the Glasgow City Region City Deal. Through a funding model similar to that being used to retain the Community Settlement Officers in Argyll and Bute, the Highlands, and Na h-Eileanan Siar, the Scottish Government will partner with Inverclyde Council to deliver a Community Settlement Officer focused on addressing depopulation in Inverclyde. The role will acknowledge opportunities identified locally to support the retention of new cohorts of people in the area, such as those granted asylum.</p>
National Planning Framework 4	<p>NPF4 requires Local Development Plans (LDPs) to plan for housing needs and provides support for the use of abandoned or underused places set out in a place focused strategy. NPF4 recognises that reversing depopulation is a strategic priority and includes policies reflective of the differing needs across Scotland. NPF4 encourages</p>

	<p>sustainable development that helps support existing communities and resettlement in previously declining areas. The document aligns with wider planning policies like net zero, inclusive economic development, 20-minute neighborhoods and protecting biodiversity.</p> <p>The emerging Inverclyde LDP will require to form a development plan for Inverclyde with the NPF4.</p>
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Key Considerations:

- There is a broad and accepted prioritisation of addressing depopulation within local, regional and national policy. The vision and strategic objectives in this strategy reflects common aspirations across these documents
- Notwithstanding the policies above, which have a direct reference to depopulation, there will be a more extensive policy system beyond this, including through Alliance partners, Health and Social Care partners, agencies and private and third sector organisations. It would be beneficial for a comprehensive policy audit to be undertaken to provide a clear understanding of all the policy interventions in place to combat depopulation, to identify gaps in policy provision that can be enhanced through adaptation and to work with partners to identify gaps in policy, particularly where additional interventions can be identified and implemented.
- Particularly with regard to housing and development opportunities, and reflecting on the recent Inverclyde Housing Summit, there is a strategic link between the Local Housing Strategy and the emerging Local Development Plan. Those strategic documents have a fundamental role in provision of housing options and supporting delivery of new development, as well as wider delivery of placemaking solutions including relationship between population and demand on infrastructure. While the Action Plan within this strategy is focused on a 25-28 horizon, prioritising advancing research of interventions, **the Action Plan for this strategy should include development of a population impact toolkit to track impact of actions within those documents on supporting repopulation.** This should not be a replication of action or action tracking in those documents, but a strategic toolkit to understand the wider impact of the priorities within those strategies.

Action Plan 2025-2028

As set out above, the Action Plan has a focus up to 2028. Tackling population decline is multi-faceted and complex. The Strategy intends to make a meaningful difference by development of research and analysis of the issue and short-term interventions. The actions set out in this strategy are within the following key themes:

- Advancing the Council's strategic understanding of the drivers of depopulation and short, medium and long term interventions to tackle depopulation
- Developing a clear understanding of the resources required to respond to depopulation in the medium to long term to inform future strategies
- Development of a coordinated view of the network of plans, policies and strategies that can positively support repopulation and influencing future policies
- Development of an effective monitoring toolkit
- Implementation of tangible initiatives to tackle population decline in the short term.

Given that the population officer will oversee the implementation of many of the actions through engagement with partners, it is anticipated that the action plan will operate as a live action plan, so that as new initiatives or resources emerge, they can form part of the Action Plan.

The interventions associated with this strategy are set out in the following Action Plan:

Action	Lead Delivery Partner	Description	Timescale
Policy, Governance and Research			
Repopulation Strategy	Inverclyde Council (<i>Repopulation Officer</i>)	<p>A Repopulation Strategy will be developed to prioritise actions to combat population decline and inform future strategies. This will include enhancing the evidence base, enhancing policy interventions and establishing a programme of pilot interventions as part of the Scottish Government's Depopulation Action Plan.</p> <p>Resources – Utilisation of Inverclyde Council/ SG Population Fund through officer time</p>	September 2025
Repopulation Policy Audit	Inverclyde Council (<i>Repopulation Officer</i>)	<p>A comprehensive review of plans, policies, strategies to identify where policies can be enhanced to have greater impact on halting depopulation.</p> <p>Resources – Utilisation of Inverclyde Council/ SG Population Fund through officer time</p>	March 2026
Repopulation Monitoring Toolkit	Inverclyde Council (<i>Repopulation Officer</i>)	<p>We will develop a dynamic monitoring toolkit for measuring and reporting on the impact of the LHS and LDP in delivering the vision and strategic objectives of this strategy.</p> <p>Resources – Utilisation of Inverclyde Council/ SG Population Fund through officer time</p>	March 2026
Population Research	Inverclyde Council/ GC Intelligence Hub	<p>We will undertake targeted research to fill gaps in existing research to design medium- and long-term interventions/ projects that are targeted and measurable in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Retention: Opportunity to link with Employability and Housing Strategy to look at the needs and aspirations of Young People in Inverclyde, primarily Greenock and port Glasgow as Priority Place areas. Linking economic development, housing and young people. • Business Needs: Engagement with a range of local employers will take place to identify recruitment barriers to local employers and opportunities to match individuals moving to Inverclyde with work opportunities. 	March 2026

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lived Experience Engagement: The research will involve listening to people's experiences- a variety of participatory research methods such as focus groups and interviews to obtain qualitative data necessary to help us understand better and inform projects/interventions. <p>Resources – Utilisation of Inverclyde Council/ SG Population Fund (est. £7.5k) / partnership with GCR Intelligence Hub (currently undertaking research)</p>	
Formation of Re-population Partnership	Inverclyde Council	<p>We will bring together key Council and HSCP services as well as key partners across our communities to monitor progress in implementation of this action plan and provide a strategic input on themes emerging from research undertaken.</p> <p>Resources – Utilisation of Inverclyde Council/ SG Population Fund through officer time</p>	Quarterly from September 2025
Project Initiatives			
Re-population Officer	Inverclyde Council	<p>We will recruit an officer for 2 years to work towards re-population of Inverclyde. The officer will work with the Scottish Government repopulation service, undertake all programme reporting requirements and deliver a range of initiative set out within this action plan.</p> <p>Resources – £93K SG Grant/Inverclyde Council Repopulation Funds</p>	March 2025
Place Marketing	Inverclyde Council	<p>A suite of marketing materials will be produced to support the promotion of Inverclyde, including to target audiences that will boost the tourism sector and Inverclyde as a place to live, work and invest in. Materials will promote Inverclyde to the housing development sector. Materials produced will be shared with partners and social media channels. Other media channels will be explored dependent on resources.</p> <p>Resources - £7.5k SG Grant/Inverclyde Council Repopulation Funds. It is anticipated that the funding can be supported through Greenock Town Fund and Inverclyde Tourism funding.</p>	<p>Marketing Resources developed – December 2025</p> <p>Promotion - ongoing</p>
Business Start-Up Grant	Inverclyde Council	<p>Provide business grant support for local residents (current or new) to set up a business within commercial premises in Inverclyde, or from their own home (at a slightly lower grant rate). This is an established grant mechanism, and the funding will be increased to encourage new and existing residents to invest in Inverclyde and create new jobs.</p>	2025-2028 (demand dependent)

		Resources - £40K SG Grant/Inverclyde Council Repopulation Fund / Inverclyde Council Regeneration Funds	
New Scots Grant	Inverclyde Council	<p>There is a range of ethnic minority communities already present in Inverclyde engaging to identify skilled work opportunities. We will provide a contribution to costs to allow ethnic minorities to move into work and skilled work opportunities, for example by contributing to costs of certificates of sponsorship.</p> <p>Resources – £6K SG Grant/Inverclyde Council Repopulation Fund</p>	2025-2028 <i>(demand dependent)</i>
Relocation Support	Inverclyde Council	<p>A grant programme will be established to provide support to working families moving to Inverclyde to assist in promoting Inverclyde as a family-friendly place to live for workers in the central/west of Scotland. Grant will be claimable to contribute to moving costs.</p> <p>Resources - £10k SG Grant/Inverclyde Council Repopulation Fund</p>	2025-2028 <i>(demand dependent)</i>
Lower Port Glasgow Masterplan	Inverclyde Council	<p>The Lower Port Glasgow Masterplan will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align with the requirement to decarbonise Inverclyde’s housing stock by 2045 in line with Scottish Government proposals, assessing the scale of work required over the next 20 years to ensure housing in the Lower Port Glasgow area achieves a Net Zero standard. • Ensure a joined-up vision for the area is presented and take a holistic view of key sites located within the Lower Port Glasgow PPA along with redevelopment opportunity. • Ensure multi-tenure development, encouraging repopulation and regeneration within Inverclyde. <p>Resources – £30K SG Grant/Inverclyde Council Repopulation Funds</p>	October 2025
Modern Apprentice Wage Subsidy	Inverclyde Council	<p>Employability Services will provide wage subsidy support to local employers hiring local residents (current or new) into apprenticeships. It has been proven that those undertaking an apprenticeship are more likely to remain in their hometown than those who undertake a degree, who are more likely to move away to find suitable employment.</p> <p>Resources – £30K core employability funds</p>	2025-2028 <i>(demand dependent)</i>
Town Centre Living	Inverclyde Council/ Scottish	We are participating in a national programme led by Scottish Futures Trust and Scotland’s Towns Partnership to identify and promote town centre living opportunity sites to a forum of developers to secure partnerships to deliver town centre living opportunities. The programme is not currently	Ongoing

	Futures Trust/ Scotland's Towns Partnership	funded, although partners indicate funds may emerge as part of programme development. IC officers are currently promoting through liaison with development sector. Resources – Officer Time (Greenock Town Fund/ Housing Strategy)	
Support to Study	Inverclyde Council	A small grant programme will be established to support learners who stay in Inverclyde but travel outwith for education and training purposes. The provision will allow a grant to support costs of studying over a 2-year period for college, university. Resources - £6k SG Grant/Inverclyde Council Repopulation Funds	2025-2028 <i>(demand dependent)</i>
Support for ESOL Community	Inverclyde Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transitioned Inclusive Communities ESOL services to offer intensive courses up to 8hrs per week for over 120 learners per year. This provision level ranges from Pre A1 to B1 level only. Create a viable alternative to West College Scotland provision where classes are capped at 3 per year supporting 60 learners (Inclusive Communities receive over 250 referrals a year). Inclusive Communities offer up to B1 ESOL level (SQA Level 4) with everyone referred assessed within 2 weeks. Create an ESOL Weekly Plan for each learner to maximise English learning opportunities and integration activities with key partners in the New to Scotland Team. Resources – Inverclyde Council Inclusive Communities	Ongoing
Inclusive Curriculum	Inverclyde Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All settings have had anti-racist education as a focus for improvement within their plans. A support guide was compiled, to provide a step by step guide to the development of anti-racist education. An equalities coordinator network has been established which works to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Reinforce our commitment to equalities consistently across all settings and further develop a more inclusive curriculum. Ensure we are acting to meet our legislative duties, as outlined in The Equality Act 2010 and GTCS Standards for Equality and Diversity. Facilitate support for staff directly involved in delivering the Equality Outcomes. Offer an opportunity to showcase good practice and improvements that relate directly to one or more of the Protected Characteristics. Engage with staff, pupils and families on equalities issues. 	Ongoing

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We work closely with partners such as WOSDEC, Tie and Education Scotland to continue to support the development of a more inclusive curriculum, and best practice is shared on an ongoing basis across the network.• Equalities coordinators are presently working to develop and implement their own equalities policies, making use of guidance from Education Scotland.• Staff participate in a wide range of professional learning delivered locally and nationally. <p>Resources - Inverclyde Council Education</p>	
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Engagement

A broad base of stakeholders and community insight has been drawn from existing datasets and engagement exercises, including the Local Development Plan (LDP) Evidence Report (Inverclyde Council, 2025), Community Learning and Development’s (CLD) Community Conversations data (Inverclyde Council, 2024), and Collective Architecture’s participatory workshops (Collective Architecture, 2025). This approach ensures that community priorities and local voices are embedded in the strategy while avoiding duplication or over-consultation and recent consultations have already provided rich insight into community priorities around housing, regeneration, services and quality of life.

In order to maximise resources, the evidence gathering stage that has been undertaken will continue, however, will be broadened within the action plan by research and focusing on target groups through the lived-experience analysis, focus on young people and on new Scots. A targeted and meaningful community engagement programme will be developed as part of the repopulation partnership, research, and development of interventions. By sequencing engagement, we can focus time and funding on targeted, meaningful dialogue that adds value rather than repeating what is already known.

It is recommended that the strategy is presented to the Alliance Board as well as the Repopulation Partnership to be set up to ensure both operational and strategic focus on progress.

Monitoring & Evaluation

Progress on the strategy will be monitored through both local and national frameworks. Inverclyde Council will provide regular updates to the Scottish Government using there ADAP framework, ensuring that the work helps inform national policy development. Development will also be reviewed locally through the Community Planning Partnership, providing accountability and alignment with wider community and partner priorities.

The strategy is intended to be a living document: we will adapt it as we go through the process of learning, responding to new challenges and opportunities. The repopulation strategy will also be aligned with the renewal of the Inverclyde Council Plan in 2028, ensuring that repopulation remains embedded as a long-term priority across the partnership.