
Report To:	Safe, Sustainable Communities Committee	Date: 24 May 2011
Report By:	Corporate Director Education & Communities	Report No: SCS/58/11/AH/DH
Contact Officer:	Drew Hall	Contact No: 01475 714272
Subject:	Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy 2011–2016: Consultative Draft	

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to introduce and explain the consultative draft of the Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2011–2016. This draft is intended to form the basis of consultations with internal and external partners, which will inform the preparation of the finalised LHS for submission to the Committee in autumn 2011.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The consultative draft LHS contains commentary on the Inverclyde housing scene, proposed outcomes, indicators and policy commitments developed by the Safer & Inclusive Communities Service. As a post stock transfer local authority, and with the latest guidance requiring the LHS to be a cross-sector corporate strategy, it is more important than ever that the LHS is developed through consultation with key partners, whose input will help to guide the decision making processes. It is intended that consultation will take place over the spring and summer months with a view to refining and prioritising the policy commitments and their related projects and actions and to setting targets for the indicators.
- 2.2 A Member/Officer Working Group has been established to take the development of the LHS forward. This group will meet again to finalise the consultative draft before it is circulated to key partners and consultees. An LHS Steering Group has also been formed to oversee the process of development and meetings have also been held with group members to refine the strategic outcomes prior to the consultative draft being circulated.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that:

1. The Committee note the content of the consultative draft Local Housing Strategy; and
2. The Committee approve the use of the consultative draft Local Housing Strategy as the basis of forthcoming consultations supporting the preparation of a finalised Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy which will be submitted, for approval, to the Committee in autumn 2011.

Albert Henderson
Corporate Director Education & Communities

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 requires local authorities to prepare and submit a local housing strategy to Scottish Ministers. The strategy must explain how housing provision and the provision of housing related services (by the Council and by any other person or agency) are to be coordinated within the local authority boundaries. Inverclyde Council submitted the first Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy in 2004, which ran for a five-year period up to mid-2009. This strategy was extended in the Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy Monitoring and Update Report 2009–2011 (May 2009).
- 4.2 Following the latest guidance on the preparation of LHSs, published jointly by the Scottish Government and COSLA in June 2008, the Council's Strategic Housing Team (formerly of the Planning and Housing Service, now of the Safer & Inclusive Communities Service) has been preparing for the Inverclyde LHS 2011-2016. The new guidance has removed the requirement of local authorities to submit separate homelessness strategies; housing support (formerly Supporting People) strategies and fuel poverty strategies. It is now expected that the LHS will provide an overarching and integrated strategic direction for all aspects of housing.
- 4.3 With the transfer of the Council's housing and related services to the stock transfer landlords, and with the new LHS affecting several services within the Council, the Strategic Housing Team has tried to maximise partnership working and openness in the development of the upcoming LHS, appreciating that joint ownership of the strategy will be the key to its success. It has consulted widely to bring the draft strategy to its current stage and expects both internal and external partners to play a significant role in selecting their priorities from the options set out in the draft, at the same time ensuring that the Council's own priorities are supported.

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5.0 PROPOSALS

The Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy 2011–2016: Consultative Draft

- 5.1 There are five main aspects of the draft LHS:

- Commentary on and analysis of the Inverclyde housing scene;
- Five strategic outcomes;
- Indicators, with respective targets;
- Headline commitments; and
- Projects/actions.

Commentary And Analysis Of The Inverclyde Housing Scene

- 5.2 This aspect of the draft LHS has been informed by consultation responses, as well as the Housing Need and Demand Assessment: Working Draft, produced by the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Housing Market Partnership. The final draft of the Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) is due for completion in May 2011 and the results of the recently completed Inverclyde Private Sector House Condition Survey (PSHCS) will also be available at that time. The HNDA outcomes and the PSHCS results will be used to enhance analysis of the Inverclyde housing scene over the coming months.
- 5.3 Some of the major issues to be addressed in the current draft LHS are: the supply of, and access to, all tenures of housing; housing support and carers; neighbourhood popularity and problems; fuel poverty and carbon emissions; housing quality; homelessness; repossessions and evictions.

Five Strategic Outcomes

- 5.4 In response to consultation with partners, and as required by the LHS guidance, the Strategic Housing Team has developed five high level strategic outcomes for the draft LHS. If the strategy is successful over the five-year period to 2016, the Council will be

able to say with confidence that the strategic outcomes have been achieved.

5.5 The outcomes are:

1. Inverclyde residents have access to a range of suitable housing options;
2. Inverclyde residents are able to make best use of their housing;
3. Inverclyde residents can enjoy their neighbourhoods;
4. Inverclyde residents receive appropriate support when they experience changes to their housing needs; and
5. Inverclyde residents take responsibility for their housing and communities.

5.6 The five outcomes are sufficiently wide ranging to cover all possible aspects of the housing system that partners may wish to intervene in; they are open enough to allow flexibility in the development of policy responses and they are designed to appeal to as many of the vast range of stakeholders in the local housing system as possible.

Indicators, With Respective Targets

5.7 Several indicators have been drafted to allow partners to measure progress toward the achievement of the outcomes. For each indicator a five-year target (up to 2016) will be set and during each annual review the indicator will be measured. The only exception to this rule is that the guidance requires housing supply targets for five years (to 2016), ten years (to 2021) and twenty years (to 2031) periods. If the recommendations of this report are accepted, the Safer & Inclusive Communities Service will work with partners over the coming months to set these targets.

Headline Commitments

5.8 The indicators will demonstrate whether partners are nearing the achievement of the strategic outcomes. It is the role of the partners, through their policy commitments, to move the indicators in the necessary direction. The Safer & Inclusive Communities Service drafted a multitude of possible projects and actions (see paragraph 5.9 below) that could be undertaken by partners over the five years of the strategy, and which should improve the indicators. These projects and actions have been grouped into eleven broader policy commitments to demonstrate that areas of work previously dealt with separately can have significant overlap. It is hoped that the new integrated style of the strategy will promote joint, and more successful, approaches to housing problems.

Projects/Actions

5.9 The projects and actions of the draft LHS are not intended to be binding on Inverclyde Council. Firstly, there are many projects listed that the Council cannot undertake alone, or at all. Secondly, there are too many projects suggested for one finalised strategy to practically include. These projects and actions are being proposed as a starting point for a prioritisation process which will involve all of the relevant partners. In this process, the number of projects will be reduced as the various Council Services and external agencies select and arrange those which are preferred by them (based on practicality, organisational priorities etc).

5.10 As part of the open approach described in paragraph 4.3 above, it is seen as important that partners are presented with a range of options to choose from, and add to where appropriate, so that they play a meaningful role in the decision making process. This is so that when a final LHS with a refined list of projects is presented to Committee in autumn 2011, it is done in the knowledge that the essential partners have given it prior backing. However, it is important to note that the Council will not be simply handing over decision making responsibilities to its partners. As the concurrent works of housing research are completed in the coming months and as the body with statutory responsibility for the LHS, the Council will be able to confirm its own priorities for Inverclyde and ensure these are also recognised in the final LHS.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

Staffing

- 6.1 There are no staffing implications arising from these proposals.

Financial

- 6.2 The HNDA is a principal source of data for the LHS. This assessment does factor in the current and the probable future financial climate.

Future actions which will be detailed in the final LHS will be considered to ensure that they are realistic in terms of available funding.

Legal

- 6.3 The development of the LHS is a legal requirement in terms of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 & 2006.

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 7.1 The wider consultation undertaken to develop the consultative draft LHS was reported to Committee in March 2010. The Inverclyde LHS Steering Group (including officers from all four Council directorates) and the Member/Officer LHS Working Group have provided input to the outcomes, indicators, policy commitments and projects currently contained in the draft LHS. As noted in paragraph 2.2 above, both of the above groups will further refine the consultative draft LHS prior to its circulation at the start of the consultation process.

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8.0 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The LHS 2011 – 2016 will be the first of the “new style” documents setting out an overarching view of the Inverclyde housing system and drawing together all aspects of housing across all tenures. It is therefore important that the consultation phase should be wide ranging in order to capture as many views as possible from our key partners and stakeholders. It should also be noted that the development of the LHS is running in parallel with the development of the Local Development Plan Main Issues Report, which is the subject of a separate report to this Committee. The Regeneration & Planning and the Safer & Inclusive Communities Services have worked together on these plans to ensure a consistent approach to planning and housing issues in line with Scottish Government planning and LHS guidance. Committee is invited to approve the recommendations set out in paragraphs 3.1(a) and 3.1(b) above.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy: Report on Engagement for Consultative Draft Report: Safe, Sustainable Communities Committee, 9 March 2010.
- Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy Monitoring and Update Report 2009–2011: Safe, Sustainable Communities Committee, 5 May 2009.
- Scottish Government / COSLA Local Housing Strategy Guidance, June 2008.

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ATTACHMENT

Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy 2011 -2016: Consultative Draft (May 2011). Appendix 1



Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy 2011 – 2016

Consultative Draft

May 2011

Education & Communities Directorate

Safer & Inclusive Communities Service
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INVERCLYDE LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY 2011–2016: CONSULTATIVE DRAFT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 requires local authorities to prepare and submit a local housing strategy (LHS) to Scottish Ministers. The strategy must explain how housing provision and the provision of housing-related services (by the Council and by any other person or agency) are to be co-ordinated within the local authority boundaries. Inverclyde Council submitted the first Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy in 2004, which ran for a five-year period up to mid-2009, and this strategy was extended in the Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy Monitoring and Update Report 2009–2011 (approved by committee in May 2009).

2. Following the latest guidance on the preparation of LHSs, published jointly by the Scottish Government and COSLA in June 2008, the Council's Strategic Housing Team within the Safer and Inclusive Communities Service has been preparing for the Inverclyde LHS 2011-2016. The new guidance has removed the requirement of local authorities to submit separate homelessness strategies, housing support (formerly Supporting People) strategies and fuel poverty strategies. It is now expected that the LHS will provide an overarching and integrated strategic direction for all aspects of housing.

3. The consultative draft LHS contains commentary on the Inverclyde housing scene, proposed outcomes, indicators, and policy commitments developed by the Safer and Inclusive Communities Service. As a post-stock transfer local authority and with the latest guidance requiring the LHS to be a cross-sector, corporate strategy, it is more important than ever that the LHS is developed through consultation with key partners whose input will help to guide the decision making processes. It is intended that consultation will take place over the summer months with a view to refining and prioritising the policy commitments and their related projects and actions and to setting targets for the indicators.

4. A Member/Officer Working group has been established to take the development of the LHS forward and input from this group has been incorporated into this consultative draft. A LHS Steering Group has also been formed to oversee the process of development and meetings of this group have helped to refine the strategic outcomes set out in this document. Further information will become available over the consultation period and will be included in the final version to be submitted to Inverclyde Council for approval in the autumn.

5. The five strategic outcomes of the LHS are as follows:

Outcome One: Inverclyde residents have access to a range of suitable housing options.

Outcome Two: Inverclyde residents are able to make best use of their housing.

Outcome Three: Inverclyde residents can enjoy their neighbourhoods.

Outcome Four: Inverclyde residents receive appropriate support when they experience changes to their housing needs.

Outcome Five: Inverclyde residents take responsibility for their housing and communities.

6. The background to the selection of the above outcomes is set out in Part 1 of this document and the five outcomes are examined in detail in Part 2.

7. The Local Housing Strategy sits within the context of the Inverclyde Alliance Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) which will support the delivery of the outcomes set out in this strategy, as the LHS will help to deliver the outcomes set out in the SOA. Inverclyde Council, along with its Community Planning Partners in the Inverclyde Alliance has agreed a vision for Inverclyde where:

'Working together in partnership we will help to develop a confident, inclusive Inverclyde, with safe, sustainable, healthy, caring communities and a thriving prosperous economy, where everyone is encouraged to achieve their potential and can make a positive contribution to the area.'

8. A core component of this is having an appropriate range of housing to support the delivery of the eight local outcomes set out in the Alliance Single Outcome Agreement, which aim to tackle depopulation, promote social regeneration and area renewal, deliver economic regeneration, develop and deliver on employability, tackle health inequalities and the negative alcohol culture and create and protect the physical environment.

9. This Local Housing Strategy has a particular resonance with the outcomes concerned with tackling depopulation - appropriate and attractive housing stock will encourage people to continue living in Inverclyde, and encourage others to move to the area; promoting social regeneration/area renewal –housing is a key part of area renewal, but also the involvement of communities in the development of area renewal plans supports the development of responsible, active communities; and environment – new and refurbished housing will be more energy efficient, and physical environments will be more attractive.

10. The strategy also contributes to the achievement of Financial Inclusion by addressing fuel poverty.

11. Inverclyde Council has identified an area of privately owned and privately rented housing in the Clune Park area of Port Glasgow that requires a regeneration plan in order to tackle a range of physical and social issues affecting the local populace. A plan has been developed and is being submitted to the Scottish Government for consideration as it is clear that the nature and extent of the work required is beyond the scope of Inverclyde Council and its key partners and will require support and funding from the appropriate divisions of the Scottish Government.

PART 1

1. What is the Local Housing Strategy?

1.1 The Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy ("LHS") is a five-year strategy designed to show how Inverclyde Council will provide its housing-related services up to 2016, and how it will co-ordinate the provision of housing and related services by other agencies within the Inverclyde area. The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 ("The 2001 Act"), as amended by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 ("The 2006 Act") places a requirement on the Council to prepare the LHS. The guidance issued jointly by the Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) in June 2008 has been followed during its preparation.

2. The purpose of the Local Housing Strategy

2.1 As the legislation and guidance require, the LHS will ensure that housing and related services will be provided in an economic, efficient and effective manner; that the standard of housing in Inverclyde is improved; and that housing need and demand is tackled over the five years of its operation.

2.2 The housing-related aims of the LHS are expressed as five strategic outcomes which the Council and its partners intend to bring about by 2016. These outcomes are as follows.

Outcome 1: Inverclyde residents have access to a range of suitable housing options

This means that there will be enough housing of suitable quality in Inverclyde to satisfy the needs and demands of current and future households, including those that are homeless. This housing will be of the required types and sizes and in suitable locations. The processes used by households to let or purchase this housing will be effective and will not unreasonably prohibit anyone from accessing the housing they need.

Outcome 2: Inverclyde residents are able to make best use of their housing

This means that households will not be hindered in the use of their own homes when there is no good reason for this to happen. If a resident is disabled or lacks the ability to manage a household independently they might receive housing support. People who care for members of their household will receive assistance to undertake their responsibilities with less strain on their own lives. There will no longer be any households experiencing poverty because too much of their income is spent on fuel costs. Also, dwellings will be safer and more secure as the risk of accidents and crime in the home is reduced.

Outcome 3: Inverclyde residents can enjoy their neighbourhoods

This means that households will be able to take pride in the wider neighbourhoods that their homes are part of. The visual appeal of neighbourhoods will have improved and the negative ways that neighbours can affect each other through their behaviour will be reduced. In the longer term, households will minimise the environmental problems experienced by their neighbours and themselves through a reduction in the carbon emissions they generate from their housing.

Outcome 4: Inverclyde residents receive appropriate support when they experience changes to their housing needs

This means that services will respond to assist households in need. This could be through some of the services described within the outcomes above, but there will also be a significant focus on assisting households at risk of losing their homes, where this is appropriate. There will be a reduction in evictions and repossessions and fewer people will have to experience homelessness.

Outcome 5: Inverclyde residents take responsibility for their housing and communities

This means that households will compliment the agency-led work described above by doing what they can to meet their household responsibilities, and to maintain and improve their housing and neighbourhoods. Residents, privately or through their community representatives in housing associations, will improve the physical quality of their houses. Neighbours will find ways to co-operate together and resolve disputes, where local agency intervention is not necessary and individual responsibilities towards rent and mortgage payments will be improved.

3. What is in the Local Housing Strategy?

The issues

3.1 Many of the housing-related issues addressed within the LHS affect each other in different ways, and therefore appear more than once throughout the document. If you are interested in a particular issue, the index below may help you to find the relevant sections of the strategy.

3.2 Please note that, following the latest guidance and legislative changes, this LHS acts as the official Inverclyde Council strategy for the following issues:

Homelessness	The 2001 Act requires local authorities to produce a strategy for the prevention and alleviation of homelessness. Scottish Ministers no longer expect this to be submitted as a stand alone strategy as it should be fully integrated into the LHS.
Housing support	Housing support services are considered to fall under the “related services” mentioned in the 2001 Act, and the guidance says that the LHS should identify how housing support needs will be addressed.
Fuel poverty	The 2001 Act states that housing strategies should be prepared so as to ensure that, where practicable, households no longer live in fuel poverty.
Private sector housing	The 2006 Act amends the 2001 Act to confirm that the LHS must set out a strategy for dealing with houses that do not meet the tolerable standard, a policy for designating housing renewal areas and a strategy for improving private housing in line with the Council's Scheme of Assistance.
Housing and related services in general	The four changes in guidance and legislation above did nothing to alter the established requirements of the 2001 Act, which must still be met through the LHS.

The Layout

Outcomes

3.3 The greater part of this strategy document has been grouped by its five strategic outcomes listed above. Under each strategic outcome section you will find an analysis of some of the most pertinent issues related to the outcomes. A clear motivator for the new, integrated approach to housing strategy was the fact that so many housing issues relate and connect in different ways. For example, homelessness is affected by the supply of housing and the ability of households to access it (an issue for Outcome 1), the ability of residents to manage their housing responsibilities (Outcomes 2 and 5) and the extent that they can retain their housing when it is at risk (Outcome 4). For this reason some topics will reappear throughout the outcome based discussions, but others will only be found under one outcome (for example, housing development will only be discussed under Outcome 1).

Commitments

3.4 As well as an analysis of the key issues under each outcome, there is also an explanation of the commitments made by partners and a statement of the related projects and actions that partners will undertake to achieve the outcomes.

Housing supply targets

3.5 The most practical aspects of the LHS, which are essential reference points for partners with joint responsibility for implementing the strategy, are the housing supply targets and outcome tables situated at the end of the strategy. The housing supply targets show how many additional houses the Council and its partners intend to bring into use in Inverclyde through new construction or the improvement of existing housing. These targets are derived from information contained in the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA), which is discussed in more detail in paragraphs 4.10 – 4.13 below. The HNDA outcomes indicate that there is an overall shortfall of social and affordable housing across the Inverclyde Council area and further work is now being undertaken at a local level to identify appropriate responses through the LHS and the related Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP). The targets principally relate to the period up to 2016, as with all targets for this LHS, but the housing supply targets are also set for the years 2021 and 2031, to ensure the strategy is supportive of the longer-term housing needs and demands of the area.

Outcome tables

3.6 The outcome tables (see Section 16 below) are based on templates developed by the Scottish Government and COSLA for housing strategies. There is an outcome table for each of the five strategic outcomes and each contains a note of the indicators that are being used to measure progress towards the outcomes, targets that are set for each indicator, and all the necessary actions and commitments for achieving these targets are listed, along with a note of the partner taking lead responsibility for these actions.

Additional features

3.7 A glossary, list of abbreviations, a bibliography and list of appendices can also be found at the end of the strategy document.

4. The work that was done to prepare the Local Housing Strategy

The first phase of consultation

4.1 In line with its vision and values expressed in its Corporate Plan, Inverclyde Council has developed the LHS by listening to, engaging with and responding to the needs of its partners and local communities.

4.2 As an indicator of how important partner and community input is, the first task undertaken in developing the LHS was to create a register of stakeholders with a potential interest in the strategy. There are around 200 individuals noted on the register, representing approximately 170 services and organisations. Interests represented include, among others:

- Architects
- Benefits agencies
- Carers (Non-professional)
- Care providers
- Community groups
- Community Safety

Appendix 1

- Construction
- Developers
- Energy agencies
- Equalities groups
- Estate agents
- Factors
- Finance agencies
- Health agencies
- Homelessness agencies
- Housing associations
- Housing support agencies
- Infrastructure agencies
- Landowners
- Letting agencies
- Planning agencies
- Private landlords
- Regeneration agencies
- Scottish Government
- Surveyors
- Tenants and residents groups

All stakeholders were given the opportunity to decide in what ways and to what extent they were to be involved in the consultation process.

4.3 It was decided that the most effective way to ensure that the LHS has the essential support it needs from its partners and the communities of Inverclyde, and to make sure it has a firm grasp of the issues of the area, was to start by asking those partners to help the Council set the agenda for the strategy from the outset. This proved to be a popular and fruitful approach.

4.4 From September 2009 to January 2010 a series of meetings were held between the Council's Strategic Housing Team and a variety of stakeholders. Some meetings were one-to-one, some were regular meetings of other agencies that the Housing Team were invited along to, but most were themed focus group-type meetings held specifically for the LHS. Around 60 agencies (from all sectors) and community groups were represented across these meetings and each was given the opportunity to state what issues they believed this housing strategy needs to address. The meetings were generally open for any matter to be raised but to prompt discussion lists of open and intentionally controversial questions were posed as well.

4.5 The wide-ranging information gathered from the meetings, and from the other concurrent consultation methods (for example, postal responses) has been essential to the development of all aspects of this strategy. The five strategic outcomes listed above were drawn directly from the consultation information, as were the indicators which will be used to measure the progress of the LHS. Also, much of the analysis of the different housing issues facing Inverclyde has been written in light of the initial consultation work.

Internal development

4.6 As explained above, Inverclyde Council used the consultation information to draft the outcomes and indicators. It is understood that, because the indicators are the central evidence for achievement of the outcomes, the LHS policies of the Council and their partners need to focus on improving these indicators and moving them in the required direction. With this in mind, the Strategic Housing Team spent a significant part of 2010–2011 drafting potential policy commitments that partners could make, and actions or projects they could undertake in order to move the indicators towards their targets.

4.7 Several goals were set for this process and were achieved: the policy commitment proposals developed in this time were wide-ranging because the newly integrated strategy requires this for success; they were drafted without regard for existing organisational boundaries, because it is acknowledged that joint working will often be the only solution to some problems; the actions and projects proposed were numerous, because joint ownership of the strategy can only be achieved by giving partners real variety of choices in which direction to take our work; and finally, the proposed commitments were innovative where possible as it should not be assumed that existing ways of working are always the most effective.

The second phase of consultation

4.8 With the first draft outcomes, indicators, policy commitments, projects and actions completed in early 2011, the Safer and Inclusive Communities Service went back out to consultation.

Research

4.9 The 2001 Act states that local authorities must support and justify their housing strategies based on an assessment of housing and related service provision in their area. The assessment must:

- look at the nature and condition of the housing stock across all tenures;
- the needs of households for housing (housing needs);
- the demands of households for housing (market-led demand); and
- the availability of housing and requirements for housing for households with special needs.

Inverclyde has met this requirement through several pieces of research it has carried out.

Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Housing Market Partnership Housing Need and Demand Assessment, 2009–2025

4.10 The most substantial piece of research undertaken for the purposes of producing the LHS was the Housing Need and Demand Assessment (“HNDA”). The housing services and planning services staff of the eight local authorities that make up the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley (GCV) area have formed a partnership specifically to undertake a joint assessment of all the topics mentioned in the legislation. As well as the eight local authorities in the area, the HNDA work was supported by the GCV Strategic Development Planning Authority and its staff, based in Glasgow. The partnership was formed as it is acknowledged that the eight authorities cover an established housing market: a geographical area within the boundaries of which a large number of residents will restrict their search when purchasing a new house. The GCV housing market can be broken down into several sub market areas, two of which are in Inverclyde. These are the Renfrewshire sub market area (shared with Renfrewshire Council and East Renfrewshire Council), which contains Kilmacolm and Quarrier’s Village, and the Inverclyde housing market, which contains the main settlements of Port Glasgow, Greenock and Gourock, together with the coastal villages of Inverkip and Wemyss Bay. These sub market areas within Inverclyde recognise the fact that a Kilmacolm household, when moving, is more likely to look elsewhere in Kilmacolm, Quarrier’s Village or in Renfrewshire for a new house, and a Greenock household, for example, is more likely to look in the Inverclyde housing market area.

4.11 While the housing market across the GCV area has helped to set the scope of the HNDA, it is important to remember that the assessment is also concerned with the needs that households have for non-market housing, including:

- registered social landlord (“RSL”) housing;
- mixed tenure housing (such as shared equity / ownership); and
- council housing.

4.12 The HNDA also investigates the demographic make up of households in the GCV area. Through analysis of recent trends in household size, age, and particular needs, in house sales, and lets in the private and social sector, and in the construction and demolition of housing in all sectors, the HNDA sets out the starting point for this LHS, but also attempts to project these same trends over the five-year period of the LHS. With this understanding of potential developments within the housing system, the LHS can attempt to anticipate future problems for Inverclyde and try to prevent these from coming about – as well as tackling existing problems.

4.13 The HNDA will be referenced throughout this strategy, and many of the strategic targets that have been set have taken full recognition of the information contained in the assessment.

Inverclyde Private Sector House Condition Survey 2011

4.14 Although the HNDA contains vital information at the local authority area level, and even at sub-area levels within local authorities, the assessment primarily covers the entire GCV region. This means that there is still much about the Inverclyde housing system that can only be discovered through specifically local research. The first local assessment of this kind was the Private Sector House Condition Survey (“Private Sector Survey”) carried out between late 2010 and early 2011. The Private Sector Survey has identified over 1000 houses as being below the Tolerable Standard (BTS), which represents around 3.5% of the total private sector stock. BTS failures were found mainly in the private rented sector, in housing constructed before 1919, and predominantly in tenement flats. The national average for BTS properties is 1% of stock however it should be noted that the main failures in Inverclyde relate to electrical systems, a relatively new item in terms of the Tolerable Standard definitions. Levels of dampness (< 1%) and condensation (4.4%) are below the national averages of 4% and 11% respectively. Around 55% of all private sector houses (15,757) are estimated to have some evidence of disrepair and 6,000 of these houses require extensive repairs. Approximately 1,400 houses are in need of urgent repairs. It is estimated from the survey results that the cost of general repairs is around £9m and that the cost of extensive and urgent repairs is around £38m. A number of discrete areas were examined in more detail as part of the Private Sector Survey due to larger than normal BTS failures, disrepair, and emerging quality issues. The survey results confirm that further investigation is needed in these areas to fully assess the extent of work required and to identify the level of investment needed to address these issues. It will be seen from the above headline information that further analysis of the survey results is needed in order to develop a strategy for improving private housing in line with the Council’s Scheme of Assistance.

Other research

4.15 The Strategic Housing Team also took part in two surveys being undertaken by the Council at a corporate level. The first was a survey of Polish migrants who lived and worked in the Inverclyde area in 2009. The survey took a wider view beyond housing issues alone, but the inclusion of some housing questions provided the LHS with extra information about one of the minority ethnic populations in the local housing system. Also, several housing questions were put to the Inverclyde Citizens’ Panel as part of the regular surveys they complete for the Council. The Panel is made up of 1000 Inverclyde residents who have volunteered to give their views on important local issues, and in the summer 2010 survey they provided useful facts about their housing circumstances and their views on housing in Inverclyde.

5. Bodies central to progressing the housing strategy

The Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy Steering Group

5.1 To oversee the preparation and implementation of the Inverclyde LHS, a Steering Group has been formed consisting of Council officers who have responsibility for the different aspects of the strategy. This is to meet the challenge of the wider ranging LHS. Collective agreement is needed

from officers on the content and direction of the housing strategy: the aim of the strategy is to support and complement the actions of all services. As well as overseeing the development of the strategy, the Steering Group has a key role in ensuring that the strategy is submitted to the relevant Council committees for consideration and approval. This is a necessarily internal role, acknowledging the position that these officers have as advisers to the Council, it also recognises that the Council alone has final responsibility for preparing the LHS whilst acknowledging the role played by partnership working in the process. Only one external partner, the Scottish Government, is represented at Steering Group meetings. As the authors of the guidance on housing strategies and as the body that the strategies are submitted to, their inclusion provides a practical advisory benefit to the Group. It also supports the unique collaborative approach local and central governments now take as a result of the Concordat and the single outcome agreements.

The Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy Elected Member/Officer Working Group

5.2 Due to its increased importance in local strategic planning and because of the integrated nature of the “new style” LHS, it was decided that Elected Members of the Inverclyde Council should have involvement in the preparation and monitoring of the strategy beyond the traditional committee cycles. Four councillors have formed an Elected Member/Officer Working Group with officers from the Safer and Inclusive Communities Service. Through this Working Group, Members provide direction to the development of the strategy and provide another means of ensuring it is responsive to the needs of the Inverclyde communities which they represent.

The Inverclyde Alliance

5.3 The Inverclyde Alliance is the partnership body that brings together various public, voluntary and private organisations to agree the long-term planning of service provision in Inverclyde in order to deliver the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA). Individual members have been consulted in the preparation of the LHS and, as the guidance requires, the strategy has been adopted by the Alliance as the central plan for housing issues in Inverclyde. Members are committed to supporting the achievement of the outcomes of the SOA and the LHS.

6. What will happen now that the Local Housing Strategy has been prepared?

6.1 This section will be completed once the outcomes of the consultation phase are known and will be included in the Final Version of the LHS.

7. Equalities issues in the Local Housing Strategy

7.1 It is a legislative requirement for the LHS to make sure that the actions contained within it will encourage equal opportunities. Inverclyde Council has clearly stated in its Corporate Plan that ensuring equality of opportunity is one of its fundamental commitments. An essential device used by the Council to bring equalities considerations to the centre of housing policy development is the equalities impact assessment. This impact assessment helps policy makers, working with the relevant agencies and communities, to anticipate the possible effects the strategy could have on equalities groups. This gives the Council and its partners the chance to revise the strategy to minimise potential problems and maximise potential benefits, where possible. In the spirit of mainstreaming equalities considerations, this strategy document explains, at the appropriate points throughout, where particular policies have been improved to promote equality of opportunity. The equalities impact assessment used to prepare the LHS has been included as an appendix.

The Related National Policies

7.2 Although the focus of the housing strategy is local, it also contributes to agreed national and regional policies. As the guidance requests, the LHS supports the primary goal of the Scottish

Government's Economic Strategy (2007): "increasing sustainable economic growth."¹ This is achieved by:

- supporting housing construction throughout Inverclyde;
- aiding the supply of housing through other means, such as conversions;
- increasing the capacity of households to access this housing;
- helping improve the quality of the housing 'product' and related services provided; and
- improving the relationships between housing providers and housing 'consumers' (the tenants and residents).

With a view to longer-term progress, the Inverclyde LHS is arguably a major local contributor to this national goal. The Scottish Government has instituted fifteen strategic outcomes for Scotland to help reach its primary goal. Appropriate comment will be made throughout this document where the Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy supports the attainment of these outcomes.

The Related Local Policies

7.3 As noted above, the Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy 2011–2016, through its policies, seeks to help turn both the Inverclyde Alliance's and the Inverclyde Council's visions into reality by making the communities of the locality inclusive, sustainable, safe and caring and encouraging residents to make a positive contribution to their neighbourhoods. The Alliance's Community Plan (2008) recognises that housing is a core part of the delivery of each of its outcomes.² The LHS guidance also requires that housing strategies inform and support the work of SOAs. The specific links between the Inverclyde LHS and the Inverclyde SOA are explained at the relevant junctures in this strategy.

7.4 LHS guidance and recent national planning policies have encouraged greater unity between local housing strategies and development plans. Development plans are to provide a generous supply of land to support the house construction and redevelopment policies of housing strategies, making sure that the housing supply targets of the LHS can be met. The Inverclyde Development Plan comprises of two elements: the Strategic Development Plan ("SDP") prepared by the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA) and the Local Development Plan ("LDP") prepared by Inverclyde Council, as the local planning authority. The unified approach to the housing matters of the Inverclyde LHS and both 'levels' of the Development Plan has been encouraged by joint preparation and use of the HNDA to back their policies by the Strategic Housing Team and the Planning Policy Team of the Regeneration and Planning Service. The consultative draft LHS and the LDP Main Issues Report have been prepared in parallel due to the close links between the two and the same Inverclyde Council committee is responsible for both planning and housing matters which helps to maintain these linkages. Housing and Planning will continue to be the Council's representatives during future reviews of the HNDA, and Planning and Regeneration representatives will continue to sit on the LHS Steering Group.

¹ M

² J, section 9

PART 2

8. STRATEGIC OUTCOMES:

OUTCOME 1: INVERCLYDE RESIDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO A RANGE OF SUITABLE HOUSING OPTIONS

Cross Tenure Issues

8.1 There are important distinctions between the different housing tenures in Inverclyde – owner occupied, private rented, and housing association rented – and the features that Inverclyde residents are looking for from each of these. These are all addressed individually in subsequent sections of this strategy. However, there are also desired features which are common to all of these tenures. These are addressed here.

8.2 The Inverclyde Alliance, in its Community Plan, expresses the Inverclyde communities' shared expectations for the future housing of Inverclyde. From its consultations, it discovered that local residents want:

“A vibrant housing market that meets the needs of all the residents of Inverclyde, with a mix of socially and privately rented and owned housing. The housing will be appropriate for the many different types of households in the area from single to larger families, and will meet the needs of people over the whole of their lives”.³

But who are the residents and 'different types of households' that share these expectations? The HNDA provides us with some of the answers.

The number of households in Inverclyde

8.3 There is much evidence which proves that Inverclyde's overall population has been decreasing, and, unfortunately, the HNDA does not contradict this. Despite this trend, it is crucial to note that policies relating to the supply of housing do not respond directly to changes in population, but instead respond to alterations in the number of households in an area. Population rates tell us of individuals, but household rates tell us how many dwellings are required in an area. Some households will contain no more than one individual member, but it is not their quality of being an individual that housing policy is interested in, it is their quality of being a household. This distinction is of central importance to the Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy: while the population of individuals is declining, the number of households in the area is increasing.

8.4 During the period of this LHS (2011–2016) the HNDA projects that the number of households in Inverclyde will increase from between 60–80 per year⁴, an increase in the growth rate of 14 new households per year from 2001–2008. Although the number of households is projected to increase for Inverclyde, the increase is rather modest in comparison with the other GCV authorities and the GCV region as one entity. This is due to the fact that household formation rates are low and there are more households leaving Inverclyde than migrating in. There were 37,156 households in Inverclyde in 2008, and this is expected to rise to 37,632–37,846 by 2016.⁵ This is a significant issue for this LHS to respond to, but there may be challenges of a different type ahead for future housing strategies: the number of households living in Inverclyde is expected to decrease again after 2016, to as low as a possible 37,560 by 2025.⁶ The housing supply response of this LHS to

³ J, section on the future of Inverclyde

⁴ D, p61

⁵ D, p72

⁶ D p72

these projections is explained in the tenure-specific sections below, and in the housing supply targets at the end of this strategy document.

Households, age and related needs

8.5 The age of residents within a household is a major contributor to its housing-related needs and wants. Age can affect the income of a household, and affect its ability to afford certain dwellings and tenures. The amount of housing benefit available to a younger household will be less than that of an older household, and households with members who are of working age may have a higher income than households of a pensionable age. The HNDA projects that the population of Inverclyde residents who are of working age (from 16 to 59/64) will decrease from nearly 50,000 people in 2008 to between 45,866 and 46,224 by the end of this strategy.⁷ There are several policies contained in this strategy that address affordability issues for housing, in response to these figures. In contrast, the potentially more economically vulnerable age group of 60/65–75 and older is expected to increase. There were over 10,000 residents who were aged between 60/65–74 living in Inverclyde in 2008 and the HNDA expects that this will increase to over 11,000 by 2016. The number of residents aged 75 or older is expected to increase by around 700 to about 7,330 people in 2016.⁸ Age can also have an impact on the location or type of housing that a household can use. If household members experience disabilities commonly associated with older age groups, particularly in relation to their mobility, then they will have a greater need for ground floor housing, that has level access from the outside, and possibly adaptations for their needs within the house. There may also be a need for greater assistance within the home, from family, professional carers or wardens. The policies responding to these issues in this strategy are supported by the above noted increase in the population of older people in Inverclyde.

The size of households

8.6 As explained above, there is a link between the number of households in Inverclyde and the number of dwellings required to house them. However, the LHS appreciates that the relationship is not as simple as this suggests. The relationship between the number of households and the number of dwellings is complicated by the fact that different sized households (i.e. households containing different numbers of individuals) need different sizes of dwellings (with particular reference to the number and size of bedrooms) and that, even within households of the same size, the different ages of the individuals, their relationships to each other, and whether they are disabled or not, can mean that very different sizes of dwellings are required.

8.7 In response to such a complicated scenario, it was necessary that a complex system for calculating the number of dwellings required for different sized households was developed. This is explained with the relevant policies and targets later in the strategy. To complicate matters further, although the overall number of Inverclyde households is projected to increase in the near future, this is not a universal trend across all household sizes. The number of households with two parents and children, and the number of households with three or more adults is expected to diminish up to 2016 and beyond⁹, with the potential to reduce the need for the larger housing available in Inverclyde. It should be noted that this situation, from a housing supply point of view, is preferable to the opposite one of the demand for existing smaller housing decreasing: smaller households can always live in a larger house, within reason and if needed, but a larger household cannot live in a smaller one without some degree of overcrowding. It is worth mentioning here that the HNDA is projecting large increases in single person households over the lifespan of the LHS and beyond.

⁷ D, 67

⁸ D, p67

⁹ D, p72

Particular needs

8.8 As well as the need for housing of different sizes, the local housing supply must also meet the need for dwellings that do not inhibit the lives of residents who are disabled, who have limiting long-term illnesses, people with support needs, or those who have particular cultural requirements. In fact, where possible, housing should help to enhance these residents' lives and not merely prevent the problems dwellings can sometimes cause them. It was recorded that in 2007/08 in Inverclyde there were around 15,600 households that had at least one person with a disability or a long-term illness¹⁰, and, as a result of the NHS agenda of shifting the balance of care from institutional to community living, many of these are resident within private or in shared accommodation. This creates a demand for housing with relevant access, amenities and support services. The HNDA (see paragraphs 4.10 – 4.13 above) has produced information on housing for particular needs at a city region level and it is expected that individual local authorities will now undertake further research within their own areas that will be used to inform the final version of the LHS later this year. Information from the recently completed Inverclyde PSHCS (see paragraph 4.14 above) will also be used to assess current and future need for housing that does meet, or that can be made capable of meeting, particular needs.

8.9 Inverclyde is the local authority area in the GCV region that contains the highest proportion of people with learning difficulties (454 adults known to the Council¹¹) and 31% of these own or rent their own accommodation. Although in many cases, individual/shared accommodation is the preferred housing response for people with particular needs, there are also 21 specialised care homes in Inverclyde, with 913 registered places provided by voluntary, private and public agencies.¹² The policies and targets of this LHS will ensure that the right balance of appropriate housing for people with different needs is developed – whether it is care homes, private homes or housing with some measure of care and support. Another consideration of the strategy, moving away from the main stream of housing need, is issues of different cultural preferences. For example, some Gypsy/Traveller households are not drawn to the types of settled accommodation discussed above and where possible this strategy will seek to assist in meeting their housing needs through other means, such as the provision of seasonal, or transit, sites with appropriate services and facilities, perhaps in collaboration with neighbouring local authorities.

Owner Occupied Housing

8.10 The first specific tenure addressed by this LHS is the most popular for households in Inverclyde: around 65% of households in the area live in and own their own homes.¹³ The three core issues affecting the owner occupied sector in Inverclyde are the quality of the housing, the availability or supply of housing, and the affordability of the housing. Matters of quality are covered under the fifth strategic outcome of this strategy, later in the document, and supply and affordability are discussed here. It may be useful to note that the level of owner occupation in Inverclyde is roughly the same as the GCV region as a whole. There is a perception that the Inverclyde area has relatively low levels of owner occupation but that is not the case.

Supply

8.11 The current stock of owner occupied housing totals 25,557 dwellings and these dwellings are occupied by 25,003 households.¹⁴ This represents a considerable change in the tenure balance of the Inverclyde Council area where social housing was, at one time, the dominant tenure and owner occupiers were in the minority. The introduction of the Right to Buy for tenants of local

¹⁰ D, Ch 8 table 8.5.1

¹¹ D, Ch 8 table 8.5.6

¹² D, Ch 8, table 8.4.2

¹³ D, p28

¹⁴ K Table 2 and table 4.

authorities and other social landlords has had a significant impact on the growth of owner occupation and the increased availability of new build housing for sale over the past 20 to 30 years has also altered the tenure balance. The results of the household tenure projections show that growth in owner occupation is projected to be low. Households at 2016 are projected to be between 24,298 and 25,368 (including households moving from the social rented sector through Right to Buy sales). Growth is projected to be modest as there are lower numbers of households entering the sector and there are more households moving out of the Inverclyde area than there are households moving in to take up residence.

Affordability

8.12 House prices and household income are the chief factors to consider when assessing the affordability of housing in the owner occupied sector. However, the recent economic downturn has seen mortgage lenders move away from using a simple multiplier of household income to determine what value of property could be afforded. A much more cautious approach to lending combined with the need for substantial deposits has resulted in fewer homes being purchased by first time buyers and this trend is likely to continue.

8.13 As with the GCV region and Scotland as a whole, the last decade saw significant increases in the cost of housing for sale in Inverclyde. Across the whole local authority area the lower quartile house price rose from £35,000 in 1999 to £75,000 in 2008, and in the same period the median house price rose from £60,000 to £140,000.¹⁵ Although Inverclyde has the most affordable house prices for the lower quartile in the whole of the GCV region, the increases to both lower quartile and median prices over this period were more than 100%, and are only welcome so far as household incomes were able to keep up. However, the HNDA tells us that only 43% of newly forming, or newly arriving households in Inverclyde can afford to purchase their own home in this locality.¹⁶ This percentage, being less than the current 65% of Inverclyde households who are owner occupiers, suggests that affordability could affect the future shape of the owner occupied sector in Inverclyde.

8.14 New households (i.e. first time buyers) entering the owner occupied sector are essential for a dynamic, well functioning sector. New households are needed to help other house sales and to provide a “chain” of vacancies as households move from one property to another. Inverclyde has one of the lowest percentages of new households seeking to enter owner occupation. The HNDA (see paragraphs 4.10 – 4.13 above) has produced information on the affordability of housing at a city region level and it is expected that individual local authorities will now undertake further research within their own areas that will be used to inform the final version of the LHS later this year.

Assistance to home buyers

8.15 The Scottish Government and its partners have developed several schemes to assist lower income households and first time buyers (often one and the same) into home ownership, where affordability is the biggest restriction. Some schemes, such as shared ownership with an RSL, have been in operation for many years, but others, such as sharing the equity of the property with the Scottish Government, are more recent solutions to the affordability problem. As a whole, these initiatives are described as low cost home ownership (“LCHO”). There are restrictions on which households can access LCHO, to ensure that it is only those who need the support, but who can also afford their own stake, are given the assistance. It is anticipated that between 1000 and 2100 newly forming households in Inverclyde could be eligible for LCHO support from 2011–2016.¹⁷

¹⁵ D, p31

¹⁶ K, Table 14

¹⁷ D, p92

This strategy supports these developments, and also investigates other policies which could improve affordability in this locality.

Private Rented Housing

8.16 The private rented sector across Inverclyde, as in the rest of the UK, has gradually decreased its share of the housing system and is often viewed as back-up tenure for households who cannot afford owner occupation and those who cannot access social rented housing. However, this is not an entirely accurate description of the tenure: for some households it is the most suitable and preferred type of housing. It is a goal of this strategy to promote and improve private rented housing in Inverclyde, and with that, increase its supply. In Inverclyde 5% of households privately rent their homes, which is a relatively small percentage; however, it is the second highest share in the GCV area after Glasgow.¹⁸ The HNDA expects that the number of households privately renting will increase from 2103 (in 2008) to between 2119 and 2603 in 2016.¹⁹ Current demand for private rented housing is satisfied by the available supply of 2213 dwellings.²⁰ The HNDA (see paragraphs 4.10 – 4.13 above) has produced information on the private rented housing sector at a city region level and it is expected that individual local authorities will now undertake further research within their own areas that will be used to inform the final version of the LHS later this year.

Social Housing

8.17 Since Inverclyde Council transferred its stock to local housing associations in 2007, housing associations have become the only local suppliers of what is known as social housing: housing developed partly or entirely from public subsidy, to be prioritised for those households in need and provided at below-market rents. In 2008 there were 11,566 social houses available in Inverclyde, which accounts for 29% of the total housing stock in the locality.²¹ In the same year there were 10,050 households residing in this social housing, indicating a surplus of over 1000 houses. However, it is important to recognise that much of this surplus housing is of poor quality and cannot be used to address housing need. There are 3536 households in Inverclyde unable to make their own arrangements for housing – households in need – and this need has to be viewed in the context of both quality and quantity of the housing stock.²² The HNDA expects that the number of households in need is likely to reduce to 3026 by 2016²³ however more research needs to be done at local level and at sub area level to determine how this need can be met as it is clear that new house building alone will not be sufficient.

Stock projections

8.18 It is still necessary for the LHS to ensure that these current and projected needs are met. It will not be entirely the responsibility of the social rented sector to meet these needs. There is the possibility that fewer than 600 households in current need could afford to rent privately, while 1,356 may be able to use LCHO as a way out of need.²⁴ Projections for the possible social rented housing provision of 2016 have been developed based on 2008 information, and these suggest that there may be up to 9672 properties available – a decrease on the 10,050 properties available in 2008. However this may represent an overall improvement in the quality of the stock available as housing that cannot be brought up to standard will have been removed from the system. There will be more households requiring social rented housing at 2016 and beyond than the Council and its key partners are currently planning for. However there is the potential that intermediate housing

¹⁸ D, p28

¹⁹ K, table 23

²⁰ K, table 2

²¹ K Table 2

²² D, p89

²³ D, p91

²⁴ K, table 13

products such as low cost home ownership and mid market rent housing could meet some of this shortfall. The HNDA has produced information on stock projections at a city region level and it is expected that individual local authorities will now undertake further research within their own areas that will be used to inform the final version of the LHS later this year.

Clune Park Area, Port Glasgow

8.19 Inverclyde Council has identified an area of private rented and privately owned housing in Clune Park, Port Glasgow, that cannot be brought up to the aspirational Scottish Housing Quality Standard and where a large number of houses are currently considered to be below the Tolerable Standard (BTS). This area has been identified as a Regeneration Initiative by Inverclyde Council and its key partners, and an active task group, including Elected Members, has been established to take forward the regeneration initiative. A physical and social survey of the tenement blocks in the area has been undertaken to determine the extent of disrepair, to identify BTS housing, and to establish the current circumstances and rehousing preferences of the residents and tenants living in Clune Park. The outcomes of these surveys will be used to inform a regeneration plan for the Clune Park area taking account of the needs and wishes of the local population.

8.20 Clune Park is included as a project in the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2011 - 2016 as a direct result of the social and physical problems prevalent in the area and Inverclyde Council wishes to make clear its willingness to tackle the issues in the Clune Park Area through comprehensive regeneration. Preliminary discussions have been held with the Minister for Housing and Communities and Civil Servants of the Scottish Government regarding the regeneration strategy for the Clune Park area, focusing on the needs of owner-occupiers and long-standing tenants living in the area. Through the SHIP, Inverclyde Council has set out the funding required to deliver comprehensive regeneration of the Clune Park Area. It is hoped that Inverclyde Council's commitment to securing the comprehensive regeneration of the area will be supported by Scottish Government funding for this ambitious, but much needed, regeneration initiative.

OUTCOME 2: INVERCLYDE RESIDENTS ARE ABLE TO MAKE BEST USE OF THEIR HOUSING

Housing Support

8.21 Housing support services are provided to people who would otherwise have difficulties in making use of their housing. The support services, which most commonly involve assistance from professional carers within the resident's home, can be provided by agencies from any sector, but the Council itself funds much of this work, primarily through the Inverclyde Community Health and Care Partnership ("CHCP"). Many vulnerable people can require housing support packages to assist them:

- people with mental or other health problems;
- people who are learning or physically disabled;
- people with limiting long-term illness;
- people with addictions; and
- older people, etc.

8.22 With such a wide range of people potentially requiring housing support it is essential that this strategy maximises the funding available for these services, and prioritises their distribution effectively. Sometimes people may not be aware that they require support which can cause difficulties with their landlords or neighbours, or if they are aware of their problems they may not realise that there are services available which can help them. It is the aim of this strategy to ensure that the services can reach those that need them. It is acknowledged that individual needs for

support can vary dramatically, even within the same category of need, and it is not the case that one solution fits all. Attempts will be made to improve the flexibility of services provided so that they provide no more nor less than the resident needs to make the best use of their housing.

Carers

8.23 While professional care providers were mentioned above, Inverclyde also contains many informal carers who, while not necessarily requiring housing support themselves, provide care as a regular part of their daily lives, as a part of their own housing circumstances. For many it cannot be separated from their residency, if they are caring for people they live with, and, for some, that is a full time responsibility. It is therefore essential that not only vulnerable people need housing support, but that informal, resident carers also need their own appropriate kinds of support. It is known from the consultation for this strategy that carers can struggle to fulfil their responsibilities where the housing that they and the person they care for live in is inadequate, for example, in relation to a lack of adaptations in the home. There can also be difficulties caused by the mental toll that these responsibilities can take, and the fact that they can also be physically demanding. It is the intention of this strategy, through its policies, to ease the difficulties faced by informal carers in Inverclyde, and to help them meet their responsibilities.

Safety/Security in the Home

8.24 For residents to make the best of their housing, and enjoy it to its full potential, they must be free from harm within their homes: whether this is harm from accidents, or harm from others within their home. For example, residential fires are a significant cause of harm to households in Inverclyde, with 183 people injured and three people dying because of them in 2009 and, unfortunately, one of the most common crimes in Inverclyde – domestic abuse – is by definition a crime of the home. This strategy will support the Inverclyde Community Safety Strategy where it can to reduce the incidences and risks of harm that residents experience in their own homes.

Fuel Poverty

8.25 Fuel poverty is found wherever a household spends 10% or more of its income on the cost of fuel. It is a national priority for the Scottish Government to eradicate fuel poverty in Scotland, where practicable, by – conveniently for this strategy – 2016. This national priority is fully supported by Inverclyde Council. The attainment of the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) within the social housing sector by 2015 will ensure that almost 30% of the Inverclyde housing stock meets 21st Century standards of efficiency and effectiveness in relation to home energy. Substantial improvements in the private sector are also being achieved through the Local Energy Savings Scheme (LESS) in partnership with SOLAS Energy and Scottish Hydro Electric, and through provision of grant assistance to vulnerable households to install energy efficient heating systems. The Inverclyde Citizens' Panel reported that the biggest complaint of residents in Inverclyde is that their housing can be too expensive to heat²⁵ so it is clear that the Council and its partners need to expand the services and assistance they provide to eliminate fuel poverty in the local area.

OUTCOME 3: INVERCLYDE RESIDENTS CAN ENJOY THEIR NEIGHBOURHOODS

Safety/Security around the Home

8.26 It is recognised above that Inverclyde residents must feel safe and secure in their homes, but this situation must extend into their neighbourhoods, and to their relations with their neighbours. Neighbourhood crime and antisocial behaviour are problems that can affect any residential area

²⁵ A

and it is the intention of this strategy, in support of the Community Safety Strategy, to prevent these difficulties from arising. All residents have a responsibility to respect the wellbeing and property of their neighbours, but many housing agencies have a role in reducing problems. Most tenancies contain clauses which prohibit crime and antisocial behaviour in relation to the property let and neighbouring households, giving landlords a duty to respond to these issues, as they would if the rent payment clause was being flouted. But just *how* landlords respond to these problems – along with the primary agencies such as the police and community safety services – is a matter which continues to be developed. This LHS will provide a strategic role in strengthening these partnerships and responsibilities where it can.

Carbon Emissions Originating From Housing in Inverclyde

8.27 The problems that carbon emissions are causing and have the potential to cause in the long-term future are widely acknowledged. The national outcomes seek to reduce the environmental impact of our consumption and Inverclyde's own SOA aims to safeguard the environment for future generations. All new build housing in the social rented and private sectors has to conform to strict emission targets and must meet current standards. The attainment of the SHQS in the social rented sector stock will serve to reduce carbon emissions in around 30% of Inverclyde households and inroads are being made in the private sector through LESS Inverclyde and targeted grant provision for vulnerable households affected by fuel poverty and inefficient heating and home insulation. It is recognised that more needs to be done to reduce emission levels and Inverclyde Council and its key partners will continue to encourage the adoption of the SHQS across all sectors as an aspirational standard in order to improve energy efficiency and reduce emissions.

The Impression People Have of Inverclyde's Neighbourhoods

8.28 The reputation that the residential areas of Inverclyde have is a major factor in the reputation that the local authority area has as a whole. Consultation has shown that there are significant perceived weaknesses and strengths in the neighbourhoods of the locality which cause a mixture of concern and pride in how residents view them. Where a household's neighbourhood is a cause for concern to them, this can be a restriction on their quality of life. Unfortunately, if the problems connected with living in Inverclyde are evident to some of its residents, it is inevitable that negative reputations also filter out to people who live outside the area. This can create a barrier to people moving into Inverclyde. It is therefore an aim of this strategy to support moves to improve neighbourhoods through social and physical regeneration. It is also a priority of the LHS and of the SOA to ensure that knowledge of the good qualities of Inverclyde communities is transmitted outside the locality. This LHS wants Inverclyde to be a place where existing residents want to continue to live and where households across Scotland will seriously consider moving when the opportunity arises.

8.29 There are many things that can contribute to a neighbourhood being considered problematic, but they can be grouped together under two main classifications. Firstly, problems caused by the behaviour of residents and secondly, problems caused by the response (or lack of response) of services that have a stake in that neighbourhood. Consultation and research for the LHS has told us that residents can cause problems in their neighbourhoods through littering and vandalism, by not looking after their closes or gardens, as well as more urgent matters such as territorialism and gang-related violence. On the other hand, it was also noted that agencies can neglect neighbourhoods or damage them through inadequate service provision. Landlord allocation policies have been accused of creating concentrations of poverty and deprivation, properties can be abandoned and unsecured (a particular problem for Inverclyde) and landscaping not maintained.

8.30 But where it has been both the people and agencies of Inverclyde who have caused the problems of local neighbourhoods – not as a whole, and not always intentionally – it is also the people and agencies of Inverclyde who have caused the successes; and it is evident that there are

many successes. The majority (65%) of residents on the Citizens' Panel have stated that they do like their neighbourhoods. This LHS will support the people and agencies of Inverclyde to ensure that this level of satisfaction continues to increase.

OUTCOME 4: INVERCLYDE RESIDENTS RECEIVE APPROPRIATE SUPPORT WHEN THEY EXPERIENCE CHANGES TO THEIR HOUSING NEEDS

Homelessness

8.31 Homelessness is an important challenge in Inverclyde and could be considered the most telling sign of problems in any housing system. In 2009–2010, 376 households were assessed by the Council as homeless, with 94% of these being in priority need.²⁶ It is crucial that services – from housing suppliers and Homelessness Services to housing support providers and health agencies – work together to tackle the multifaceted causes of homelessness and help minimise the harm it can cause when it occurs. The pressure to respond to homelessness has never been greater as the legislative requirement that all unintentionally homeless households in priority need are to become entitled to settled accommodation comes into force during the course of this LHS (in 2012).

8.32 This LHS must ensure that there is more appropriate and affordable housing available to homeless people. Some residents who have experienced homelessness are concerned that the quality of the housing provided to them is below standard and in less desirable areas.²⁷ However, there have been many innovations in improving access to better housing and these will continue to be developed under this strategy.

8.33 There are many reasons that people find themselves to be homeless, and through increased understanding of these the LHS intends to help prevent homelessness from occurring. The HNDA tells us that in 2009–2010 the most common cause of homelessness was the household being asked to leave a dwelling (40% of homelessness applicants) or relationships breaking down (21%).²⁸ Where appropriate the LHS will look at options for early interventions and mediation which could prevent homelessness or at least provide time for other options to be considered.

8.34 Homelessness, or the threat of homelessness, can be distressing to anyone, but particular attention needs to be paid to vulnerable people who lose, or who may lose their home. In 2009–2010, 61 homeless applicants gave domestic abuse as their reason for applying while 16% of applicants were single parents – reminding us that children also suffer from homelessness. In addition to this people who are disabled, or have health and addiction problems also experience homelessness, and there is an important role for housing support and care services to play in protecting these households from the worst effects of homelessness when it occurs and to help them retain and make best use of the housing made available to them through tenancy sustainment measures.

Repossession and evictions

8.35 Repossessions and evictions can lead to homelessness, but in some situations this is not a consideration as some households will be fortunate enough to obtain suitable alternative accommodation. However, although repossession or eviction does not always lead to homelessness, it can still be a disruptive and distressing experience for households and can act as an important indicator that there has been a failure somewhere in the relationship between the household and either the lender or the landlord. On a wider scale, regular occurrence of

²⁶ D, Ch 8, table 8.13.1

²⁷ A and B

²⁸ D, Ch 8, table 8.13.3

repossessions and evictions can warn us that there are problems in the housing system as a whole. Advance notification that landlords and lenders are considering repossession and eviction has been of assistance in allowing Inverclyde Council and partner agencies to intervene and to seek alternatives to the loss of a home. The requirement to provide advance notification has been seen as beneficial to all parties and in many cases has been sufficient to stave off costly and complex legal action to the benefit of landlords and tenants, and lenders and home owners.

OUTCOME 5: INVERCLYDE RESIDENTS TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

Housing Quality

8.36 In meeting the needs and demands for housing in Inverclyde, addressing supply issues, as set out in the first strategic outcome of the LHS, is insufficient. When appropriate housing has been provided there is also a need to ensure that it *continues* to provide its residents with the shelter and quality of life that they need over the longest period possible. To do this the physical condition of a property must be maintained to a good standard. This means newly occurring repairs should be responded to but also that the more fundamental but predictable works of renewing or repairing structural elements of the property need to be planned for and funded. As social tenants, through their representatives on housing association boards, or as private home owners, the residents of Inverclyde have primary responsibility towards the maintenance of the dwellings of Inverclyde. The one exception to this position is that, in the private rented sector tenants have less control over property maintenance and it is the role of the private landlord to meet these responsibilities. Where this strategy sets out policies in relation to housing quality it will be clear where there are expectations of the private landlords as well as the residents of Inverclyde.

8.37 There are different standards and expectations for the private sector and for the social sector, with the former subject to a legislated tolerable standard and the latter being subject to the more demanding SHQS. This difference in requirement acknowledges that social landlords potentially have more resources to support the achievement of a higher standard than individual owners in the private sector, but it also seeks to protect the public funds which are heavily invested in the provision of social housing. Funds are of central importance to housing maintenance in all sectors as housing associations are experiencing reductions to their funding and having to find more innovative ways of achieving their requirements. The Inverclyde Community Plan states that a co-ordinated plan across all agencies is needed to help the social sector of Inverclyde meet the SHQS by 2015, as expected by the Scottish Government.²⁹ This strategy intends to support such an approach. In the private sector there are many owners who do not have the funds to maintain their properties as they are required to, and the policies of this strategy will respond to these problems in the an effort to ensure that conditions improve in the private sector.

Sub-strategy for dealing with below tolerable standard dwellings

8.38 The tolerable standard is defined through a list of criteria set in law and a property which is below the standard will have failed to meet the criteria. Where an assessment of a property confirms it as being below the Tolerable Standard financial assistance will be provided to encourage the owner to carry out works and bring the property up to at least the Tolerable Standard. This financial assistance will be at a 50% flat rate of the cost of the works required to meet the Tolerable Standard. Prioritisation of funding will be directed by the 'significance' of the element which has led to failure and the findings of the Private Sector House Condition Survey will assist this process. Where financial assistance is provided it will be at Inverclyde Council's discretion as to whether or not a maintenance plan should be put in place and monitored to

²⁹ J, Section on housing stock and built environment

prevent future disrepair. Where a privately rented flat is found to be below Tolerable Standard, consideration will be given to a Closing Order until the property is brought up to the private rented repairing standard.

Policy for identifying housing renewal areas

8.39 If any area within a local authority boundary contains properties which are sub-standard, or if the state of repair or appearance of the properties are affecting the quality of the neighbourhood, then Inverclyde Council may designate it as a housing renewal area (HRA), with ministerial approval. When an HRA is established a strategy is prepared and implemented to improve the standard of the housing within the designated geographical area concerned. Inverclyde Council has set its local criteria for identifying an HRA as:

- the level of below Tolerable Standard housing in a defined geographical area;
- the level of sub-standard housing in a defined geographical /neighbourhood area;
- the level and condition of disrepair;
- the sustainability of the geographical/neighbourhood area;
- previous investment in the surrounding area; and
- links and strategic fit with the agreed Area Renewal Strategy.

A weighted options appraisal system will be developed as an additional assessment tool. Information received through the Private Sector House Condition Survey will be factored in to ensure a targeted, transparent approach to HRA identification and tackling below Tolerable Standard housing in Inverclyde.

Sub-strategy for improving the condition of houses by providing or arranging the provision of assistance in line with the authority's Scheme of Assistance

8.40 The Inverclyde Council Scheme of Assistance seeks to provide the advice and information, the practical assistance and the financial assistance that owners require to allow them to exercise their rights and responsibilities relative to the maintenance of their property. The Scheme of Assistance has a 3-strand approach to delivery, namely:

- Advice & Information;
- Practical Assistance; and
- Financial Assistance.

The approach that is relevant to each homeowner will be dependant upon their ownership status, the repair or improvement that is required to the property and the budgets available to the Council. To ensure that the Council meets its obligations and delivers on the objectives of the LHS the following categories of repair or improvement will be given priority:

- Houses in significant breach of the Tolerable Standard or lacking Standard Amenities;
- Work to meet the needs of a disabled person;
- Replacing lead pipe supplying drinking water;
- Central heating system replacement;
- Communal Scottish Housing Quality Standard works; and
- Improving thermal insulation.

Practical assistance is offered to all homeowners in Inverclyde. Advice on tackling disrepair is delivered by Care & Repair and is aimed at providing owners with an opportunity to identify issues of disrepair in and around their property and take the most appropriate course of action. The Small Repairs Service, operated through Care & Repair, will assist elderly home owners with a range of

small repairs that are required around the home and will continue to build on the success of the existing service. To ensure that the Council achieves maximum output for the budgets available for private sector housing in Inverclyde financial assistance will be available for the priorities mentioned above.

Neighbourhood Issues Being Dealt With By Residents Themselves

8.41 This LHS is set against a background of major financial cutbacks which are affecting many services across the public, voluntary and private sectors. As a result, it is inevitable that services will be withdrawn or reduced. In this context, it needs to be recognised that for successful neighbourhoods to continue to work well, and for problematic neighbourhoods to improve, the residents of Inverclyde will have to take on more responsibilities than may have previously been expected of them. This does not absolve service providers of their responsibilities towards the communities of Inverclyde; supporting these communities in one way or another is the reason they exist. Also, it is clear that the vast majority of this strategy is geared towards various agencies carrying out work to improve the local housing system for the benefit of all its residents. However, there is often more that can be done by households to better their neighbourhoods as well.

8.42 Improving the capacity of residents to respond to the needs of their neighbourhoods can be done in several ways. For example, if the communication skills of individuals throughout the area can be improved then there should be a reduction in the incidences of conflict between neighbours. If consideration for others can be increased then there is the chance that antisocial behaviour and vandalism can be reduced. Also, if co-operation and leadership can be encouraged then neighbours can tackle large projects together and make greater impacts on improving the area where they live. For example, neighbourhood cleanups have been successful in fostering community spirit and dealing with litter, fly tipping and vandalism. This section of the strategy will attempt to promote and support these processes and more.

Mortgage and Rent Arrears

8.43 Arrears can be a great source of worry to residents and can be a disruption to the effective operation of housing-related businesses, particularly landlords, and can put both at risk: the former of repossession/eviction and the latter of becoming untenable as a business. The LHS will continue to support advice and assistance, mediation, and other measures to resolve arrears issues and to prevent homelessness. Existing protocols will be regularly reviewed to ensure that the best options are made available in all cases to allow owners and tenants to remain in their homes and to preserve continuity of employment, education, access to care and support, and networks of family and friends.

Housing-Related Community Scene

8.44 The SOA goal, that Inverclyde communities will become more able to identify, articulate and take action on their needs and aspirations, can be brought about in two fundamental ways. The first, addressed above, is that individual residents can work on an issue-by-issue basis to improve their neighbourhoods. The second is that they can organise in a more structured manner, and on a longer-term basis. The most common way to do this is the formation of community groups. The LHS is particularly concerned with the successful operation of tenants' and residents' representative groups in Inverclyde. In terms of funds and resources at their disposal, the committees that direct local housing associations are arguably the tenant and resident voluntary groups which have the greatest potential to affect change and improvement in the area. But there are many tenants' and residents' groups that have formed, who may have less resources, and may operate on a smaller scale, but are no less ambitious in their desire to improve their neighbourhoods. The LHS will support where it can the formation of new groups for the households of Inverclyde to help them achieve their communities' goals.

PART 3

9. Housing Supply Targets [Details to follow in Final Version]

10. Glossary [Details to follow]

Community plan
Development plan
Dwelling
Fuel poverty
Household
Housing need
Housing demand
Housing market
Housing support
Local development plan
Main issues report
Mixed tenure housing
Private sector
Registered social landlord
Scheme of Assistance
Shared ownership
Single outcome agreement
Social sector
Strategic development plan
Sub area

11. List of Abbreviations [Details to follow]

GCV
HNDA
LDP
LHS
RSL
SDP
SDPA
SOA
2001 Act
2006 Act

12. Bibliography

- A - Inverclyde Council, *Citizens' Panel Summer 2010 Postal Survey: Summary Report*, Greenock, July 2010
- B - Inverclyde Council Planning and Housing Service, Local Housing Strategy Consultation September 2009–February 2010
- C - Inverclyde Council Planning and Housing Service, *Migration, Housing and Integration: Report on the Results of a Survey of Polish Migrants living in and around Inverclyde, Scotland*. Greenock, 2009
- D - The Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Housing Market Partnership, *Housing Need and Demand Assessment: Working Draft*. Glasgow, November 2010. NB Where any part of Chapter 8 'Household Groups with Specific Housing Requirements' is mentioned, this

relates to the version of the chapter that was revised and released separately *after* the Working Draft was distributed.

- E - Inverclyde Alliance, *Single Outcome Agreement: 'Tackling Poverty, Sustaining Growth', 2009–2011*. Greenock, 2009
- F - Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority, *Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan: Main Issues Report*. Glasgow, 2010.
- G - Inverclyde Council Regeneration and Planning Service, *Inverclyde Local Development Plan: Main Issues Report* (Draft). Greenock, 2011
- H - Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, *Review criteria for Local Housing Strategies*. (Final Version)
- I - The Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, *Local Housing Strategy Guidance*. Edinburgh, June 2008
- J - Inverclyde Alliance, *Inspiring Inverclyde: Inverclyde Alliance Community Plan 2008–2018*. Greenock, 2008
- K - Scheme of Assistance
- L - SG, housing in the 21st century
- M - Scottish Government, *The Government Economic Strategy*. Edinburgh, 2007
- N - Inverclyde Council, an *Ambitious, Confident Council: Corporate Plan 2007–11*. Greenock, 2007
- O - Housing (Scotland) Act 2001
- P - Inverclyde Private Sector House Condition Survey
- Q – Scottish Government, *National Outcomes*. Edinburgh, <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/scotPerforms/outcomes>
- R - Regeneration plans
- S - Community Care plans
- T - Health improvement plans
- U - Same as You
- V – Climate Change Scotland Act
- W – Guidance on Climate Change Act and the LHS
- X - SHQS Delivery Plan guidance
- Y - 2006 Act
- Z - Guidance on homelessness prevention
- AA - 2003 Homelessness Act
- BB - 1987 Act (tolerable standard)
- CC - LDP Main Issues Report
- DD - Report on Travellers 2007
- EE - Council's race equalities scheme
- FF - Council's disability equalities scheme
- GG - the new planning policy (I think it confirms the 5, 10, 20 year supply targets correction to the LHS guidance)
- HH - Council's gender equality schemes
- II - Equalities Act 2010

13. List of Annexes [Details to follow]

14. Consultation Questions

14.1 We would be grateful for your responses to the following questions about the Consultative Draft of the Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy, our contact details are as shown in paragraph 16 below.

Question 1

Do you agree with the five strategic outcomes for the Local Housing Strategy? If not, please give your reasons.

Question 2

Are there any other strategic outcomes that should be included in the Local Housing Strategy? Please give your reasons for their inclusion.

Question 3

Does the Local Housing Strategy provide an overarching strategy for all aspects of housing including homelessness, housing support, fuel poverty, private sector housing conditions, and need and demand for housing? If not, please provide comments.

Question 4

Does the Local Housing Strategy pay sufficient attention to changes in the make up and age range of the Inverclyde population and the effects that these changes may have on housing need and demand? If not, please provide comments.

Question 5

How would you prioritise the five strategic outcomes and the associated actions? Please give reasons for your choice of priorities.

Question 6

Do you consider that appropriate attention has been given to the equalities aspects of the Local Housing Strategy? If not, please provide comments.

Question 7

Would you / your organisation be prepared, in principle, to support the achievement of the five strategic outcomes in partnership with Inverclyde Council?

Question 8

Would you / your organisation be prepared to support the actions set out in the Outcome Templates of the Local Housing Strategy? (See Section 16 for details).

15. Contact Details

For further information on the Consultative Draft of the Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy or any other matters relating to the Strategic Housing Team within Safer & Inclusive Communities please contact:

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16. Outcome Templates

Local Housing Strategy Outcome 1	Relevant Indicators	Data Frequency/Type/Source	Baseline (date)	Targets	Timescale
Inverclyde residents have access to a range of suitable housing options.	The ratio of 'useable private renting dwellings' to 'households that can afford them but cannot afford owner occupation'				
	The ratio of 'useable owner occupation dwellings' to 'households that can afford them'				
	The ratio of 'useable housing association dwellings' to 'households that cannot afford to live in the private sector'				
	The number of dwellings purchased as a percentage of those put on the market during the financial year				
	The number of dwellings let as a percentage of those that were vacated during the financial year				
	The number of households that became homeless in the financial year				
	The proportion of households that remained homeless for more than x days during the financial year				

Appendix 1

Key actions and commitment by local Partners for this outcome	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Partners support the effective operation of housing association and private lettings in Inverclyde by improving links between potential landlords and tenants 2. Partners support growth in the rented sector in Inverclyde by encouraging more people to become landlords, or encouraging existing landlords to expand 3. Partners support house purchases and lets in Inverclyde by encouraging the development of new housing 4. Partners support house purchases and lets in Inverclyde by helping improve the ability of potential buyers and tenants to afford a wider range of dwellings 5. Partners assist in making dwellings and neighbourhoods in Inverclyde more attractive to current residents, and potential tenants and buyers 6. Partners assist in making dwellings and neighbourhoods in Inverclyde more practically useful and desirable to a wider range of lifestyles 8. Partners support residents and landlords in Inverclyde to improve the physical quality of their dwellings and to keep these standards up 				

Appendix 1

Local Housing Strategy Outcome 2	Relevant Indicators	Data Frequency/Type/Source	Baseline (date)	Targets	Timescale
Inverclyde residents are able to make best use of their housing.	The proportion of residents who respond in affirmative to direct question, "Are you living with the appropriate degree of independence?"				
	The proportion of residents who respond in affirmative to direct question, "Do you feel capable of fulfilling your caring role?"				
	The proportion of residents who respond in affirmative to direct question, "Do you feel secure in and around your home?"				
	The proportion of households living in fuel poverty				
	The mean average volume of carbon emissions originating from dwellings				
	The number of households that became homeless in the financial year				
	The proportion of households that are evicted during the financial year				
	The proportion of				

Appendix 1

	households that had their dwelling repossessed by their mortgage lender during the financial year				
	The amount of rent arrears owed by residents as percentage of total due				
	The amount of mortgage arrears owed by residents as percentage of total due				
Key actions and commitment by local Partners for this outcome	<p>5. Partners assist in making dwellings and neighbourhoods in Inverclyde more attractive to current residents, and potential tenants and buyers</p> <p>6. Partners assist in making dwellings and neighbourhoods in Inverclyde more practically useful and desirable to a wider range of lifestyles</p> <p>7. Partners support residents to manage their own housing-related responsibilities and to work with other residents to improve their neighbourhood living</p> <p>9. Partners work to reduce carbon emissions from housing and to reduce fuel poverty in Inverclyde</p> <p>10. Partners continue to support the improved safety of households within dwellings and neighbourhoods in Inverclyde</p>				

Appendix 1

Local Housing Strategy Outcome 3	Relevant Indicators	Data Frequency/Type/Source	Baseline (date)	Targets	Timescale
Inverclyde residents can enjoy their neighbourhoods.	The proportion of residents who respond in affirmative to direct question, “Do you feel secure in and around your home?”				
	The proportion of residents who respond in affirmative to direct question, “Are you impressed by Inverclyde’s residential areas?”				
	The mean average volume of carbon emissions originating from dwellings				
	The proportion of non-Inverclyde residents who respond in affirmative to direct question, “Are you impressed by Inverclyde’s residential areas?”				
	The number of antisocial incidents resolved between residents				
Key actions and commitment by local Partners for this outcome	<p>5. Partners assist in making dwellings and neighbourhoods in Inverclyde more attractive to current residents, and potential tenants and buyers</p> <p>6. Partners assist in making dwellings and neighbourhoods in Inverclyde more practically useful and desirable to a wider range of lifestyles</p> <p>7. Partners support residents to manage their own housing-related responsibilities and to work with other residents to improve their neighbourhood living</p>				

Appendix 1

	<p>8. Partners support residents and landlords in Inverclyde to improve the physical quality of their dwellings and to keep these standards up</p> <p>9. Partners work to reduce carbon emissions from housing and to reduce fuel poverty in Inverclyde</p> <p>10. Partners continue to support the improved safety of households within dwellings and neighbourhoods in Inverclyde</p>
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Appendix 1

Local Housing Strategy Outcome 4	Relevant Indicators	Data Frequency/Type/Source	Baseline (date)	Targets	Timescale
Inverclyde residents receive appropriate support when they experience changes to their housing needs.	The proportion of residents who respond in affirmative to direct question, "Are you living with the appropriate degree of independence?"				
	The proportion of residents who respond in affirmative to direct question, "Do you feel capable of fulfilling your caring role?"				
	The proportion of households living in fuel poverty				
	The number of households that became homeless in the financial year				
	The proportion of households that remained homeless for more than x days during the financial year				
	The proportion of households that are evicted during the financial year				
	The proportion of households that had their dwelling repossessed by their mortgage lender during the financial year				

Appendix 1

	The amount of rent arrears owed by residents as percentage of total due				
	The amount of mortgage arrears owed by residents as percentage of total due				
Key actions and commitment by local Partners for this outcome	<p>1. Partners support the effective operation of housing association and private lettings in Inverclyde by improving links between potential landlords and tenants</p> <p>4. Partners support house purchases and lets in Inverclyde by helping improve the ability of potential buyers and tenants to afford a wider range of dwellings</p> <p>6. Partners assist in making dwellings and neighbourhoods in Inverclyde more practically useful and desirable to a wider range of lifestyles</p> <p>7. Partners support residents to manage their own housing-related responsibilities and to work with other residents to improve their neighbourhood living</p> <p>9. Partners work to reduce carbon emissions from housing and to reduce fuel poverty in Inverclyde</p> <p>11. Where appropriate, partners work to increase the potential for households to keep their homes where these are at risk</p>				

Appendix 1

Local Housing Strategy Outcome 5	Relevant Indicators	Data Frequency/Type/Source	Baseline (date)	Targets	Timescale
Inverclyde residents take responsibility for their housing and communities.	The proportion of residents who respond in affirmative to direct question, "Are you living with the appropriate degree of independence?"				
	The mean average volume of carbon emissions originating from dwellings				
	The proportion of households that are evicted during the financial year				
	The proportion of households that had their dwelling repossessed by their mortgage lender during the financial year				
	The proportion of private sector dwellings that meet the tolerable standard				
	The proportion of private sector dwellings that are in serious disrepair				
	The number of antisocial incidents resolved between residents				
	The amount of rent arrears owed by residents as percentage of total due				
	The amount of mortgage				

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	arrears owed by residents as percentage of total due				
	The proportion of housing association dwellings that meet the Scottish housing quality standard				
	The number of housing-related campaigns undertaken by formal community groups				
	The number of housing-related campaigns undertaken by informal community alliances				
Key actions and commitment by local Partners for this outcome	<p>4. Partners support house purchases and lets in Inverclyde by helping improve the ability of potential buyers and tenants to afford a wider range of dwellings</p> <p>7. Partners support residents to manage their own housing-related responsibilities and to work with other residents to improve their neighbourhood living</p> <p>8. Partners support residents and landlords in Inverclyde to improve the physical quality of their dwellings and to keep these standards up</p> <p>9. Partners work to reduce carbon emissions from housing and to reduce fuel poverty in Inverclyde</p> <p>11. Where appropriate, partners work to increase the potential for households to keep their homes where these are at risk</p>				

The following pages contain detailed action points that support and complement the five strategic outcomes as set out in the templates above. These actions will be used as the basis of the consultation process and will be refined and prioritised for inclusion in the Final Version of the LHS 2011 – 2016.

1. Partners support the effective operation of housing association and private lettings in Inverclyde by improving links between potential landlords and tenants

- Create a weekly lettings magazine/web page for *registered* private and social landlords, jointly between Council, RSLs and private landlords
- Develop a housing options guide for the area – jointly between Council, RSLs, private landlords, estate agents etc. Promote the guide and measure popularity
- Investigate methods for establishing and improving links between the Council and private landlords
- Partners encourage housing-related agencies to record equalities information, to analyse it for planning purposes and to share it with other relevant agencies
- Partners explore the possibility of RSLs and private landlords using temporary tenancies and close monitoring and support for households with a problematic tenancy history, instead of suspending them from their housing lists
- Investigate possibilities for the Council and all relevant partners (housing support, homelessness, RSLs, private landlords, estate agents etc) to open a one-stop housing shop in a central area for advice, support, advertising, comprehensive housing assessments and joint responses
- Investigate the possibilities of continuing to use private lets to provide temporary housing for homeless households
- Develop more publicity covering specialist housing that is available
- Partners develop protocols for supporting young people into independent living, when moving on from a family home but particularly when moving on from a care home
- Landlords consider alternative ways of increasing applicants' ability to secure appropriate housing as quickly as possible and to reducing void times
- Continue the development of RSL allocation policy harmonisation
- RSLs and Council work together to develop a quota system for lets to section 5 referrals in Inverclyde
- Continue the development of a common housing register for RSLs in Inverclyde
- RSLs and CHCP develop procedures for rapid access to housing for households being discharged from hospital
- Continue to support the work and development of the joint assessment allocations panel established through the Demonstrator initiative
- CHCP to develop a priority system/strategy for making referrals to RSLs

Appendix 1

2. Partners support activity in the rented sector in Inverclyde by encouraging more people to become landlords, or encouraging existing landlords to expand

- a. Encourage RSLs to take on property management contracts for private landlords
- b. Council initiate targeted campaign promoting the facts and benefits of owners with empty homes becoming landlords. Do this in conjunction with RSL and private property managers.
- c. Partners assist RSLs in investigating the creation of private landlord wings which can develop and purchase their own housing
- d. Look into the potential for private lettings agencies which own properties to set up development wings
- e. Investigate methods for establishing and improving links between the Council and private landlords
- f. Look into the creation of a compulsory-purchase strategy for vacant properties
- g. RSLs purchase private sector dwellings as a *standard form* of increasing stock, as an alternative to new build
- h. Investigate the possibility of existing private landlords becoming private wing of RSLs group or becoming RSLs themselves

3. Partners support house purchases and lets in Inverclyde by encouraging the development of new housing

- a. Continue the development of the land supply audit to provide accurate information on land for potential development of housing, including RSL land, local authority land and other public sector land, and containing development constraint and contamination information.
- b. Organise a publicity event to promote the best sites for development in Inverclyde, aimed at housing developers from across Scotland
- c. Create and promote a self-build information pack
- d. Establish systems for supporting regular contact between the Council and private developers, for discussing development issues, promoting sites, improving the LHS etc.
- e. Promote charities/services investing in RSL developments in exchange for RSLs guaranteeing a share of lets to the charities'/services' clients
- f. Promote RSLs setting up profit making companies, and reinvesting the profits in their social housing developments
- g. Investigate using council tax second homes receipts to support development projects
- h. Council provide a financial contribution to housing supply through the provision of land for development
- i. Support private developers and RSLs to form development partnerships
- j. Investigate the potential for merging or splitting sites for the benefit of housing development
- k. Prepare an affordable housing policy in conjunction with the Local Development Plan
- l. Investigate the conversion of storage spaces above shops into housing, for example, in town centres
- m. Support the improvement of liaison and co-operation between infrastructure agencies and developers
- n. Investigate the possibilities of using tax increment financing in Inverclyde housing and neighbourhood developments
- o. Riverside Inverclyde consider allowing RSLs to develop on sites which are not being taken up by private developers
- p. Promote the importance of early engagement and pre-application processes in helping speed up planning decisions
- q. RSLs investigate alternative development options for land they are not in a position to develop themselves

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4. Partners support house purchases and lets in Inverclyde by helping improve the ability of potential buyers and tenants to afford a wider range of dwellings

- a. Promote savings schemes in Inverclyde
- b. Investigate the options for the creation of, and public subsidisation of, tenancies designed to support households that are trying to save for mortgage deposits. Landlord retains majority of rent, landlord puts agreed portion of rent into deposit savings fund for tenant. Public authority subsidises portion landlord loses to the savings fund. Tenant eventually uses savings for deposit to support purchase on the open market.
- c. Come to agreement with developers/construction companies, that they will employ local labour and create apprenticeships
- d. Multi-agency review of benefit claims process, including original claims and keeping claims live
- e. Continue to support the uptake of key benefits.
- f. Develop cross-sector training strategy for people to work in housing in Inverclyde, including modern apprenticeships
- g. Develop cross-sector strategy for promoting employment in the housing sector
- h. Promote and expand schemes for recycling/testing appliances and furniture, for landlords and tenants
- i. Investigate possibilities for the Council and all relevant partners (housing support, homelessness, RSLs, private landlords, estate agents etc) to open a one-stop housing shop in a central area for advice, support, advertising, comprehensive housing assessments and joint responses
- j. Investigate the possibility of the Council guaranteeing individual household mortgages
- k. Investigate new ways to help households maximise income
- l. Partners encourage housing-related agencies to record equalities information, to analyse it for planning purposes and to share it with other relevant agencies
- m. Review housing finance advice provision in Inverclyde and investigate the potential for increased co-ordination of service provision
- n. Inverclyde Council review the possibility of providing house purchase loans to households unable to afford mortgages on the open market
- o. Partners develop joint schemes to allow households to access mortgages with smaller deposits, or ownership schemes requiring smaller mortgages

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5. Partners assist in making dwellings and neighbourhoods in Inverclyde more attractive to current residents, and potential tenants and buyers

Actions concerned with visual appearance of neighbourhoods etc

- a. Continue to support and promote provision of facilities and green areas as part of new developments, and also where there is no planned local development
- b. Support and develop co-ordinated responses to graffiti and vandalism
- c. Survey residents to establish what they believe is problematic about their residential environments, e.g. external common areas and landscaping.
- d. Continue the programme of demolishing low demand and below standard housing association dwellings, where they cannot be brought up to standard at reasonable cost
- e. Develop policy for the use of VAT receipts to improve neighbourhood landscaping where appropriate

Actions concerned with the overall image of Inverclyde and its neighbourhoods

- f. Support research and analysis carried out to understand why certain residential areas of Inverclyde are unpopular
- g. Carry out studies of the successful neighbourhoods of Inverclyde
- h. Support a strategy for the promotion of Inverclyde's housing estates and Inverclyde as a whole across West of Scotland and all of Scotland
- i. Regenerate Clune Park
- j. Improve and promote the image of Inverclyde's private rented sector so it can develop into a tenure of choice
- k. Support balanced tenure split, particularly in areas dominated by social housing, and monitor progress

Actions concerned with making housing costs more affordable

- l. Explore the expansion of affordable housing across all tenures (midmarket rent, low cost home ownership and social housing etc) with reference to the affordable housing policy when prepared
- m. Promote a policy of RSLs setting rents by popularity of housing, as part of hard-to-let policies
- n. Investigate the possibility of developers retaining a share of the equity of a property with the first owner until resale
- o. Investigate with suppliers the potential to supply gas to currently all-electric dwellings in Inverclyde
- p. Council promote and give advice on self-factoring
- q. Council hold sinking funds for self-factoring owners and landlords

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6. Partners assist in making dwellings and neighbourhoods in Inverclyde more practically useful and desirable to a wider range of lifestyles

Improve access to Inverclyde's neighbourhoods:

- a. Look into the need to improve access and parking for households with cars in Inverclyde's residential areas
- b. Investigate the need for assessments of Inverclyde's neighbourhoods for dwellings affected by steep road/pavement access. Use as basis for strategy to ease access difficulties, particularly where it will support the effectiveness and provision of adaptations
- c. Explore links with the Inverclyde transport strategy to improve public transport provision to Inverclyde's housing estates

Help create more "housing +" neighbourhoods:

- d. Continue to support and encourage cross-departmental, cross-sector forums for considering upcoming large developments – to co-ordinate 'complete' developments: housing, shops, recreation, transport, health, schools etc
- e. Carry out/support review of household communication access across Inverclyde – broadband, cable, mobile phones etc, as basis for sub-strategy to improve access, and to support other initiatives such as telecare
- f. Support research and investigations in understanding what residents want and need improved in their communities, including service provision
- g. Investigate the potential for encouraging and supporting upper market housing and lifestyle, inc. schools, shops, bars etc. in Inverclyde as part of the regeneration process in Inverclyde

Promote housing that can be of practical use to as many households as possible:

- h. Partners create central database of adapted properties and residents who need adaptations etc
- i. Improve processes and develop incentives to encourage people in adapted houses to move if they don't need the adaptation
- j. Partners carry out local assessment of the balance of funding (proportion funded by different agencies), and seeking new funding, for equipment and adaptations
- k. Agree local multi-agency partnership for prioritising all equipment (including telecare) and adaptations for Inverclyde residents
- l. Investigate ways in which partners can develop more flexibility in the distribution of equipment and adaptations
- m. Continue existing research and carry out extra research regarding what households in all sectors are looking for from housing (size, style, extras etc) – share with all sector developers
- n. Partners encourage housing-related agencies to record equalities information, to analyse it for planning purposes and to share it with other relevant agencies
- o. Review the suitability of current housing provision and housing-based service provision for people with particular needs, and assess potential future needs
- p. Partners further promote the development of lifetime homes and wheelchair accessible housing, particularly in the private sector
- q. Council will continue to increase the number of private landlords on the private landlord register
- r. Develop links between private and social landlords for practice sharing
- s. Partners provide landlord training/advice
- t. Develop a private landlord accreditation scheme, to give tenants confidence in their landlords, the way that RSL inspection reports may do for their tenants. This accreditation could require private landlords to achieve, or plan to achieve, the SHQS.
- u. Joint review of quality/usefulness of information provision/communication across the housing system

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- v. Develop systems to regularly assess demand for specialist housing to ensure current provision is necessary and to determine where new provision is needed
- w. Provide more sheltered and very sheltered housing in existing neighbourhoods in Inverclyde.
- x. Continue to support Care and Repair services to support older and disabled people in their homes.

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7. Partners support residents to manage their own housing-related responsibilities and to work with other residents to improve their neighbourhood living

- a. Partners agree a definitive local list of triggers in resident behaviour that will prompt housing support or other kinds of support assessments
- b. Investigate the possibility of introducing tenancy clauses which state that if the landlord or CHCP believe a housing support or other kind of support assessment is required, tenants must comply
- c. Partners further consider alternative support to compliment support workers e.g. classes, instructional DVDs/literature, temp accommodation where training is provided, stand-by support when client requests it instead of programmed support etc.
- d. Programme regular reviews of all clients receiving support
- e. Continue to support interagency housing support assessments
- f. Undertake wide investigation into efficiency savings in Council-funded housing support provision
- g. Investigate ways of measuring the benefits, successes and cost-effectiveness of housing support provision
- h. Develop housing support programmes and housing for preparing people to manage their own tenancies
- i. Develop ways in which landlords can play a greater role in identifying potential support needs of their applicants or tenants and in responding to those
- j. Develop strategy for training households to manage household finances
- k. Landlords jointly review and improve procedures used in relation to rent collection and arrears
- l. Investigate possibilities for the Council and all relevant partners (housing support, homelessness, RSLs, private landlords, estate agents etc) to open a one-stop housing shop in a central area for advice, support, advertising, comprehensive housing assessments and joint responses
- m. Partners develop and support initiatives to improve neighbour relations and co-operation
- n. Support development of a concordat between service providers/community planning partners and communities, re-defining boundaries between services and communities. Train staff on how to work under this, and monitor it in practice.
- o. Develop ways of making community groups more representative, accountable and capable
- p. Private landlords and RSLs consider the need for a live-in carer when prioritising applicants for housing
- q. Support development of non-professional carer networks of friends/family instead of focus on individual non-professional carer
- r. Partners encourage housing-related agencies to record equalities information, to analyse it for planning purposes and to share it with other relevant agencies
- s. Continue to support Care and Repair services to support older and disabled people in their homes.

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8. Partners support residents and landlords in Inverclyde to improve the physical quality of their dwellings and to keep these standards up

- a. Partners investigate ways of monitoring and improving the maintenance of dwellings in Inverclyde
- b. Investigate methods for establishing and improving links between the Council and private landlords
- c. Assess the potential for HRAs in Inverclyde. Review criteria for deciding areas where these would be suitable.
- d. Review criteria for deciding which households will receive help from the Council for property conditions
- e. Investigate ways of improving the Council's advice provision to private households in regards to their property conditions
- f. Continually renew our private sector condition surveys
- g. Support RSL work towards the minimum achievement of the SHQS
- h. Investigate possibilities for the Council and all relevant partners (housing support, homelessness, RSLs, private landlords, estate agents etc) to open a one-stop housing shop in a central area for advice, support, advertising, comprehensive housing assessments and joint responses
- i. Promote SHQS as an aspiration for home owners and private landlords
- j. Partners encourage housing-related agencies to record equalities information, to analyse it for planning purposes and to share it with other relevant agencies
- k. Where RSLs are exempt from the SHQS, RSLs continually review the potential for the SHQS to be achieved at a later date
- l. Improve the conditions that tenants in the private rented sector live in, ensuring their dwellings are fully habitable, with monitoring through, for example, 5% spot checks
- m. Continue to support Care and Repair services to support older and disabled people in their homes.
- n. Council continue to support RSLs in remedying disrepair in private homes.

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9. Partners work to reduce carbon emissions from housing and to reduce fuel poverty in Inverclyde

- a. Investigate with suppliers the potential to supply gas to currently all-electric dwellings in Inverclyde
- b. Partners campaign for reduction in energy costs for households
- c. Continue development of and seek funding for home visits for fuel use assessments
- d. Investigate options and potentials for converting more households to greener energy use
- e. Investigate possibilities for the Council and all relevant partners (housing support, homelessness, RSLs, private landlords, estate agents etc) to open a one-stop housing shop in a central area for advice, support, advertising, comprehensive housing assessments and joint responses
- f. Develop an area based, cross-tenure scheme for delivery of all relevant domestic energy efficiency, carbon reduction and fuel poverty activity
- g. Partners encourage housing-related agencies to record equalities information, to analyse it for planning purposes and to share it with other relevant agencies
- h. Explore with energy suppliers the potential for beneficial rates for residents in Inverclyde
- i. Explore innovative methods to encourage more efficient energy use by households
- j. Improve existing RSL energy and heating advice provision
- k. Support an increased take-up of social tariffs offered by energy companies

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10. Partners continue to support the improved safety of households within dwellings and neighbourhoods in Inverclyde

- a. Explore funding to subsidise security alarms in areas where housing is most affected by break-ins
- b. Review possibilities of developing home security and home safety checks (in style of fire service fire safety checks) – as well as Police involvement, train housing officers/maintenance officers to do these
- c. Partners support Community Safety Partnership to target resources to make communities safer
- d. Encourage private and housing association landlords to arrange fire service home visits as part of new tenancy/settling in arrangements
- e. Community Safety Partnership reviews residential access issues for emergency services
- f. Support the development of clearer arrangements and responsibilities in responding to crime/antisocial behaviour, across/between all housing agencies
- g. Continue to target the use of mobile CCTV in hot spots
- h. Support continuing works to improve road safety in Inverclyde's residential areas.
- i. Encourage greater involvement of RSLs and (through a strategy to improve links with them) private landlords in the work of the Community Safety Partnership
- j. Provide Fire and Rescue with comprehensive and regular updates on planned demolition and construction plans, to allow them to plan their service around the increased risks work sites or derelict properties cause
- k. Support the development of an Inverclyde protocol for joint service response to domestic abuse, based on the West of Scotland protocol
- l. Provide housing and maintenance officers with training on how to respond to suspected domestic abuse/vulnerable person or child abuse within a home they have visited

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11. Where appropriate, partners work to increase the potential for households to keep their homes where these are at risk

- a. Partners provide landlord training/advice
- b. Promote wider uptake of housing association and regular contents insurance and buildings insurance, where appropriate
- c. Develop strategy for training households to manage household finances
- d. Investigate possibilities for the Council and all relevant partners (housing support, homelessness, RSLs, private landlords, estate agents etc) to open a one-stop housing shop in a central area for advice, support, advertising, comprehensive housing assessments and joint responses
- e. Partners encourage housing-related agencies to record equalities information, to analyse it for planning purposes and to share it with other relevant agencies
- f. Investigate ways of ensuring tenants can sustain their tenancy during hospital stays and rehabilitation and re-ablement
- g. Where appropriate, expand on and improve existing services that allow people to stay in their homes when they develop care needs or their needs change
- h. Investigate the requirement for an increased uptake of mortgage-to-rent cases in Inverclyde
- i. Review and improve the different methods the Homelessness Service and its partners use to respond to different presentation situations
- j. Review homelessness/CHCP services' ability to respond to the earliest indications of eviction/repossession procedures
- k. Investigate the potential for increasing the number of crisis/emergency homes in Inverclyde
- l. All homeless households and households at risk of homelessness to receive welfare rights and financial assessments.