

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

3 October 2024

Report by Director of Environment

East Renfrewshire's Local Housing Strategy (LHS) - 2024-2029

**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To seek approval for, and publication of, the final proposed Local Housing Strategy (LHS) covering the period 2024-2029, and to proceed to implementation of the LHS in conjunction with key partners and local stakeholders.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

2. It is recommended that the Council:
- a) Note the Vision and Strategic Housing Priorities identified for the LHS 2024 – 2029;
  - b) Note that the draft LHS was subject to a formal “peer review” process led by Scottish Government, and feedback provided in March 2024 has been taken into account in subsequent revisions; and
  - c) Approve the LHS 2024-2029, and its publication.

**BACKGROUND**

3. The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 requires local authorities to prepare a Local Housing Strategy (LHS). This is a five-year plan setting out the strategic direction for housing and related services for the local area.

4. This is required to be carried out in consultation with key stakeholders, delivery partners and most importantly the community. Prior to final Council approval, a “peer review” led by Scottish Government must take place to ensure the LHS meets the terms of the statutory guidance on preparing Local Housing Strategies’.

5. The LHS must reflect priorities for development of, and investment in, housing and housing related services in the local area. It takes into account all housing tenures (including as examples owner occupied, private rented and socially rented). Though the Council is not responsible for all housing within its boundary area, as a landlord or otherwise, the Council is nonetheless the “strategic housing authority.” As the strategic authority, in addition to its landlord role for its own stock, it also has the strategic and enabling role in ensuring that improvements sought and delivered help to support sustaining and improving the quality of life of all residents.

6. Extensive research and consultation has been undertaken by Housing Services to sharpen our understanding of the main issues affecting the housing market, homelessness pressures, the condition and energy efficiency of homes, and the needs of residents from a

health and support perspective. This has shaped the five Strategic Housing Priorities the LHS seeks to address.

7. The Strategic Housing Need and Demand Assessment (SHNDA) forms the main part of this evidence base - identifying the medium to long term need for affordable and market housing based on a range of data. This is prepared regionally by Glasgow and Clyde Valley Housing Market Partnership, and was signed off by the Scottish Government as robust and credible on the 7 June this year. This evidence has informed proposed targets for delivery of new private and affordable homes in East Renfrewshire over the lifespan of the LHS, and has critical links to the emerging Local Development Plan (LDP) 3.

8. East Renfrewshire's LHS has been developed in a landscape of unprecedented housing pressure both locally and nationally. This has recently culminated in the declaration of a housing emergency by several Councils, including East Renfrewshire Council, and the Scottish Parliament. High priority continues to be placed by all on delivering enough homes of the right type and quality, in the right places, and which are affordable to meet people's needs, as set out in Housing to 2040 vision, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/housing-2040-2/>.

9. More affordable homes are critical to meeting rehousing and homelessness duties, and creating a more balanced and accessible housing system. The Council, as the strategic housing authority, needs to drive the delivery of this agenda both within its own stock and in influencing, and facilitating where possible, delivery by and in conjunction with, other key delivery partners operating within our boundaries.

10. It is however important to note that in the understandable desire to build new and additional housing of all tenures, and particularly affordable and social rented housing, that we also need must reflect the need to ensure that there is the appropriate balance between new homes and existing stock investment. Sections in this report referencing, the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS), the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (ESSH) & the proposed Social Housing Net Zero Standard (SHNZS) are all indicative of areas where investment to meet legislative standards is required.

11. The extent to which further accelerated delivery of new housing is feasible will depend on a range of factors, including HRA capacity and an updated stock condition survey/up to date condition data. Clearly there is an impact on our ability to fund new housing when considered alongside the requirement to invest in these areas and in terms of our legal requirements regarding fitness of our existing stock for purpose. This is not a challenge faced solely by the Council but equally faced by all other affordable and social rented housing providers.

## REPORT

12. The proposed Local Housing Strategy 2024-2029 is included at Appendix 1. This contains a clear vision, 5 strategic housing priorities as well as a delivery plan with clear outcomes, targets and the contributions partners have committed to making towards these over the next five years.

13. The Vision for the plan is:

**“A Welcome Home – East Renfrewshire residents can access a good quality home within their wider community that is affordable and meets their needs”**

14. The five Strategic Housing Priorities co-produced through extensive community and stakeholder engagement are:

- i. Enough of the right homes to rent or buy, in the places where we need them;
- ii. Homes that meet a lifetime of needs, supporting residents to live independently;
- iii. Working together to deliver the advice and support people need, when they need it;
- iv. Good quality homes (and neighbourhoods); improving standards across East Renfrewshire; and
- v. East Renfrewshire's carbon footprint; making improvements to our homes and reducing energy usage.

15. There are key targets set out by the Scottish Government in Housing to 2040 which every LHS must take into account, and reflect back in the targets we set locally. These national targets include:

- Delivering at least 160,000 affordable homes by 2032, with 112,000 of these to be for social rent.
- Preventing homelessness occurring, and where it does happen reducing time spent in temporary accommodation, and eradicating use of unsuitable accommodation.
- Maximising annual compliance with the existing Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) and Energy Efficiency Standard (EESH) for social rented homes.
- Working towards compliance with the EESH & the proposed SHNZS.
- Improvements in housing design and energy efficiency to contribute to Scotland's commitments to reduce its energy consumption by 12% and greenhouse gas emissions by 43%.

16. The full LHS including action plan (Appendix 1) and visual storyboard (Appendix 2) provide a comprehensive overview of the key issues we have identified, and the outcomes the LHS will seek to deliver. This is written in a local and national context of known housing market, budgetary and economic challenges.

17. The strategic priorities, targets and actions set out in the LHS reflect an ambitious but realistic plan to attempt to tackle the most acute pressures facing East Renfrewshire, in particular housing crisis/ homelessness and in sustainably increasing housing supply. This is in the context of the significant increase in the number of homeless applications that we are currently experiencing, the length of time in temporary accommodation faced by many, and also the significant numbers of applicants on the general waiting list, all of which are of a scale unknown in recent years and a huge challenge to manage.

18. However, available resources will determine the outcomes achieved with our partners over 5 years. There are clear delivery challenges for the LHS presented by the economy, labour market and construction industry, as well as budget and cost of living pressures, and uncertainty around key funding streams in the immediate and longer term, and additionally, the factors set out within paragraph 8 above, which are legislatively driven and will require significant investment to deliver, reducing resource available to the delivery of new build housing.

19. The persistent challenge of the historical shortfall of affordable housing in East Renfrewshire has been helped by a notable increase in new build social rented homes and other affordable housing in the last 5 years. This has meant exceeding the LHS 2017-2022

housing supply target of 225 homes (45 per annum average). This achievement has been as a result of significant work over several years bringing together land, finance and developer commitment to deliver on identified housing sites.

20. The proposed Housing Supply Targets for the LHS 2024-2029, reflect an ambition to go further in addressing the acute affordable housing pressures faced locally, and meet requirements identified in the SHNDA. But with a practical outlook regarding funding, land and deliverability. These must also connect realistically with the housing land provision in the emerging Local Development Plan 3, to ensure appropriate infrastructure is there to support development in our existing communities.

21. The LHS target is that as a minimum target will be to continue delivering 45 additional affordable homes per year on average over 5 years. However, this is with the ambition to achieve up to a possible 65 additional affordable homes per year for rent and sale by maximising opportunities for finding a suitable home across all housing tenures through collaborative working. Given the ongoing housing pressures, this target will be reviewed as a part of the annual LHS review and update to Cabinet and increased if feasible.

22. Ensuring homes and neighbourhoods are kept to a good standard and supporting people to live independently for as long as possible will also frame our focus, for our own tenants and how we support private owners and landlords. Emphasis will also be placed on supporting residents who are facing financial and other barriers to finding and keeping a home they can afford.

## **FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY**

23. There are no direct financial and efficiency implications associated with the LHS itself, other than the availability of sufficient funding and other resources to deliver on the commitments made. The delivery plans associated with the LHS such as the Strategic Housing Investment Plan, new build programme, capital plan etc. will be considered in detail individually and the options possible fed into ongoing monitoring of the LHS delivery plan. We will continue to use a digital first approach to minimise production of LHS materials on paper.

## **CONSULTATION**

24. The vision, strategic priorities and action plan for the LHS have been informed by extensive consultation with partners and the community. This has included both digital and face to face consultation, with 2 major surveys to inform issues gathering and draft plan development. Further detail on our engagement approach is available in Appendix 1, and an associated full engagement report on request.

25. We have been keen to ensure a modern, inclusive and enabling framework for co-production of the strategy, embracing a fresh approach as an alternative to the traditional development of the LHS. This has been based on service feedback over the last few years on how people wish to get involved. We will continue this approach going forward in implementation and evaluating the impacts of the LHS.

26. The visuals being used throughout have been developed independently with those engaged through consultation. We used the services of a designer to develop a visual representation of the strategy with commentary – making it accessible to everyone who wants to be involved. This was done dynamically in the course of consultation workshops. These images will be used to support every aspect of delivery of the LHS with the community, and in partnership with others.

## **PARTNERSHIP WORKING**

27. The LHS is at the heart of local arrangements for housing, setting out a strategic vision for the delivery of housing and housing related services across all tenures and types of housing provision. The Council as “strategic housing authority” for East Renfrewshire has responsibility for developing and “enabling” improvements in local housing and services for the whole area. In delivering the LHS, and linking actions across other key plans such as Fairer East Ren and HSCP’s Strategic Plan, successful delivery requires sharing responsibility, knowledge and resources and pooling these to achieve the best outcomes possible for local residents.

28. The LHS 2024-2029 is the key planning document which details the framework of actions the Council and its partners will take to make sure our strategic housing vision becomes a reality. Annual reports on progress must be approved by Cabinet and submitted to Scottish Government. This is alongside annual updates on our Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP).

29. The cross-cutting nature of the issues contained within the LHS, and their importance to residents’ day to day lives, means corporate - level partnership is crucial in driving success. The reliance on each department within the Council to help deliver on these priorities is clear. Scottish Government guidance stresses that it expects to see commitment corporately and by partner organisations to delivering the LHS.

30. The Governance arrangements for the LHS going forward, require buy in to keep the vision and priorities in focus over five years, and to ensure progress is made. A three pronged approach is required to deliver this.

- Level 1: Member Workshops - Members and senior officers will consider key themes and challenges for the LHS on an ongoing basis, supported by current evidence and emerging issues.
- Level 2: LHS Steering Group supported by key officers and partners will inform this dialogue with members and senior officers, as well as monitoring and evaluating delivery of the LHS.
- Level 3: A number of established partnership groups will take practical action on delivering the plan, including options appraisal and budget considerations, and feed progress and issues to the Steering Group

## **IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS**

31. The draft LHS has been reviewed by the Scottish Government and their feedback, as well as feedback from peer review, has been incorporated into this draft. The final version as approved will have no direct specific financial, IT or other implications. The development of the LHS requires the completion of:

- An Equalities Impact Assessment (including socio-economic impacts)(EqIA);
- A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA); and
- Climate Change Impact Assessment (CCIA).

These assessments have been completed. A copy of each is available on request.

32. The EqIA highlights the positive impacts the LHS intends in improving housing and services for those most disadvantaged by their housing situation. Challenges remain

generally in meeting the needs of the entire population for affordable and suitable housing in particular, given the shortfall locally. Those in most need will continue to be prioritised through our Allocations and associated housing policies.

33. A pre-screening report for environmental impact (SEA) has been submitted to the consultation authorities. The most significant area for environmental impact is in delivery of new homes. As the LHS is an overarching plan providing strategic direction for this, the EIA completed for Local Development Plan and the associated sustainability elements built into procurement for Council house building will fulfil this role.

34. The CCIA Stage 2 has been completed, and minimal direct impacts are expected from the LHS itself. The overall aim is to improve our climate impact and reduce carbon. Practical delivery through plans such as new build, capital programme etc. will also be subject to detailed CCIA individually.

## CONCLUSIONS

35. The LHS shapes the direction that housing and related services will take locally and influences identification of housing land through the emerging Local Development Plan. A revised Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) will also be developed with a target date of October 2024, and will be critical in directing available resources towards affordable housing delivery.

36. The development of the LHS 2024-2029 has been built on significant consultation and evidence building, and the vision, priorities and plan for action reflects the views of our stakeholders on the key issues and how we should tackle these. It has also been developed in line with statutory guidance on preparation of Local Housing Strategies as set out by Scottish Government.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

37. It is recommended that the Council:

- a) Note the Vision and Strategic Housing Priorities identified for the LHS 2024 – 2029;
- b) Note the draft LHS was subject to a formal “peer review” process led by Scottish Government, and feedback provided in March 2024 has been taken into account in revisions; and
- c) Approve the LHS 2024-2029, and its publication.

Director of Environment

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Appendices: Appendix 1, Local Housing Strategy 2024-2029, Appendix 2, LHS Driver Diagrams, Appendix 3, LHS Visual Story Boards



# A WELCOME HOME

LOCAL HOUSING VISION · STRATEGY · PRIORITIES

East Renfrewshire Local Housing Strategy

2024-29

*DRAFT*



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## What is a Local Housing Strategy?

A Local Housing Strategy (LHS) is at the heart of local arrangements for housing, setting out a strategic vision for the delivery of housing and housing related services across all tenures and types of housing provision. The LHS is the key planning document which details the framework of actions the Council and its partners will take to make sure this vision becomes a reality.

The Scottish Government expects all Scottish local authorities to prepare and submit a Local Housing Strategy around every five years.

### The purpose of the LHS is to:

- Set out a shared understanding of housing need and demand for all types of housing, and for housing services both now and in the future
- Provide clear strategic direction for housing investment, including the development of new homes and investment in existing housing
- Set out actions and targets to improve the quality, condition and energy efficiency of homes in East Renfrewshire
- Create a framework for placemaking, ensuring housing connects people to local services, jobs, the natural environment and community
- Provide a strong contribution to the integration of housing, health and social care services, which enable independent living and improve wellbeing
- Set out the framework to prevent homelessness wherever possible and to resolve homelessness quickly and effectively when it occurs
- Focus on the priorities and outcomes required to achieve the LHS vision

### The LHS must be:

- Evidence based
- Developed in collaboration with stakeholders, including residents and tenants
- Forward looking and delivery focused
- Clear, concise and easy to read
- Developed using extensive and inclusive engagement and consultation
- A corporate document, agreed and supported by all relevant local authority departments, and other partners.

## Developing the LHS 2024-2029

The 2024-29 Local Housing Strategy builds on the progress of the 2017-22 strategy and sets out the vision, priorities and actions that will give strategic direction to housing and housing related services in East Renfrewshire for the next 5 years.

This LHS is being developed with the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic, the UK exit from the European Union, the war in Ukraine, and the cost-of-living crisis; all of which have had significant impacts on East Renfrewshire's economy and communities. It also comes at a time of an ambitious programme from Scottish Government aimed at increasing the number of and quality of homes, reducing carbon

emissions and tackling homelessness head on. The Local Housing Strategy therefore comes at a crucial time and aims to be instrumental in improving outcomes for everyone across East Renfrewshire.

The LHS has been developed taking account of a wide range of views across:

- Council departments
- Partner organisations
- Elected Members
- Tenants, Residents and the wider community

Masterplanning  
together

We carried out a successful online consultation early in the development process relating to various aspects of East Renfrewshire homes and communities, which we publicised through a range of communication channels, such as social media, our newsletter and the Council website. Using research and this newly collected data, we were able to propose five priority areas which would underpin the Local Housing Strategy.

Having established the five priorities, we launched a further public consultation, including an online survey and held a series of workshops with partners and interested residents.

A key aim of the strategy is to promote inclusiveness and to make engaging with the development process as accessible as possible to a wide range of people.

Co-production  
with people at 

We introduced service design elements into the development process, working with a visual designer who helped us to have conversations with local community groups, private landlords and residents about our local priorities in a more user friendly, accessible and engaging format.

Although we are obliged to meet certain targets and regulations set by the Scottish Government, this is not our only driver. We are keen to ensure that the Local Housing Strategy is tailored to the needs, demands and expectations of our residents and that engagement plays a vital role in our decision-making. The Council have offered a number of avenues for the public to offer their input to the Local Housing Strategy and full details of this can be found in the Engagement Report, which accompanies the Local Housing Strategy.

One example of how public engagement shapes the Local Housing Strategy can be seen in the data gathered from a variety of consultations. Our consultations gathered a wide range of feedback, with some residents expressing preferences that are the polar opposites of others. Some residents have been calling for more social housing, whilst others suggest that East Renfrewshire Council should sell some of their existing social housing to improve opportunities for home ownership in the area. Some feedback complains that there are too many homes available for private let, despite only 6% of all houses in the area being privately rented. This evidence helped to demonstrate a common frustration at the lack of available and affordable housing to rent and buy for those entering the housing market and showed that there is a demand from our residents to maximise the affordable housing options in the local area. This, backed up by local research and data, then formed the basis for Strategic Priority 1: Enough of the Right Homes to Rent or Buy, in the Places Where We Need Them.

## **Delivering the LHS 2017-2022**

Four Strategic Housing Outcomes were identified to help us achieve the vision set out in the last LHS.

The vision was:

*“Good quality and affordable housing opportunities are available to all our residents, within safe and attractive neighbourhoods”.*

Good progress has been made in delivering on the LHS over the last 5 years – a snapshot of progress in achieving these outcomes is illustrated below.

The challenges faced within the latter years of LHS delivery have been unprecedented, including the pandemic and economic uncertainty facing households and within the public and housing industries. This has shifted the context and pressures we face despite making progress on our intended strategy, including higher waiting lists and homeless presentations but with tightening resources.

The Council and partners are having to adapt and reset service delivery in response. We are now on a journey of service redesign using our updated understanding of how the public wish to access and engage with housing services. This drives the commitments and actions within the LHS 2024-2029.

## What We Achieved Together - Local Housing Strategy (2017 to 2022)

<p><b>1. Increase Access to Housing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Target of 45 additional affordable homes (average per annum to 2022/23) exceeded. (321 achieved by end 2022).</li> <li>- This includes new build homes for social rent; but also 24 homes purchased on the open market by social landlords or through the LIFT scheme; and 25 other affordable homes for sale built by private developers.</li> <li>- Initial commitment to deliver 120 new Council Homes exceeded; 179 delivered by end 2022).</li> <li>- Major developments complete and progressing at the Maidenhill and Barrhead South masterplan development areas, including housing, school provision and infrastructure.</li> <li>- Review of our regional and local evidence of Housing Need and Demand through Clydeplan HND3 preparation; and a review of house lettings and waiting list demand over 3 years to provide insight into escalating demand and pressures on housing allocations system.</li> </ul>	<p><b>3. Facilitate Independent Living</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 849 adaptations completed in Council homes in the last 5 years.</li> <li>- 317 grants awarded to owners to assist with the cost of home adaptations.</li> <li>- Around 50 new affordable homes built specifically to meet the needs of older or disabled people, and which are adapted or adaptable to a lifetime of needs.</li> <li>- Improved joint working to address the needs of homeless people, and those accessing housing in particular with significant and complex support needs.</li> <li>- Responsive supply of temporary accommodation to meet peaks in demand through use of council and RSL homes, as well as private sector leasing.</li> <li>- Accommodation “flipped” from temporary to a permanent tenancy, where it has been identified as optimum for the occupants, and in recognition of pressures for certain types and sizes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Thriving, Attractive and Sustainable Neighbourhoods</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Over 95% of local Council and RSL properties achieving the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH) by end 2021/22.</li> <li>-£1.56m invested in solid wall insulation in around 308 Council homes in the last 3 years, to improve energy efficiency and running costs.</li> <li>-SG Funding provided 3,300 energy efficiency measures installed in 1500 private sector homes, (from 2019-22), including internal and external insulation to walls, lofts, underfloor, and boiler replacement, .</li> <li>- Award winning Mixed Tenure Scheme targeted at maintaining good standards in the physical appearance and appeal of mixed owned and rented areas.</li> <li>- Reviewed letting standard for Council homes launched in 2022 to support improved satisfaction and tenancy sustainment.</li> <li>-Programme of Neighbourhood Inspections, reformed again post pandemic, which allow residents to flag issues, and a partnership approach taken to addressing the emerging action plans.</li> </ul>	<p><b>4. Improve Access &amp; Participation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduction of Choice Based Lettings for Council homes, improving choice and transparency.</li> <li>- Scottish Approach to Service Design applied to our ongoing review of homelessness and housing advice services, and improved governance to support development of our corporate approach to tackling homelessness.</li> <li>- Staff providing housing options advice trained to minimum Level 1 in National Housing Advice Standards.</li> <li>-Development of our online digital customer offering and user experience through digital forums and surveys, online housing application and CBL bidding, and appointment and reminder text messaging.</li> <li>- Established Customer Engagement Groups helping shape our strategy and develop a “Culture of Care”, including a mix of tenants, residents, elderly and young and those with lived experience.</li> <li>- Resources offered to maximise engagement with residents including equipment loan, local housing surgeries and strengthened links with community anchors.</li> </ul>

## 2. CONTEXT

### East Renfrewshire Profile

East Renfrewshire local authority area was formed in April 1996, bringing together Eastwood and parts of Renfrew District Councils. Each area has its own distinct history and housing makeup, with Eastwood forming part of Greater Glasgow South Housing Submarket Area (HSMA), and Lavern Valley forming part of Renfrewshire HSMA.

Approximately two thirds of East Renfrewshire is farm land encompassing the villages of Neilston, Uplawmoor, Waterfoot and Eaglesham. The remaining area comprises the mainly suburban areas of Thornliebank, Giffnock, Clarkston, Newton Mearns and the town of Barrhead.

East Renfrewshire is a sought after area for living, school education and leisure – this drives a particular set of housing challenges. There is a very high rate of owner occupation, with very small private and social rented sectors, and some of the highest house prices in Scotland.



## National Context



The Scottish Government published their ‘Housing to 2040 Strategy’ and ‘Housing to 2040 Vision & Principles’ in March 2021. These documents set out a vision of what homes and communities should look and feel like in the future.

The Scottish Government’s ambition is that everyone has access to a warm, safe, affordable and energy efficient home that meets their needs, in a community they feel part of.

Their goal is to create a housing system that is dynamic and resilient enough to respond to future change and to enable Scotland to face key challenges such as its ageing population and the climate emergency.

Successful delivery of Housing to 2040 will require joint working between local authorities, housing providers, landlords, the construction and house building sectors and others.

This Local Housing Strategy has fully considered the Housing to 2040 Strategy when forming the actions and strategic priorities for East Renfrewshire.

## Local Challenges

A wide range of factors and issues influence housing, including population and economic trends. The key issues influencing how the housing system is operating and driving the need for housing and housing services in East Renfrewshire are set out below:

### Household Growth

In 2020, there were an estimated 39,586 households living in East Renfrewshire, an increase of 13% since 2001, with growth in more than half of the small area geographies in the Council area. East Renfrewshire households are projected to increase by 7.8% up to 2028, to 42,139 households, against an increase of 4.9% for Scotland as a whole. Over the next two decades the biggest proportional change in household type in East Renfrewshire, will be towards single adult households – this in part reflects the ageing population.

### An Ageing Population

In addition to household growth generally in East Renfrewshire, an already ageing population will continue to increase up to 2028. The number of people aged 65+ will increase by just under 3,000, and the 75+ age group will see a projected increase of 26.8%. Life expectancy at birth in East Renfrewshire is also higher than the Scottish average and this long-standing trend is projected to continue. The national and local commitment is to enabling the frail and



elderly, amongst other households, to live independently in their community while they can. This places a significant focus on ensuring the quality and design of our homes and neighbourhoods supports this vision.

## The local economy

Data from 2023 shows East Renfrewshire residents had the highest weekly earnings (median) on average in Scotland where in full time employment (£899). This is against an average of £666 for Scotland and £564 for the Glasgow City Region. Unemployment has remained lower than the Scottish average, and the region, over the longer term. Much of the employment in the local area is in the service sector, with East Renfrewshire being a significant commuter route for residents working in Glasgow and elsewhere around the region.

Economic inactivity (27.5%) sits above the regional average of 25.6% and national average of 23.8%. Whilst this reflects levels of unemployment, there is a clear correlation with the retired and ageing population on a pension or fixed income.

## The Housing Market

Though average incomes are high, the challenge in East Renfrewshire is finding an affordable and suitable home for many residents. With some of the highest house prices in Scotland and a desirable location, the market is further pressured with local people trying to get on the property ladder or move to a suitable home, particularly those of retirement age looking to downsize. Latest data available for detailed local analysis<sup>1</sup> shows the average cost to buy a home in East Renfrewshire was £255,163, with the Scottish average two-thirds of that at £167,000. The cost of purchasing a new build home in East Renfrewshire was on average £328,000.

First time buyers and movers on a modest income, looking to buy entry-level priced homes typically face a mortgage shortfall of £20-36k<sup>2</sup>. A typical low-income household cannot afford to buy in East Renfrewshire, so must find a home to rent. However, in 2021/22 the average market rent in East Renfrewshire was also out of reach for many residents, at £1046.25 per month<sup>3</sup>. With owner occupation making up 82% of homes in the market, the sustained shortfall in private and social rented homes required to meet residents' needs remains a significant challenge despite the delivery of new homes. It is likely that the limited range of housing options continues to drive housing affordability pressures in East Renfrewshire.



## Enough Affordable Homes?

There are approximately 39,500 residential homes in East Renfrewshire to meet the needs of the local population, with a 9.5% increase in stock since 2001 - which is less rapid change than on average for Scotland (14.4%). Homes provided by the Council, other social landlords and in the private rented sector only account for around 18% of all homes, compared to the national average where these make up a third of all homes. The breadth of

<sup>1</sup> Centre for Housing Market Analysis - NRS 2020/21.

<sup>2</sup> Based on typical mortgage lending and deposit criteria.

<sup>3</sup> RRS dataset October 2021 to September 2022

homes provided for private rent, from entry level to luxury, limits the availability of this as an option for those needing housing urgently or on a low income.

There are significant pressures on Council and Housing Association homes for social rent, with around 4500 households on the Council's waiting list in 2022 and continuing to grow. This has seen a significant and sustained increase in numbers over the past 5 years, as have homeless applications, with no current sign of slowing and placing significant pressure to find enough homes for temporary and permanent rehousing.

Positive strides have been made in the last 5 years to increase social rented stock, however, the shortfall in homes required cannot be met in the short term. The availability of land and funding to do so are a continued focus. With very little land in Council ownership, there is heavy reliance on private developers bringing forward developments to enable the delivery of affordable homes. The ambition to increase the supply of accessible homes and the variety of affordable housing options available in East Renfrewshire, is an additional challenge.

### The Right Homes?

There is significant demand on waiting lists for small 1 or 2 bedroom homes (75%), homes of 4 bedrooms or more for larger families, and from households with medical requirements who require a more suitable home. The most significant demand is for houses or flats with their own back and front door – more than two-thirds. This is a mismatch with the stock of social rented homes we have locally,



though is being partially addressed through the affordable new build programme. Purchase of second hand homes will continue to be used to target homes of size and type needed, and to meet additional demands through, for example, refugee resettlement programmes.

There are also a higher than average number of council homes that are flats (68%) and over half of homes built before 1964. Requirements for modern standards of living - and more recently the need for additional space to work, care and spend more time at home - add to the gap between demand and available homes. The need to achieve this, whilst also investing in our homes to meet standards for quality and energy efficiency, will require a significant amount of investment over the coming years.



### Housing Emergency

On 11th September 2024, East Renfrewshire Council declared a housing emergency locally. We were the 12th local authority to do so, in addition to the Scottish Government itself. This is a reflection of the persistent shortage of affordable housing available to residents who need it locally, despite us delivering more than 470 new-build homes since 2018 through the LHS, which includes bringing forward the provision of 105 new properties in Maidenhill this year.

Added to the general shortage of affordable housing is the declaration by the Scottish Housing Regulator that several Scottish Councils are facing "systemic failure" of their homelessness services, and this includes East Renfrewshire. The main issue for the SHR is the use of hotel accommodation, which is deemed as unsuitable in most circumstances, and an absence of sufficient suitable alternative accommodation. More information is outlined in the following chapters on the issues we face, and the actions we are taking to respond to and mitigate these pressures.



## Housing Need & Demand

The LHS needs to be built on a solid evidence base, and a key part of this is producing a detailed 'Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA)'. The assessment estimates the number of new households who will require housing in the area over time. This is based on household projections and economic scenarios produced by the National Records of Scotland (NRS). The HNDA carried out for the Glasgow City Region identifies the housing requirements for each of the eight local authorities in the area.

Using this analysis, we can calculate if more housing will be needed in East Renfrewshire in the future. The Housing Need & Demand Assessment estimates the need for both affordable and market housing. It does this by looking at the number of projected new households and the number of existing households who will need additional housing and assesses their ability to meet local housing costs.

Based on our emerging HNDA3, Future housing estimates for East Renfrewshire identify a requirement for 5,876 new homes over the next 20 years, with around 700 of these needed for social renting, and a further 600 for mid-market rent or alternative affordable housing.

During the life of the LHS, a need for 1,545 new homes is estimated across East Renfrewshire.

Our baseline targets for the LHS 2024-29 will reflect these Housing Supply Targets when agreed and are discussed in more detail under Priority 1 and 2.

### 3. SHAPING OUR VISION

Informed by the evidence of local housing issues and working with partners and our local residents, a vision for East Renfrewshire's LHS (2024-29) has been developed.

*East Renfrewshire residents can access a good quality home, within their wider community, that is affordable and meets their needs.*

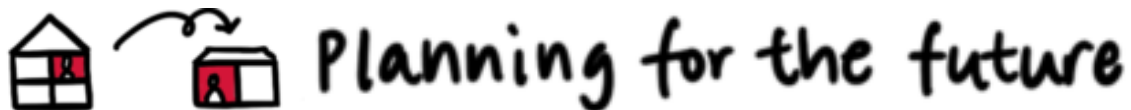
The LHS vision has at its centre our ambitions that everyone in East Renfrewshire has (both now and in the future):



**What we mean by this is that:**

- Those who need a home can find one within their wider community, at a cost they can afford.
- Homes are well maintained and of good quality.
- Residents can afford to live in their home comfortably; homes are affordable to run, warm and sustainable.
- People who need support to find a home, can access the right advice and services.

- Homes are designed to suit a lifetime of needs, and assist people to live independently at home.
- Communities are thriving, connected and welcoming.
- Planning for the future together can help us to achieve our long-term goals for modern, low carbon, digitally connected and sustainable communities.



## Links to Other Plans and Policies

The LHS vision and priorities are driven by a range of factors including national and local priorities and strive to complement commitments in other plans and policies that have a housing related impact.

The Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) and Homelessness Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) are key delivery plans intrinsically connected to the overarching LHS, delivering on strategic housing priorities 1 and 3.

East Renfrewshire Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2)<sup>4</sup> provides the existing framework for physical development of the local area. The emerging LDP 3 for East Renfrewshire is being shaped by the priorities identified at the regional and local level. In the Glasgow and Clyde Valley region partners work together to ensure a collaborative approach is taken to land use and housing planning through Clydeplan and the linked Strategic HNDA.

There are a wide range of other service plans and strategies shaping the delivery of local services and with which this LHS aims to fit. How we align with corporate priorities and with those of the HSCP are particularly important and we have worked with colleagues to ensure the LHS supports key plans relating to the needs of our residents.



- **East Renfrewshire Community Plan**
- **Fairer East Ren - East Renfrewshire Local Outcomes Improvement Plan**
- **East Renfrewshire Council Outcome Delivery Plan 2022-23 (onwards)**

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/article/1166/Local-Development-Plan>

- **East Renfrewshire: A Place to Grow (10 year vision)**
- **Local Development Plan 2 (and emerging LDP3)**
- **Working Together for East Renfrewshire HSCP Strategic Plan 2022-25**
- **Local Child Poverty Action Plan 2022**
- **Get to Zero Action Plan**
- **LHEES**
- **Local Transport Strategy**
- **Active Travel Plan**
- **Local Action Plans**

## 4. EAST RENFREWSHIRE'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

### Strategic Priority 1: Enough of the Right Homes to Rent or Buy, in the Places Where We Need Them

The Scottish Government vision is that by 2040, everyone has a good quality home that they can afford and meets their needs.

Increasing the supply of homes, and in particular affordable homes, across Scotland is a key national priority. This is driven by the "More Homes Scotland" framework.

This is underpinned by:

- A review of the Housing and Planning Delivery Framework (incl. National Planning Framework 4)
- The Affordable Housing Supply Programme – providing investment and the review of benchmark subsidies to support delivery of more homes.
- The Housing Infrastructure Fund – to help unlock delivery of challenging sites.



#### **Housing & Planning Delivery Framework (HPDF):**

The Housing and Planning Delivery Framework (HPDF) has been developed to gel housing and planning systems more closely, and assist in making the planning process quicker and easier on the ground.

HPDF focuses on 3 key areas to make this happen.



- Increase housing supply over the long term.
- Deliver a housing system which is more responsive to demand.
- Make improvements in housing affordability for the long term.
- Reduce housing market volatility.

### Drivers & Targets

There are guiding principles and targets set out nationally through More Homes Scotland that we will reflect locally in our strategic housing plan. The **Key Targets** for More Homes are:

- The Scottish Government’s target to deliver 50,000 new affordable homes by 2021, with at least 35,000 of these for social rent. <sup>5</sup>
- A national commitment to delivering a further 110,000 affordable homes by 2032, of which at least 70% will be for social rent (and 10% in remote, rural, and island communities).
- £3.6billion committed from 21/22 to 25/26 to support delivery of these targets, of which East Renfrewshire has been allocated £37.5m towards our Strategic Housing Investment Programme (SHIP).



The **Key Principles** for More Homes also incorporate:

<sup>5</sup> Over the five years from 2016-17 to 2020-21, there were a total of 53,936 affordable homes approved, 53,078 started and 41,353 delivered. Achievement of the national target was impacted by the COVID pandemic, and the 110k target will apply when the 50k is reached.

- Ensuring a 10 year land supply with flexibility to amend to make sure a pipeline of sites support delivery of the homes required in each area.
- Focus on developing infrastructure and the reuse of existing assets/ brownfield sites.
- Bringing homes into the affordable housing supply, E.g. empty homes, purchase off the shelf to address significant pressure for affordable housing in local areas.

The Housing to 2040 vision recognises key drivers for development in addition to ensuring there are enough homes to meet the need and demand across Scotland.

While creating and expanding communities, consideration also needs to be given to the sustainability of those communities in the longer term. Ensuring a mix of homes and a range of households can live there, whilst also providing necessary infrastructure to support employment, access to key local services and for recreation - is critical.

The **key drivers** are:

- Sustainable Communities: “20 minute neighbourhoods” should shape the development of homes, facilities and services<sup>6</sup>.
- Better Homes: Emphasis on design quality of homes and neighbourhoods to meet a range of needs, including development of accessible homes and housing solutions designed with future in mind.

## **Housing Need and Demand**

The HNDA carried out for the Glasgow City Region identifies the housing requirements for each of the eight local authorities in the area, setting out the need for both affordable and market housing for sale and rent.

**Future housing estimates for East Renfrewshire identify a requirement for 5,876 new homes over the next 20 years, with around 700 of these needed for social renting, and a further 600 for mid-market rent or alternative affordable housing.**

**During the life of the LHS, a need for 1,545 new homes are estimated across East Renfrewshire.**

The HNDA is used to help with the setting of a ‘Housing Supply Target’ for the region and how this is proposed to be met across individual local council areas. The minimum housing land requirement will be informed by the finalised National Planning Framework 4. Expected funding available to support the build and acquisition of affordable housing will also influence overall agreed housing supply targets.

The regional HNDA 3 is in the process of being finalised, and next steps will be to consider targets for each council area in the region to meet identified housing requirements. This in turn drives clear delivery targets within the LHS and Local Development Plan. This considers the land required to enable the number of new houses of all tenures to be built in East Renfrewshire that are needed, and the number of affordable homes to be built and acquired to meet the shortfall in identified need and demand during the life of the LHS.

## **Who Lives in East Renfrewshire**

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<sup>6</sup> The basic premise is a model of urban development that creates neighbourhoods where daily services can be accessed within a 20 minute walk

East Renfrewshire’s population is 96,060, made up of an estimated 46,039 males and 50,021 females. Figures show a population increase of 6.2%, or 5650 people, in the last 10 years. 20% of the population of East Renfrewshire fall into the 65+ age bracket and the 75+ age group will see a projected increase of 26.8% up to 2028.

The percentage of people of pensionable age is 19%, slightly higher than the Scottish average of 18% and percentage of people under 16 also slightly higher than the Scottish average, at 20% compared to 17%.

East Renfrewshire households are also projected to increase by 7.8% up to 2028, to 42,139 households, against an increase of 4.9% for Scotland as a whole. Over the next two decades the biggest proportional change in household type in East Renfrewshire, will be towards single adult households – this in part reflects the ageing population.

The percentage of the population falling into the most deprived banding, according to SIMD<sup>7</sup> is just 1%, and the percentage of ERC’s population in the least deprived is 38%, which is the highest in Scotland. The localities where the most deprived live are prioritised through East Renfrewshire’s Community Planning Partnership and the relevant outcomes of associated plans, including the LHS.

Demand for key worker accommodation is not an identified concern, in part as the area does not host a major hospital, police station or university, however, we will continue to monitor this.

### **East Renfrewshire’s Housing Market**

In 2021, there were 39,909 homes in East Renfrewshire, a 1.2% increase from 2020, and a 10.7% increase since 2001. In comparison the number of homes in Scotland overall increased by 0.8% between 2020 and 2021. The local area has extremely high levels of owner occupation and less than half the rented homes than the Scottish average, particularly in Eastwood. Two thirds of the land in East Renfrewshire is rural farmland but given the relatively small geographical area covered, this has little material impact on delivery or support.

<b>Tenure</b>	<b>East Renfrewshire</b>	<b>Scotland</b>
Owner Occupied	82.0%	59.2%
Private Rented	6.6%	14.2%
Registered Social Landlord	3.8%	10.8%
Council	7.6%	12.1%

Two-thirds of the population live in Eastwood, the remainder living in Levern Valley. In contrast, three quarters of the social rented homes provided by the Council or RSLs are located in Levern Valley. The majority of homes in Eastwood are privately owned. The majority of RSL stock in East Renfrewshire is owned by Barrhead Housing Association - 61.6% - with Hanover Housing Association at 18% the only other RSL owning more than 10%.

Around 240 Council homes a year (excluding new build) become available for relet to those on the waiting list. In stark contrast in 2022, there were 4435 households on the Council’s waiting list for housing, reflecting a significant and sustained increase in the waiting list for the past 4-5years.

<sup>7</sup> Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)



New build homes for social rent have accounted for some of this increase in demand, however the significant backlog of housing need in East Renfrewshire simply cannot be met by the turnover of new and existing homes that become available. What can be delivered in terms of additional affordable housing is a balance between homes needed, land and funding available, and the economy – currently significantly pressured in available finance, labour and inflation rates, all of which impact housing delivery.

Three-quarters of those on waiting lists for social housing require a 1 or 2 bedroom home, reflecting the rise in smaller households. Around 250 household needs a home with 4 or more bedrooms, a much smaller proportion of demand but a significant challenge given lack of social rented homes of this size for large families.

Aspirations reflect a modern standard of living being sought, and more recently driven by the need for additional space to work, care and spend more time at home. The most significant demand is for houses or flats with their own back/ front door – more than two-thirds.

However, the homes available currently do not match comfortably with that aspiration. Council stock is predominantly flats at 68%, and a much larger proportion than elsewhere in Scotland.

### **Private Rented Sector**

The Private Rented Sector is very small, accounting for 6% of stock, and fairly limited in terms of availability, particularly as an option for those needing housing urgently or on a low income.

There are currently no Rent Pressure Zones designated within East Renfrewshire. However, we will continue to monitor this and may consider an application if the evidence determines it necessary. We are currently on the Scottish Government's stakeholder group considering rent control measures and are actively collecting rental data to allow us to monitor costs locally.

During the lifetime of this LHS, we plan to engage with both private landlords and tenants to gain a better insight into property condition, needs and their future intentions.

### **Alternative Affordable Housing Options**

The local authority is exploring the need for and provision for alternative housing options such as Mid-Market Rentals (MMR) to help meet the needs of local people and give households more variation in choice. There is a recognition that for those in the middle of the market, i.e. those who cannot afford to buy on the open market and are lower in priority for available social housing, it is becoming more and more difficult to find a suitable option in East Renfrewshire.

We are currently undertaking research to determine whether the development of MMR is a feasible option for delivery in East Renfrewshire and could be tailored affordably to suit the local housing market and the income profile of local people.

### **Empty Homes**



There are around 185 long-term empty homes in East Renfrewshire owned privately. We are currently working with the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership to develop an Empty Homes Framework for East Renfrewshire, which commits to identifying and understanding the challenges of local empty homes and outlining potential interventions that could be used to increase the supply for affordable housing and simultaneously reduce homelessness.

**Target: Reduce the number of long term empty homes in East Renfrewshire**

**Self-Build**

We recognise, through the LHS and the emerging LDP that self-build housing can play a role in increasing housing supply and housing choice, as part of a wider package of measures to secure greater diversity in the housing market, as well as helping to deliver the homes people want. However, groups and organisations who want to bring forward such developments face a range of challenges; in particular, they may struggle to access suitable land. In conjunction with Planning, we will explore any proposal if brought forward.

**Affordability**

Keeping social rents as low as possible is in focus, but will be harder to balance going forward with the cost per unit to build homes that meet people’s needs and modern building and energy efficiency standards. The deliverability of our SHIP Programme will depend heavily on the market and affordability of new development.

The cost of buying a home is one of the highest in Scotland at an average of £225,000; with entry level housing for sale<sup>8</sup> on average £145,000 and requiring around £25,116 deposit.

Household income data against house prices and standard assumptions on mortgage lending and deposit requirements suggests typical lower income households cannot afford to purchase property locally and those on an average (median) income households could only afford entry level priced properties.



Mortgage Shortfall for Lower Q Income Households buying Lower Q priced home	Sale Price	Deposit	Mortgage	Mortgage Shortfall
1st time Buyer	£138,000	£25,116	£112,884	£36,444
Home Mover	£138,000	£39,606	£98,394	£21,954

Just over half of house sales locally were to local residents with 37% of purchasers from the Glasgow region; the biggest proportion of those buying higher priced properties (39%). In contrast 62% of those buying the lowest priced homes were from East Renfrewshire. There is very little movement of buyers between Eastwood and Levern Valley.

<sup>8</sup> Entry Level Housing is based on Lower Quartile house values, indicating the homes for sale locally which are most accessible to first time buyers and those trying to get on the housing ladder.

In illustration of age, type and value of local homes, in East Renfrewshire, 27% are Council Tax Band C or below, compared to 59% Scottish average; in contrast 56% of homes are Council Tax Band E or above while only 26% of homes in Scotland are E or above.

Consideration of the affordability of buying a home takes in mortgage, council tax, utility and running costs as a basic. Some will borrow to the edge of affordability to simply access housing, and the impacts of cost of living increases, inflation and interest rates place a significant pressure on already stretched households.

## What You Told Us

The biggest priority for the LHS for those consulted (almost 60% of those who responded), was to ensure enough of the right homes in the right places in East Renfrewshire. The emphasis was put on building new homes – both private and affordable (specifically council housing); and for rent and sale.



Almost all respondents said in their experience it is more difficult than expected to find a home in the local area which is affordable to them, good quality and meets their needs. And nearly three-quarters (73%) cited a distinct lack of suitable housing options to rent and buy.

The pressure on waiting lists for social housing and competition for private homes for rent and sale, particularly for existing local residents needing to move, is viewed as very stark. Respondents told us that for those who need to move urgently – e.g. due to homelessness; unsuitable housing if elderly or disabled; or in an insecure living situation - finding a suitable home in the private sector is unaffordable, and there are simply not enough homes available from social landlords to meet demand in a reasonable timeframe.

The most important factors for respondents were that homes could be found in the area they required (location matters); and they could afford to run – just over 70% of respondents cited both.

During the completion of our Equalities, Impact, Fairness and Rights Assessment, it was identified that young people, families and those of those of working age are significantly affected by cost-of-living pressures. As such, actions taken will support the Scottish Government's Child Poverty Act (Scotland) 2017 in its ambition to meet targets en route to eradicating child poverty.

Looking to the types of homes that are required, and residents wish to see developed, the important factors were clear:

- ❖ A range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of smaller households and larger families;
- ❖ A good range of housing options to rent and to buy were needed for people of all income levels, and all stages in life.
- ❖ Homes should be affordable to run and energy efficient.
- ❖ In addition homes should have decent space standards and be digitally modern, so they can be adaptable to folks changing needs over time.

- ❖ The neighbourhoods where these homes are located should provide garden or green space access, and critically should have decent public transport links and community based services and infrastructure.
- ❖ Location matters in terms of finding available housing within their community or near family and other support networks.
- ❖ Better use should be made of vacant spaces within existing neighbourhoods, before greenbelt development is considered.
- ❖ Opportunities to downsize or move to a more suitable home should be considered, to create movement and allow a greater range of existing homes to become available.

## Key Issues

- ! Demand for affordable homes significantly outstrips the supply, with waiting lists continuing to increase and despite a healthy newbuild programme.
- ! The profile (size and type) and location of existing affordable housing doesn't reflect demand in some areas, or needs such as for wheelchair housing, creating a larger deficit of available housing to meet demand.
- ! In addition balancing the demand for a suitable home from a range of priority groups, e.g. homeless people, disabled, elderly people, can mean longer waiting times than hoped for.
- ! Owner occupied homes make up the greatest proportion of homes in East Renfrewshire, but with some of the highest house prices in Scotland, this limits the options available to rent and buy for those on modest or low incomes.
- ! Land available, or which could be brought forward for housing development is not in council ownership, meaning a reliance on private developers and less control over when development happens.
- ! Better use could be made of existing homes and buildings (e.g. long term empty homes, households living in homes larger than they require).
- ! Balancing the cost of building new affordable homes with investment required in existing social rented homes to meet new standards and energy requirements will be an ongoing challenge in next 5 years.
- ! Young people, families and those of working age are adversely affected by high rent and housing costs in East Renfrewshire.

## Local Targets

Our rolling local target for East Renfrewshire in the past 5 years has been an average of 45 additional affordable homes to be built or brought into the supply, or at least 225 homes overall. We also have a commitment that at least 10% of all new affordable homes should be built or adaptable to a lifetime of needs, including for wheelchair users.

**Target: 10% of all new homes for rent and sale are built to wheelchair or adaptable standard.**

### Between 2017 and the end of 2022:

- ✓ 321 affordable homes were added to the East Renfrewshire housing supply.
- ✓ This includes new build homes for social rent; but also 24 homes purchased on the open market by social landlords or through the LIFT scheme; and 25 other affordable homes for sale built by private developers.
- ✓ An initial commitment to deliver 120 new Council Homes has been exceeded, with 179 new Council homes delivered by the end of 2022 and more in progress.
- ✓ Around 50 new affordable homes were built specifically to meet the needs of older or disabled people, and which are adaptable to a lifetime of needs.

### Between 2024 and 2029:

Our **minimum target** will be to continue delivering 45 additional affordable homes per year on average over 5 years, with an aim to deliver the equivalent of 65 additional affordable homes per year for rent and sale across the lifetime of the LHS. 10% of these will be adaptable to lifetime needs or fully wheelchair adapted.

To achieve these targets we will continue to prioritise the delivery of new social housing through the Council and RSL partners across the lifetime of the LHS. However, we recognise the important contribution that acquisitions and other models of housing delivery can make in boosting provision in the immediate term to reduce significant pressure from waiting lists and homelessness.

To achieve this we will build on work to date with private developers, landlords and home owners to secure provision of other affordable homes for sale or rent to meet identified local needs, as well as with owners of long term empty homes to bring these back into use. This is in recognition of identified HNDA requirements for a broader range of affordable homes for rent and sale, in a local housing market dominated by owner occupation.

Encourage  
developers to  
to build homes  
to meet  
residents' needs



We must also set fresh targets for wheelchair accessible housing **across all housing tenures**, and this includes working with private developers to build for a range of household needs. The HNDA and LHS evidence will be used to influence Local Development Plan 3 to support these requirements and to inform development of an effective Housing Mix Policy for all tenures of housing.

**Target: Deliver at least 45 additional affordable homes rent and sale p.a. with ambition to exceed this.**

### What We Will Do

1. Increase the number and range of homes available, which are affordable to rent or buy to meet a range of local needs. Including:
  - Review the housing land supply, to ensure adequate developable land to meet identified need and demand for new housing through the annual Housing Land Audit and forthcoming LDP3.

- Support the provision of digital infrastructure as an integral part of new residential development.
- Proactively identify sites and projects for delivery of affordable housing to achieve a robust future investment programme.
- Identify options for delivery of a range of new housing to rent and buy that enables movement around the local housing market for households at different life stages.
- Work with private landlords to understand East Renfrewshire's future private rental market and its role in meeting housing need.
- Work in partnership to develop innovative proposals, which repurpose key brownfield land and town centre spaces, using place-making principles.
- Use 20 minute neighbourhood principles to guide the location of new housing to sustainable locations, ensuring access to critical amenities such as school, transport and health services.
- Monitor the impact of cost of living pressures on young people, families and those of working age, and respond where appropriate.

**2. Support a well-functioning local housing system by making best use of existing housing, and enabling households improved opportunities to move to suitable housing.**

- Develop an Empty Homes Strategy with the aim to ensure that best use is made of long term empty homes locally.
- Review local social housing allocation policies to meet the most critical needs, whilst creating movement in the housing stock.
- Development of a robust and accessible scheme for mutual exchanges across social housing partners, to support best use of existing homes.
- Use 'buy back' schemes to tackle significant shortfalls in affordable housing of particular size, types and locations, and to avert homelessness and support resettlement schemes.

## **Strategic Priority 2: Homes that Meet a Lifetime of Needs, Supporting Residents to Live Independently**

The Scottish Government's ambition is that by 2040 everyone has a good quality home that is amongst other things accessible and fits their needs.

Relevant commitments from **Housing to 2040** include<sup>9</sup>:

- Review Housing for Varying Needs;
- Increase the supply of accessible and adapted homes;
- Improve choice for younger disabled people;
- Introduce National Planning Framework 4;
- Introduce new building standards to underpin a Scottish Accessible Homes Standard which all new homes must achieve;
- Streamline and accelerate the adaptations system;
- Provide help to older and disabled home owners who want to move to a new home that better meets their needs;
- Embed a person-centred approach, aligning housing support with social care services;

The aim for Scotland to have a housing system that is dynamic and resilient enough to respond to future change will be critical in addressing challenges such as:

❖ *An ageing population;*

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/housing-2040/>

- ❖ *Changing needs of households over their lifetime;*
- ❖ *More choices for independent living and remaining within the community*
- ❖ *Reshaping demand on the health and social care system.*

## Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) Strategic Plan<sup>10</sup>

The Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 brought together NHS and Local Authority care services under one partnership, known as the East Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership. Further information on the integration scheme, delegated services and responsibilities are available on request or can be found online<sup>11</sup>.

East Renfrewshire Health & Social Care's third strategic plan covers the period 2022 to 2025 and sets out a series of joint strategic priorities for health and social care such as supporting people to living independently and well at home, supporting better mental health and wellbeing, and ensuring access to high quality local health care services.



- Working together, with children, young people and their families to improve mental and emotional wellbeing
- Working together, with people to maintain their independence at home and in their local community
- Working together, to support mental health and wellbeing
- Working together, to meet people's healthcare needs by providing support in the right way, by the right person at the right time
- Working together, with people who care for someone ensuring they are able to exercise choice and control
- Working together, on effective community justice pathways that support people to stop offending and rebuild lives
- Working together, with individuals and communities to tackle health inequalities and improve life chances
- Working together, with staff across the partnership to support resilience and wellbeing
- Protecting people from harm

Housing, Health and Social Care services within East Renfrewshire work closely together to ensure that the strategic priorities of both the HSCP Strategic Plan and the LHS are aligned, through the Housing, Health & Social Care Strategic Group, which feeds to both the Council and the Integrated Joint Board.

<sup>10</sup> [https://eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/media/7569/HSCP-Strategic-Plan-2022-2025/pdf/East\\_Renfrewshire\\_HSCP\\_-\\_Strategic\\_Plan\\_2022-2025.pdf?m=637847662804030000](https://eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/media/7569/HSCP-Strategic-Plan-2022-2025/pdf/East_Renfrewshire_HSCP_-_Strategic_Plan_2022-2025.pdf?m=637847662804030000)

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/media/7035/East-Renfrewshire-Integration-Scheme-2018-Update/pdf/East\\_Renfrewshire\\_Integration\\_Scheme\\_-\\_2018\\_Update.pdf?m=637704037531600000](https://www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/media/7035/East-Renfrewshire-Integration-Scheme-2018-Update/pdf/East_Renfrewshire_Integration_Scheme_-_2018_Update.pdf?m=637704037531600000)

A key priority for East Renfrewshire is that residents can live independently for as long as possible, regardless of tenure, and that the different housing needs of people across the area are being met. This requires a well-functioning housing system, with high quality, sustainable homes that are able to meet a wide range of people's needs.



This Local Housing Strategy strategic priority aims to take account of the range of housing needs and housing related support requirements of particular groups of people living in East Renfrewshire, working in partnership with the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) and other social housing providers, as well as other partners and the local community.

## **Housing Support**

Appropriate housing support is essential to ensuring that people are able to live independently for as long as possible. Many people with particular needs do not require specialist housing and can live safely and independently in their own home with some additional support.

The population receiving support is diverse, with wide-ranging needs and circumstances, and this must be reflected in the type and range of specialist provision provided to individuals and households. It ranges from low level assistance for people with mobility needs and frailty to more intensive and personalised supports that enable people with particular needs related to their capacity for sustaining a housing option.

In general, there are no specific property related factors and supports can be provided across all dwelling and tenure types. However, not every home may be adaptable to meet the current and future needs of existing households. A proportion may require a move to an alternative, more suitable home.

Planning for, and responding to the housing and support needs of these groups requires a joint approach by housing providers, the HSCP and other partners. As an example, housing support is often required to allow people to leave hospital and return home as soon as possible. Despite seeing increased hospital activity as we move out of the pandemic, the latest HSCP Annual Performance Update reports that, although there has been an increase in discharges with delay, East Renfrewshire's performance for delays remains amongst the best in Scotland.

Although we are seeing increasing numbers of households and individuals with conditions associated with ageing and frailty, we recognise that support needs are not always physical; an individual's mental health or addiction can have a significant impact on their ability to sustain their tenancy. We are working with our HSCP colleagues to improve our understanding of the range and extent of support needs to determine how we balance this extensive range of need with the limited availability of housing stock in East Renfrewshire.

## **Supporting People in their Local Community**

The HSCP works together with people to maintain their independence at home and in their local community. Over 2022/23 they continued to support people to live independently and well at home, despite additional demand pressures on services due to more people seeking support at home as well as increased levels of frailty and complexity.



During 2022/23, they saw continuing pressure on Care at Home service with increased referrals and reducing capacity among partner providers.

Headline performance data includes<sup>12</sup>:

- 64.4% of people aged 65+ with intensive care needs (plus 10 hours) receiving care at home (up from 62% in previous year).
- 65% of adults (18+) receiving personal care at home or direct payments for personal care, as a percentage of the total number of adults needing care.
- 80.4% of adults supported at home who agreed that they are supported to live as independently as possible
- 89% reporting 'living where you/as you want to live'
- 48% of people with reduced care need following reablement / rehabilitation (down from 60% for 21/22 but up from 31% for 20/21).

## Health Profile

The table below shows a snapshot from 2020/21 of the numbers of people in East Renfrewshire living with particular conditions.

Year	Dementia	Learning Disability	Physical / Motor / Sensory Impairment	Frail older people	Neurological conditions
2020-21	894	384	2,322	2,691	782

As the population of East Renfrewshire continues to age, there has been a corresponding increase in the number of people living with age related conditions. There were 894 cases of people with Dementia (who may also have other health conditions) in East Renfrewshire at the year-end 2020/21, an increase of around 31% of since 2017/18.

There are also increasing numbers of people with a variety of neurological conditions and increasing numbers of people with severe autism and autistic spectrum disorder related needs.

Planning for the current and future health and housing needs of our population requires joint working with partners. Together Housing, Health and Social Care services can work to identify emerging needs at an early stage and proactively seek out options, whether these involve new development, designation or adaptation of existing stock.



## An Ageing Population

East Renfrewshire's population is continuing to age, with people living longer. 20% of the population of East Renfrewshire fall into the 65+ age bracket. By 2041, almost one quarter of East Renfrewshire is projected to be aged 65 or over, in line with Scottish projections.

<sup>12</sup> <https://eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/annual-performance-report>

Older people who own their homes may have issues with affordability, maintenance and accessibility, therefore, helping older people to live independently at home involves partnership working with a range of services and agencies.

East Renfrewshire's Care & Repair Service is available to provide support and assistance to local residents who are older or disabled, through its adaptations project management service and the small repairs service.

## Need for accessible housing

The estimated number of households in East Renfrewshire that have a need for accessible housing<sup>13</sup> is:

- 2021: 4,100 households (equivalent to around 11% of all households)
- 2026: 4,300 households
- 2031: 4,500 households

There are estimated to be around 1,400 wheelchair user households in East Renfrewshire. Of these, the estimated number of households with an unmet need for fully wheelchair accessible housing is:

- 2021: 280 households
- 2026: 290 households
- 2031: 300 households

There are around 1,120 wheelchair user households who are most likely to need a range of adaptations to make their homes accessible, for example including wet-room conversions, level access, or ramps.

The residual 2,700 households requiring some form of accessible housing are likely to require a range of adaptations depending on need. Many of these households will require minor adaptations to make their homes accessible.



A key aim for this strategy is to work with partners and stakeholders to influence the mix of housing that is developed in East Renfrewshire to ensure that the local need for wheelchair and accessible housing across all tenures is recognised and taken into account.

It is also crucial that where wheelchair and accessible housing is being built it is designed to a high standard that is futureproofed and can be flexible to changing needs. We will take a collaborative approach to this with partners and other stakeholders, including residents with lived experience.

**Target: 10% of all new homes for rent and sale are built to wheelchair or adaptable standard.**

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<sup>13</sup> Accessible Housing Needs in East Renfrewshire 2022 – Report by Housing LIN

## Housing Adaptations

The Scottish House Condition Survey (SCHC) records the proportion of households in each Local Authority that report requiring adaptations. This gives a broad indication of the number of people who think their home requires some form of adaptation to support independent living. The Scottish House Condition Survey 2019 indicated that 1.8% of all households in East Renfrewshire reported they may require adaptations for living in their own home, considerably lower than the Glasgow City Region average of 4.5%.

The SHCS 2019 estimates that across East Renfrewshire, approximately 4.6% of households where one or more of the members are Long Term Sick or Disabled (LTSD) feel they are restricted by the dwelling.

Local residents who are eligible and assessed as needing an adaptation to their home to make it more suitable for them are referred to Housing Services for the work to be carried out. Grants are available for homeowners to make this service more accessible. Where an adapted property we own becomes available for relet we will do all we can to ensure this property is allocated to a household with similar needs.

	ERC TENANTS		OWNERS / PRIVATE TENANTS	
	Major Adapts	Aids & Equipment	Major Adapts	Small Repairs / Handyperson
2022/23	96	215	59	1473
2021/22	47	143	49	1273
2020/21	16	45	23	587
2019/20	57	208	59	1119
2018/19	54	154	61	1571

*Adapt existing homes for different needs*

The Local Housing Strategy commits to reviewing the adaptations services we deliver to ensure that they are responsive, reflective of local need and support an early intervention and prevention approach, particularly as they relate to individuals with cognitive, neurodiversity and complex challenges.

## Telecare

Telecare provision is increasing in East Renfrewshire with 3638 users in 2020/21 compared to 3167 users in 2019/20 – an increase of 14.9%. The greatest telecare provision is for users aged 65 and over at 89.7% while 46.2% are aged 85 and over. More and more, older people in East Renfrewshire are being digitally supported in their own home by the use of telecare and community alarms tailored to their individual needs.

## Planning Ahead

Joint working between Housing, Health and Social Care services is essential to recognising emerging needs, both at a population and at an individual level, to allow planning for housing to happen earlier.

People's individual housing needs may change for a variety of reasons, including the following:

- People with physical challenges may need their property adapted to suit their change in need
- People with deteriorating neurological and other types of chronic deteriorating illnesses sometimes find it harder to adapt their current properties due to technical restrictions and therefore may need to move
- Younger people with complex needs in transition are looking to move out of the family home but they and their families generally want options within their current community – which can often be very challenging.
- People with mental health needs may be looking more for support & safety rather than physical adaptations.



Most people do not plan ahead in terms of their evolving housing or adaptation needs. Having early conversations with customers about their future needs and working with them proactively instead of waiting until a crisis occurs will be more efficient and improve wellbeing.

Ensuring we have a wide variety of good quality and consistent information and advice available will help customers to make realistic choices for themselves.

## What you told us

During the consultation for the LHS, 95% of people who responded told us they were able to live in their own home independently but 45% of people told us they helped to care for someone else to allow them to live independently in their own home.

When asked what changes to the home would most help to retain independence, the most picked choice was level access bathing, followed by access to a garden or outdoor space and handrails. Access to safe outdoor space was seen as extremely important for mental health and wellbeing.

The cost of adaptations was seen as the most significant barrier to adapting a property to better suit need.

71% of people had given thought to their future housing needs. Need, space, suitability, affordability and independence were the main priorities that people considered when planning for future housing.

Factors around independent living and lifetime homes that are important to our residents include:

- ❖ There should be a stronger emphasis on homes that can suit a lifetime of needs
- ❖ The availability of more affordable options for those with disabilities should be given a higher priority
- ❖ Working *with* individuals and households to find solutions, not *for* them is very important
- ❖ Making good use of modern technology to enable resident to remain in their current home, where appropriate, should be explored
- ❖ Information and advice should be prepared by an appropriate agency (using specialist groups or charities where appropriate) and delivered consistently across East Renfrewshire

## Key Issues

- ! Creating a more diverse range of homes to meet the needs of all households living in East Renfrewshire
- ! Developing design guides for housing for particular needs
- ! Developing innovative housing solutions for key client groups, including households with health issues and disabilities
- ! Designing adaptations services which are flexible and responsive to what people really need
- ! Planning ahead to reduce the necessity to make difficult decisions at a time of crisis
- ! Encouraging joint working across health, social and housing to improve service pathways

## What We Will Do

- 1. Work to ensure that wheelchair and accessible housing is designed to a high standard that meets local need**
  - Work in partnership with the planning service and developers to influence house building in East Renfrewshire so that it delivers a housing mix that meets existing residents' identified needs.
  - Ensure all affordable homes are built to the revised Housing for Varying Needs Standard, with an agreed minimum % of all new homes built to a wheelchair and adaptable standard over time.
  - Work in collaboration with partners to develop an East Renfrewshire prototype of new build design for lifetime needs.
- 2. Work together to identify emerging needs at an early stage and ensure this influences planning around new development, rehousing and adaptations**
  - Together Housing, Health and Social Work partners work better together to share information and plan effectively to meet individual needs.
  - Work proactively to support households known to our services, and who are impacted by lifelong and limiting conditions, to plan ahead for their changing housing and support needs.
  - Review existing models of social housing designed for the elderly and others who require assisted living, to ensure they are fit for the future, with modern space technology and design considerations.
- 3. Review adaptations services to ensure they are responsive, reflective of local need and support an early intervention and preventative approach**
  - Develop opportunities with partners for the delivery of assistive digital technology in social housing.
  - Review the range of adaptations that are available for people with cognitive, neurodiversity and complex challenges.
  - Consider how policies and budgets within the Scheme of Assistance could be updated to reflect growing requirements for accessible housing linked to cognitive and mental health needs, and children with complex needs.

4. Review the availability and quality of information and advice on offer to ensure service users and carers feel able to make choices for themselves, based on realistic options

- Review the availability of information and advice to ensure it is proactive and comprehensive and allows people to access it at an appropriate time.
- Work in partnership to ensure that access to and delivery of advice and support is consistent and person centred.
- Work closely with charities and other specialist organisations to gain expert advice.
- Develop a planning ahead campaign to encourage residents to plan ahead in terms of their housing needs.

### Strategic Priority 3: Working Together to Deliver the Advice and Support People Need, When They Need It



The Scottish Government's 'Housing to 2040' sets out a route map for housing provision that delivers a collective vision of what our homes and communities are striving to become and the action required to get there.

Section 2 of the document refers to affordability and choice in the housing sector and links directly with preventing homelessness and realising all citizens' rights to an adequate home.

The principles underpinning this are:

- The right to an adequate home and delivering equality
- Ending homelessness

- The rented sector (access, affordability, rights and standards)
- The housing market and home ownership (increasing housing supply)

## Ending Homelessness Together

Scottish Government published the Action Plan for [Ending Homelessness Together](#) in 2018, informed by recommendations from the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG), as a shared direction towards ending homelessness. This was updated in 2020 drawing on homelessness evidence and reflecting developments related to Covid-19 and equalities.



### Key areas identified for action include:

- Embedding a person-centred and trauma-informed approach in our service delivery by having a trauma-informed workforce.
- Promoting equality by developing better understanding of the needs and experiences of groups with protected characteristics, for example; risks, causes and pathways into homelessness
- Constructing policy with input from the ‘real world’ using current evidence from lived experience groups and employees delivering services on the front line.
- Using Personal Housing Planning (PHP) to ensure people received the support, information and advice they need and development of child wellbeing assessments to meet the shared requirements of parents and children.
- Supporting people who are digitally excluded and on low incomes to access equipment, data and training.
- Raise public awareness and challenge stigma for those households who are faced with housing crisis and accessing services.
- Preventing homelessness from happening in the first place as a primary goal for services and a key objective in policy and procedure. Good quality housing management service can have a positive impact on tenancy sustainment and implementing rapid rehousing will target prevention.

## Drivers and Targets

Scotland has some of the most progressive homelessness legislation in the world, with successive Acts such as the **Housing (Scotland) Acts in 1987, 2001 and Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003**, embedding the powers and duties of Councils towards those facing homelessness. This has come with an increasing focus on **Prevention** of housing crisis in the first place. The aim is to eradicate homelessness in a modern society.

Most recently, the development of Rapid Rehousing Action Plans for each local authority area reflects the premise that a stable home is the most critical building block, around which required support can be built up to keep a household from homelessness or repeat housing crisis. East Renfrewshire will focus on a shift in culture where the starting position is that everyone can be ‘tenancy ready’ with the

right support; building on existing relationships with the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP), RSL's and other partners.

But often, people still find it hard to get the help they need to find or sustain a suitable home, and in turn to prevent housing crisis. This is significantly impacted in East Renfrewshire by a lack of suitable housing options available to people to find an alternative home, should they need to.

Increasing homeless presentations locally, and nationally, must also balance the need to find suitable settled accommodation with the need for adequate temporary accommodation. Both are largely taken from the same supply of homes, with some more traditional routes for emergency temporary accommodation, such as hotels and B&Bs, viewed as unsuitable and to be used minimally, if at all.

The Homeless persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Order 2020 aims to reduce the time all households stay in unsuitable temporary accommodation to a maximum of seven days. This previously only applied to families with dependent children and pregnant women.



Advice around Housing Options also needs to be comprehensive, of good quality and accessible to all residents. The ability to navigate the range of services and advice available, is also important, to ensure people can self-serve effectively where they wish to. Or where people need more support to consider their options that this support is available, and the process is clear.

There are other forms of legislation that hold relevance, such as the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, for households who are homeless but not eligible for housing assistance. Although not eligible for assistance under the homelessness legislation, asylum-seekers may be eligible for assistance under alternative social welfare legislation. There are also other programmes such as for those fleeing the conflict in Ukraine, to have access to accommodation while they require it.

East Renfrewshire's Homeless Service Re-design Project, which is ongoing, will shape services around an agreed 'corporate' approach to preventing homelessness. This means that all departments and partner organisations whose services relate to issues around homelessness are involved in the process of redesigning the service and delivering actions to help tackle homelessness. This is based on the agreement that homelessness is not just a housing issue.

As part of this Re-design, research has been carried out through a 'Lived experience Steering Group' facilitated by Homeless Network Scotland. Participants in the group included people using our services and our partner service providers, and the approach used to place those who use the service at the heart of the ongoing work. The Steering Group has been instrumental in identifying and providing the Council with potential solutions to homelessness, through their Culture of Care report. This will be laced through our service design.

### **Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP)**

The Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) is the planning framework for local authorities and their partners to transition to a rapid rehousing approach. Their core purpose is to plan how to redress the balance of housing options for homeless households and realign these to a housing-led approach.

East Renfrewshire's RRTP has 4 main objectives, as follows:

#### ***1. Increase focus on prevention***



2. *Review current system for temporary accommodation*
3. *Review current system of housing support*
4. *Investigate the feasibility of a Housing First Pilot*

These RRTP objectives are closely aligned with the priorities of this LHS. The actions we have committed to taking on these issues are reflected in the LHS action plan.

## **Key Targets**

Through the LHS we will use the following targets to guide our design and investment in services to achieve Priority 3.

- *20% reduction in households assessed as homeless due to successful prevention activity.*
- *Ongoing reduction in the length of time households are homeless awaiting rehousing.*
- *A year on year reduction in the average time spent in temporary accommodation for households who require it.*

## **What Do We Know – National and Local Picture**

Homelessness is a growing concern for East Renfrewshire Council and its partners. An increasing number of households, both locally and from further afield, are presenting to the Council and other social housing providers when they find themselves in housing crisis. This, and the snowballing 'cost of living' intensifies current pressures for affordable housing and support services in our local area.

Significant increases on already pressurised local waiting lists in the last few years, means households are waiting longer to be offered suitable housing. This increases the risk for some households who find themselves faced with housing crisis and in need of emergency temporary accommodation. Length of stay in B&B and other temporary accommodation for homeless households has become much longer, despite an increase in accommodation being used for this purpose, and to avoid using unsuitable accommodation.

The future economic situation is looking bleak as households endure high energy costs and inflation on food and other costs of living pressures persist. This will be a tipping point for many households whose budgets may be already stretched. We must also factor in the heated local housing market and high rental costs associated with private renting, particularly in the Eastwood area, all of which are influencing and drive an upsurge in households needing quality affordable housing and homelessness support and advice. There is an increasing need for services that are informed, pro-active, person-centred and champion a prevention approach that will continue to support them through their housing journey.

*Design homelessness services to better meet users' needs*

The years of the Covid-19 pandemic were unusual, and it is still difficult to know if the trends seen between 2019/20 and recent years are likely to continue or how these trends will be affected moving forward.

Under Priority 1 we have discussed the general pressure for affordable housing, which impacts East Renfrewshire, with social housing waiting lists the highest they have ever been and demand for other affordable homes for sale or rent huge. Below, we highlight the issues facing those who are homeless or have a very urgent need for rehousing.



### Homeless Presentations:

Homeless presentations in East Renfrewshire are on an upward trend, with an overall increase of 44% over the last 5 years. This can likely be attributed to limited housing options in the authority, then more recently wider issues in the economy and relating to the COVID19 pandemic.

Homeless Presentations	East Renfrewshire	Scotland
2022/23	445	39,006
	(+16%)	(+11%)
2021/22	378	35,230
	(+2%)	+3%
2020/21	372	33,792
	(+10%)	(-9%)
2019/20	339	36,855
	(+9%)	(+1%)
2018/19	308	36,465

**Target: 20% reduction in households assessed as homeless due to successful prevention activity.**

### Local Connection:

The majority of presentations have a local connection to East Renfrewshire and over half of presentations were already residing in the area. However, changes to local connection provisions were introduced in November 2022 to suspend “local connection” in respect of homelessness. We are assessing the impact it is having on demand for housing within East Renfrewshire on an ongoing basis. It is clear though, that the removal of the local connection test is causing a rise in homeless presentations and so, an upward pressure on services.

### Rehousing pressures:

A significantly increasing number of households are on a waiting list immediately prior to seeking homelessness assistance. 52% (233) of households were on a waiting list prior to making a homeless application in 2022/23 this has escalated since pre-pandemic 2019/20 (37%) and is more than double (22%) the proportion seen in 2017/18. This clearly reflects a lack of affordable housing options, most notably social housing, as a contributing factor to households presenting as homeless. It is likely telling

of households who are on social housing waiting lists falling into housing crisis before they ever receive a permanent offer of housing from these lists.

Historically, we do not see a particular demand from rural, Gypsy Traveller, Travelling Showpeople, or key worker households accessing housing advice and homelessness services, though, we will continue to monitor and report on these cohorts.

**Target: Ongoing reduction in the length of time households are homeless awaiting rehousing.**

**Reasons for Homelessness:**

In 2022/23, the most common reasons for households seeking homeless assistance in East Renfrewshire were:

- Being ‘asked to leave’ accommodation and this could be by family or friends.
- ‘Dispute within household: violent or abusive’.

In addition, the next most common reasons were:

- Other action by landlord resulting in the termination of the tenancy’
- Dispute within household / relationship breakdown: non-violent

Reason for Application (Most Common) 2022/23	ERC No.	ERC %	Scotland %
Asked To Leave	121	27%	26%
Dispute Within Household: Violent or abusive	94	21%	12%
Other Action Taken by landlord resulting in termination of tenancy	63	14%	9%
Dispute within household: Non violent	56	13%	21%

**Reasons for failing to maintain previous accommodation:**

Increasing numbers of homeless households are disclosing ‘mental health’ as one of the reasons for failing to maintain their previous accommodation. Most recently (2022/23), mental health was cited in 38% of presentations in East Renfrewshire; an increase from 22% in 2017/18. We know that health and wellbeing advice is an important factor in housing advice and over half of all respondents (54%) in our public consultation highlighted the need for this too.

Those citing the reason for homelessness is 'not to do with the applicant household' can fluctuate, but was mentioned in 38% of applications in 2022/23.

Presentations with 'criminal/antisocial behaviour' cited as one of the reasons for failing to sustain a tenancy were 21% in 2022/23, and remaining higher than pre-pandemic levels. In our recent public consultation, over three quarters (78%) of consultation respondents rated ‘safe communities with low levels of anti-social behaviour’ highly when we asked ‘What should local communities look like?’.

**Who is facing housing crisis?**

Although the majority of those who approach the homeless service come from ‘White Scottish, other British’ backgrounds (80%) - other ethnic minority groups made up around 19% of homeless applicants in 2022/23. With 1-2% of applications having a ‘not known’ ethnic group return. This is a higher percentage than the make up of the general East Renfrewshire population. The 2011 Census figures show that 7.1% of East Renfrewshire’s population is from a minority ethnic group.

‘Single person’ households remain the most common presentation type. In 2022/23, single households made up 56% of homelessness applications. We have seen an increase in the number of ‘single parent’ homelessness presentations in recent years, up from 19% in 2019/20 to 24% in 2022/23. Evidence shows that both of these groups have households who re-present to homeless services within a year.

A small but growing variation of household types seeking homelessness assistance include ‘Couples’ representing 6.29% of applications, the highest record of this type in the last three years. ‘Couples with children’ shows a similar pattern - 8.54% in 22/23 up 2.01% from 21/22.

The number of children included in applications has been increasing for the last 4 yrs. In 2022/23 there were 278 children, compared with 246 in 2021/22 and 169 in 2019/20. This may be in part due to the increase in applications, but it may also be an indication that more and larger families are requesting assistance in East Renfrewshire, some of these we know have household members who have disabilities or other complex housing needs.

Applications:	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Total number of children	200	169	182	246	278
Total number of adults	347	403	419	464	555
Total	547	572	601	710	833

The age profile of applicants has remained consistent in terms of percentage of presentations over the last five years. Almost three quarters of households being in the ‘26-59’ age range in 2022/23. The average age of homeless applicants is 37 years old over the period 2019-22.

The number of younger people under 25 experiencing homelessness in 2023/23 was around 20% of all applications. In many cases the reason for failing to maintain accommodation is “being asked to leave by family/ friends” and presents an opportunity to prevent homelessness “up-stream” by providing advice and prevention services (e.g. mediation) to this group at an earlier stage.

Our Equalities, Fairness and Rights Impact Assessment supports this, noting that young people (along with families and those of working age) are adversely affected by rent and housing cost. We will take steps to gather more evidence to understand this emerging picture and allow us to target advice on housing and support issues.

## Rough Sleeping

East Renfrewshire does not typically see rough sleeping as it is often perceived, i.e. sleeping on the streets. We tend to find those who sleep rough migrate to Glasgow. When street workers engage with these clients they will liaise with our teams to provide assistance to them.

We can see a significant reduction in presentations from applicants who reported 'rough sleeping in the last three months preceding their application'. This made up 6% of presentations (against a high of 14% in 2019/20) and the number of applicants who slept rough the night prior to presenting at the service was 2.5% in 2022/23.

## **Accommodation Outcomes**

The housing outcomes of homeless applicants in East Renfrewshire has not had any recognisable change in recent years. Though there is an upward trend in waiting list periods for homeless applicants Scottish Secure Tenancy (local authority or RSL tenancy) continues to be the most common outcome at 56% in 2022/23.

Private rented tenancies account for 3.3% of outcomes in 2022/23, which is relatively low, and could be telling of wider issues in utilising this sector more to meet needs. Rent levels across the private rented sector can make this tenure an unaffordable option for an increasing number of households. Greater Glasgow has seen cumulative increases in average rents above the rate of inflation between 2010 and 2021 across all property sizes. This is a fundamental issue for Scottish Government in their forthcoming strategy, a 'New Deal for Tenants'.

10% of households 'returned to previous accommodation/friends as an outcome in 2022/23; this is a slight drop from the previous reporting period though a 5 % drop from pre-pandemic proportions.

The numbers who 'lost contact before duty discharge' in 2022/23 was 4.4% of cases and in 2017/18 2%. This could correlate with longer waiting times to receive an offer of permanent housing, with the notable waiting list increases that have occurred over this time. This is despite the biggest proportion of social rented homes becoming available targeted to homeless priority households through local allocations policies. Again, these outcomes point to the need for better advice and support to find a home, and prevent homelessness in the first place.



## **Temporary accommodation**

There has been a notable rise in the use of temporary accommodation arranged by the Council in the last few years. During the pandemic this reflected the need for short term accommodation to keep people safe, and restrictions which slowed the movement of households through to settled accommodation. More recently this reflects sustained pressure and a lack of move on accommodation.

At the time of writing in 2024, the Council has up to 350 households accepted as homeless and awaiting an offer of accommodation, and approaching almost 200 households in temporary accommodation, including those in bed and breakfast. Note that these figures are for "households" and that the total number of individual persons affected will be substantially higher. The number of households in furnished temporary accommodation at the time of LHS publication end is 92 households - the highest recording in over 5 years.

The Council is also using over 130 dwellings for temporary accommodation plus B&Bs. This is up significantly from 98 temporary accommodation dwellings in August 2022, including those leased from other landlords, yet B&B usage remains too high, reflective of the continued pressures on services. There are cases where B&B is being used for longer than 7 days for a range of reasons, and our focus is on tackling that. This is deemed unsuitable accommodation generally, and B&Bs are unsuitable for certain households, such as families, on the whole.

The vast majority of those who are placed in temporary accommodation are single person households. But at the first quarter of 2024 there were 157 children in temporary accommodation, up from 48 at the end of 2022/23. Households with children made up 34% of total households in temporary accommodation at the first quarter in 2024.

On average, families are in temporary accommodation for longer than single people. This is due to limited choice and availability of suitable accommodation, for instance if they are waiting for a property in a particular location close to support networks or schools.

The implementation of East Renfrewshire’s Rapid Rehousing Transition Action Plan (RRTP) is a key driver in modifying and reducing future use of temporary accommodation.

**Target: A year on year reduction in the average time spent in temporary accommodation for households who require it.**

## Housing Support Provision

Section 32B of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 established a housing support duty for local authorities to conduct a housing support assessment for applicants who are unintentionally homeless or threatened with homelessness and that they have 'reason to believe' need the housing support services prescribed in regulations.

The Housing Support Services (Homelessness) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 ensures 'housing support services' include any service which provides support, assistance, advice or counselling to an individual with particular needs with a view to enabling that individual to occupy, or to continue to occupy, residential accommodation as the individual's sole or main residence. The form and duration of housing support will vary depending on the individual's circumstances and/or those of the people in the household

Housing Support	2021/22	2022/23
Assessments under the Housing Support Regulations	191	248
Support Provided under the Housing Support Regulations	75	121

The number of households being assessed under these regulations and being provided support as a result, has increased notably. This reflects a demand for support services, which are challenged to keep pace with need and demand. Our RRTP makes provision for the development of housing support services which will allow those affected by homelessness to become tenancy ready and aims to reduce repeat housing crisis.

### **Domestic Abuse**

East Renfrewshire Council is committed to providing a proactive response to preventing and addressing Domestic Abuse, and the impact this has on the victim's housing and support circumstances. As part of this commitment, an enhanced Housing policy has been developed in partnership and will be submitted for Council approval shortly.

### **Prison Leavers**

As a statutory partner of Criminal Justice, we uphold the SHORE standards rooted in the revised National Strategy for Community Justice (2022). The standards promote a nationally consistent approach in meeting the housing needs of individuals in contact with the justice system – this approach is person-centred, trauma-informed, and prevents homelessness at liberation.

### **Gypsy / Travellers and Travelling Showpeople**

The needs of Gypsy / Travellers who live or migrate through East Renfrewshire, though low numbers, will continue to be monitored. There is no site provision or significant demand for this. We will work with neighbouring Councils to address emerging needs, and ensure our approach to managing encampments is in line with national guidance, and responsive to changing requirements.

Similarly, there is no identified site provision or demand in East Renfrewshire from the Travelling Show persons community, but we will continue to monitor this to ensure we can be responsive to changing requirements.

### **Veterans**

East Renfrewshire Council recognises the sacrifice of the armed forces, veterans and their families. While the majority make an effective transition to civilian life there are a small number of veterans who face challenges.

On 5 August 2022, Scottish Government published a [refreshed action plan](#), which details how they intend to continue to take forward the 'Strategy for Our Veterans' in Scotland. The main objectives are:

- ensuring no disadvantage for service personnel, veterans and their families in Scotland accessing public services and support
- that Scotland is viewed as a 'destination of choice' for service leavers and their families
- providing visible Scottish Government support for the armed forces community

East Renfrewshire has a marginal number of enquiries from the veteran community and provides housing advice and support aligning with this Scottish Government strategy. We will continue to monitor the number of presentations from this group to inform future action.

## Refugee programmes

With the ongoing monitoring of hosting arrangements for families fleeing Ukraine, we will continue to provide resettlement support service, and accommodation should this be required. Home Office programmes to secure dispersed accommodation for asylum seekers/ refugees and unaccompanied young people will also create competition for available homes within a really pressured East Renfrewshire market. We will monitor the impact on our waiting lists and the range of housing options available for everyone who requires them, while responding to our obligations.

## What You Told Us

Those consulted for the LHS (almost 80% of those who responded), felt it more difficult than expected to find a home that meets their needs, is of good quality and is affordable in East Renfrewshire. This echoes the largest priority (Strategic Priority 1) which is placed on building new homes – both private and affordable – across our consultation.



Priorities for making it easier to find a home also centred on the ease and transparency of bidding for a Council home; ensuring much clearer information was available to applicants to show the properties that actually do become available. Respondents also felt that a closer look at the needs of those applying would help to deliver appropriate advice and assist in finding a suitable home more readily. This could be provided through a range of trusted sources.

73% of people felt there are not enough different housing options for people to buy and rent in East Renfrewshire, and this is reflected in the scale of waiting lists for Council and other social housing. 71% have thought about their future housing needs, but the biggest obstacle to planning ahead was the availability of homes locally that were suitable.

A significant element of feedback was around introducing options to encourage people to move to a more suitable social rented home in terms of size, location and facilities, through offering incentives for downsizers and supporting schemes for swapping homes. Recognition is given that tenants may not want to give up a long-standing home readily, but if the homes available to bid for were of better quality this may free up larger homes for families etc.

40% of respondents would not know where to go to access the help needed if they were at risk of homeless; and 14% were not sure. The accessibility of advice and support on housing options and when faced with homelessness, were a large factor in this response. Providing services in a range of ways is felt to be crucial including:

- ❖ Across locations; given poor transport links.
- ❖ Via digital as well as traditional contact routes, to cater for all circumstances.
- ❖ Ensuring the ability to speak to someone whether digitally, by phone or in person is not made more challenging by poor response times.
- ❖ That individual needs are considered – including language, disability and mental health – in the range of services offered.





Respondents would largely prefer to 'speak to an advisor in person' (62%), followed by 'on the phone' (31%); and by self-serving via the Council and linked websites (30%).

Almost all of those who responded in relation to housing advice and homeless felt housing options advice (98%) and financial advice (e.g. benefits or budgeting) (94%) were the most crucial types of advice and support that should be available.



70% also placed importance on health and wellbeing advice and supports, e.g. for those with addictions or mental ill health.

Overall, those providing advice and support should have a good level of knowledge and be able to signpost to specialist advice and advocacy services where customers required these.

## Key Issues

- ! **Increasing demand on services:** East Renfrewshire Council continues to see a rise in the number of households approaching the homelessness service. This has had an impact on the demand for advice, temporary and settled accommodation, and for support services.
- ! **Good quality, accessible advice and support** is required at a much earlier stage, and it's important that information and signposting across partner agencies is consistent, and delivered using a caring and trauma informed approach.
- ! **Legislative Changes:** Changes in homelessness legislation have and will increase pressure on the service. For example, the increased reliance on Bed & Breakfast presents challenges to stopping its use where possible, or using for more than 7 days. Forthcoming removal of local connection may also increase local presentations.
- ! **Housing First:** Currently, there is no Housing First (or rapid rehousing) provision in East Renfrewshire but it is recognised that providing a tenancy first approach while developing personalised, open-ended, flexible support services could help people with complex support needs and a history of repeat homelessness.
- ! **Sustaining a Home:** Earlier preventative action is needed to support people to remain in their home, where a risk of losing that home is identified. This is two-pronged. Free, impartial advice and information needs to be available at an early stage for local residents, and promotion of what's available is crucial. Targeting support to a greater range of people than currently will also be important - including peer support, advocacy and the introduction of mediation services to strengthen relationships at home and prevent homelessness occurring.
- ! **Housing Options:** There are limited affordable housing options in East Renfrewshire and this has a huge impact. We need to maximise housing options available through the Strategic Housing Investment Programme (SHIP) to increase affordable housing, and open up discussion with private landlords and developers about local needs. Consultation has also shown that creating movement through local allocations policies and giving people incentives to move and swap homes, would be welcomed.
- ! **Temporary Accommodation:** We will continue review temporary accommodation services to ensure households are able to move on to a settled home system as quickly as possible, and work to eliminate extended use of unsuitable temporary accommodation.

- ! **Embedding a Preventative Approach with Residents:** A core feature of our LHS is “Planning Ahead” with residents across all aspects of housing. Where possible it is important that can plan for any changes in their life that may mean their current home needs to adapt or they need to move. We will develop a campaign to support this message.

## What We Will Do



1. **Deliver accessible, comprehensive, effective and consistent housing advice and support to households.**
  - Work robustly with our partners to increase access to quality, accessible housing advice and support, including a “trusted expert” approach and independent advocacy where required.
  - Increase visibility of housing advice services in the local area, reducing barriers to support and providing earlier intervention.
  - Invest in continuous and progressive training for staff delivering housing advice services across East Renfrewshire to ensure knowledge is broad and up to date, and relevant across a range of circumstances.
  - Monitor the impact of cost-of-living pressures and respond where possible. Enhance housing option for younger people by improving the information we have on their housing needs and requirements, through targeted consultation.
2. **Embed a preventative approach to finding and sustaining a home, and supporting frontline services in delivery of this.**
  - Roll out digital capability that provides modern services and access to information for those seeking a home, or at risk of losing their home.
  - Improve joint working through a social landlords’ Neighbourhood Housing Officer Network to share knowledge of neighbourhood issues and local services, and target assistance to households at the earliest stage.
  - Deliver access to mediation services to help resolve household conflict placing people at risk of housing crisis, and to build healthy relationships.
  - Work with HSCP and other partners to target specialist support to young people and those with complex needs arising from addictions or mental health, which put them at risk of housing crisis.
  - Work closely with private landlords to monitor the impact of changing standards, requirements around rent setting and evictions, and the ongoing role of the private rented sector in providing a key housing option for local residents.
  - Limit the impact that homelessness has on specific groups identified in the Equalities, Fairness and Rights Impact Assessment such as young people, families and those of working age by ensuring appropriate temporary and settled accommodation and support services are available.

3. **Deliver a redesign of homelessness and housing allocations services which reflects the expressed needs of service users and other stakeholders.**
  - Use proactive engagement with service users to obtain essential feedback, and support continuing development of services through a “Service Design” approach.
  - Develop a trauma informed approach amongst staff dealing with service users, which prioritises a “Culture of Care”.
  - Develop an effective and independent peer support service for households faced with homelessness.
  - Simplify existing social housing allocations policies and processes for customers to make them easier to understand and navigate, provide transparency in decision making, and support clearer expectations.
  
4. **Remodel temporary accommodation options to meet demands from households facing crisis, or requiring proactive resettlement.**
  - Work with HSCP to deliver rapid access accommodation to reduce reliance on B&B, and meet the requirements of the unsuitable accommodation order.
  - Pilot a small Housing First service with wrap around support for those households facing repeat homelessness and with the most complex needs.
  - Ensure our approach to rehousing homeless households minimises time in temporary accommodation, and supports a range of options for securing appropriate settled accommodation.

## **Strategic Priority 4: Good Quality Homes (and Neighbourhoods), Improving Standards across East Renfrewshire**

The Scottish Government’s publication ‘Housing to 2040’ states an ambition that, “All homes have to be good quality, whether they be new build or existing, meaning everyone can expect the same high standards no matter what kind of home or tenure they live in.”

Currently, Social Housing (both Council and Registered Social Landlord homes) has to be compliant with the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS). Privately homes have to meet conditions determined by the ‘Tolerable Standard’, which lists a number of regulations relating to the state of repair, facilities, sanitation, safety and preventative measures. The ‘Repairing Standard’ places further obligations on private landlords, including guaranteeing the safety of any furniture, fixtures, fittings or equipment in the property which is provided by the landlord.



A new cross tenure housing standard will replace both SHQS and the Tolerable Standard. Exact details around the content and timeline for this are currently unclear but it is anticipated that the new standard will begin to be introduced in the lifespan of this LHS.

### **Social Housing**

Since its original introduction in 2004, the SHQS has provided a set of criteria that properties in the Social Rented Sector must adhere to. These criteria are categorised into five groups; compliance with

the current tolerable standard, free from serious disrepair, a requirement to be energy efficient, the availability of modern facilities and services and a requirement to be healthy, safe and secure.

Changes to the SHQS requirements around electrical certificates meant that for the period 2022/23, East Renfrewshire Council's SHQS performance was recorded at 59.2%. This was considerably lower than our reported figures from 2017-2021 which ranged from 97.2 – 97.9%. Along with most other local authority landlords in Scotland, East Renfrewshire Council have been working to improve this, with updated certification now being completed in some of the 953 homes identified in 2021 as requiring renewal as well as in others which are now approaching their required renewal date. This work has resulted in an improved level of SHQS compliance to date this year, and we will continue to build on this to return to our previous levels.

There are 6 Registered Social Landlords operating in East Renfrewshire, whose reported SHQS compliance among their entire stock currently ranges from 81.4% - 99.6%.

The vision for housing stock outlined in Housing to 2040 is ambitious and will require significant and ongoing targeted investment. As part of the work on reviewing our Asset Management Plans we will proactively consider options for rebuild or remodelling of housing stock which cannot meet modern standards, or where the cost to do so would be prohibitive, working closely with our tenants.



Existing investment to maintain future proof social housing

**Target: Social Housing compliance with property condition standards is maximised year on year.**

## Private Housing

Data relating to owner occupied and private rented housing is more difficult for local authorities to compile. The most recent data from the Scottish House Condition Survey estimates that 1.3% of private properties in East Renfrewshire are below the Tolerable Standard, which is below the Scottish average. However, given the cost of living crisis, we estimate many more households may be struggling to manage essential repair and maintenance works. A significant number of these households may also be elderly or on a fixed income, or vulnerable in terms of age, economic position or health. There is a potential risk that private landlords will struggle to maintain their properties and may leave the market.

Throughout the period of this LHS we will work to gain a deeper insight into the condition of private housing, both owner and rented, to allow us to target advice and support to where it is most needed.



We are aiming to profile our private rented stock to gain insight into their condition as well as their potential usage going forward. We will also look to engage with the owners and residents of these homes.

Where it becomes apparent that homes in the private rented sector fall short of the Tolerable Standard, we will work with the landlord to help them bring it back up to standard. Failing this, and depending on individual circumstances, we may use available powers to place an order on such homes obliging the owner to make the necessary repairs or potentially resulting in their suspension from use or closure.

There may be residents whose homes currently meet the Tolerable Standard but may not in the future. We will launch a 'Planning Ahead' campaign to encourage and support owner occupiers and private landlords to better prepare for the future investment required in their home.

**Target: Establish a reliable baseline for private property compliance with condition standards, to work towards improvements.**

## **Scheme of Assistance**

Our Private Housing Scheme of Assistance prioritises advice and assistance to owners to improve house conditions. It promotes the principle that homeowners have primary responsibility for maintaining their own homes. It also commits to improvement of homes in the worst condition by supporting owners where possible or through enforcement action as a last resort or where necessary. This could include issuing Works Notices and undertaking necessary repairs in default and recharging the owner or applying a Closing Order or Demolition Order.

Where the Council finds private landlords renting our properties below the required standard and those landlords fail to work with the Council to address the required issues, the Council will take appropriate enforcement action.

Through the Scheme of Assistance, East Renfrewshire Council can also advise on how to bring a home up to the Tolerable Standard and may, on certain occasions and resources permitting, provide assistance with repairs in homes designated as are below tolerable standard.

The Scheme of Assistance will be reviewed to determine what type of support can be given to improving standards within private sector housing, to help achieve emerging national standards.

## **Housing Renewal Areas (HRA)**

Under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006, Local authorities can also create a designated Housing Renewal Area (HRA) if a considerable number of homes within close geographical proximity are below standards or where homes' conditions are negatively affecting an area.

East Renfrewshire Council does not intend to proactively seek the designation of Housing Renewal Areas at present. The Council may, however, choose to utilise these powers if a situation arises in future that could be addressed most effectively through the designation of a Housing Renewal Area.

## **Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO)**

In certain circumstances, the local authority may seek permission from Scottish Ministers to authorise a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) where evidence shows there is a clear public interest in a proposal and any social, economic and environmental benefits outweigh the rights of the owner. Prior to this, the local authority will take steps to engage with those affected by the proposed development and normally agree a voluntary purchase offer, alternative options will also be considered. CPO's will be the option of last resort.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> [Compulsory purchase orders: core principles - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot/Compulsory-purchase-orders-core-principles) [Compulsory purchase in Scotland: guide for property owners and occupiers - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot/Compulsory-purchase-in-Scotland-guide-for-property-owners-and-occupiers)

## Empty Homes

The Scottish Government Strategy, **Housing to 2040**, sets out a vision of creating more affordable houses in the coming decades and brings the issue of empty homes to the fore.

In East Renfrewshire, it is estimated that there are currently 185 privately owned long-term empty homes (an increase of 28 properties since 2019) and equating to approximately 0.5% of the privately owned properties in East Renfrewshire. Figures suggest that numbers of empty homes are slightly lower in East Renfrewshire than across Scotland, where an average of 0.9% of all properties have been empty for more than 12 months.

We are currently working with the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership to develop an Empty Homes Framework for East Renfrewshire, which commits to identifying and understanding the challenges of local empty homes and outlining potential interventions that could be used to increase the supply of affordable housing and simultaneously reduce homelessness.

We have also created a post for an Empty Homes Officer, funded through the removal of the Council Tax discount and potential increased charges for long-term empty and second homes. The Empty Homes Officer will work jointly between Revenue Services and Housing Services to maximise council tax recovery and provide a support mechanism to owners of empty property with the aim of bringing empty homes back into use locally.

### **Target: Reduce the number of long term empty homes in East Renfrewshire**

## Improving Neighbourhoods

This strategy seeks to put communities and people at the centre and help to create safe and thriving sustainable communities. It aims to address cross-cutting core principles relating to empty homes, and to highlight the contribution of housing to safe and thriving neighbourhoods.



In planning for new development, and where possible in existing neighbourhoods, the council will be guided by the 20-minute neighbourhood concept and will aim to create places where people can live, work and learn in communities close to home, enabling people to live better, healthier lives and contribute to sustainability overall.

Providing opportunities for local communities to become more involved in the planning, development and enhancement of their places is central to the delivery of this local housing strategy. We will use place-making principles in the improvement of local neighbourhoods, in partnership with and to reflect the priorities local communities have identified for regeneration of their areas.

The Council is currently using a placemaking approach to develop Local Action Plans, working with local communities to identify improvements that people want to see in their towns and villages. Action Plans have been developed for each of the settlements within East Renfrewshire, with a list of priority options proposed by local residents. Local Action Plan Groups will be set up for each area to provide ongoing community input and oversight as any projects roll out.

**MASTER PLANNING a holistic community approach with partners and residents**

**COMMUNITIES**  
to be  
• **THRIVING**  
• **RESILIENT**  
• **SUSTAINABLE**

This strategy will support investment programmes and local initiatives which support welcoming, sustainable and connected communities. Participatory budgeting will be used to champion improvements aimed at improving sustainability and connectedness identified by our customers.

### What you told us

The recent LHS consultation told us that improving the quality of homes and neighbourhoods should be a key concern for the LHS. A significant proportion of those consulted (71%) told us they were at least 'mostly happy' with the quality of their current home.

When asked what issues are most important when thinking about the quality of a home the joint top choices were that **it is warm** and **is in a location I like**, putting **is in good repair** into third place.

A significant number of people (62%) stated that they are prevented from carrying out improvements to their home due to the cost.

Looking at the quality of homes and neighbourhoods, factors that are important to people are clear:

- ❖ Social rented homes should be of a good quality and maintained effectively and timely
- ❖ There should be recognition that some households are struggling to finance repairs and maintenance for their homes in the current economic climate
- ❖ Access to a garden area or other outdoor green space is very important to people, even to those living in smaller properties
- ❖ Modern technology should be explored and used effectively, both to tackle property issues that may affect the health of a resident, such as dampness, and to ensure better digital connectivity.
- ❖ Communities should be safe, with low levels of antisocial behaviour and good reasonable access to local services and amenities
- ❖ Local residents take pride in their communities and want to be able to influence improvement works and regeneration.

### Key Issues

- ! Higher than average levels of owner occupation with an ageing population, and a good proportion of owners therefore on a fixed or lower income.
- ! The proposed national cross tenure housing standard will drive up the requirement for investment in homes across the area by social and private landlords as well as home owners.
- ! There are gaps in knowledge in the information available on the condition of private sector homes, with this information critical to identifying areas of concern and targeting available advice and support.
- ! Increasing homeowner support is expected to be required to ensure investment in repair and maintenance in homes across East Renfrewshire.
- ! The targets set and investment required may change private landlords' future intentions for letting their homes, and we need to understand more about what this might look like.
- ! Skill and labour shortages in the trades and construction industry post pandemic, and as a result of Brexit, significantly challenge the ability to progress home improvements, even for those wishing to invest.

- ! Refresh our understanding of what local communities need to provide a thriving, resilient and sustainable environment to live in.

## **What We Will Do**

- 1. Maximise standards within social housing locally, in line with national targets for housing quality and energy efficiency**
  - Review our asset management plans to prioritise available investment towards quality, safety and future of existing social rented housing, and compliance with the Scottish Housing Quality Standard.
  - Proactively consider options for rebuild or remodelling of socially rented housing stock which cannot meet future standards, or costs are prohibitive to do so.
  - Use modern technology to enable investment in homes that face issues that most impact the health of households, such as condensation and dampness.
- 2. Gain improved insight into the condition of privately owned and rented homes, to guide services and support required locally to achieve cross tenure housing standards**
  - Improve the information we have about activity in the private rented sector as landlords consider future investment in their homes, as well as the profile of households living in the sector.
  - Review our Private Sector Scheme of Assistance to determine what type of support can be given to improving standards within private sector housing, towards emerging national standards.
  - Launch a “Planning Ahead” vision for housing in East Renfrewshire which includes encouraging and supporting owners and private landlords, to plan for future investment required in their homes.
  - Use the outcomes of targeted condition surveys to establish private homes which are below minimum standard, and where necessary use enforcement powers to ensure homes are fit for use.
- 3. Support investment programmes and local initiatives which support welcoming, sustainable and connected communities**
  - Undertake an options appraisal to consider homes in mixed estates that cannot currently be made fit for the future, because they are costly or difficult to modernise, and develop a multi-tenure plan in partnership with key stakeholders.
  - Use place-making principles in the improvement of local neighbourhoods, in partnership with and to reflect the priorities local communities have identified for regeneration of their areas.
  - Work in collaboration with partners and local communities to implement the place-making local action plans.
  - Enable local communities to influence improvements in their areas through regular provision of Neighbourhood Inspections, Housing Surgeries and other robust engagement mechanisms.



- Support improvements championed by local communities which improve sustainability and connectedness, through participatory budgeting schemes for our tenants.
- Provide an increased presence in local neighbourhoods through our local Neighbourhood Housing Officer network, to help identify and address anti-social and estate management issues at an early stage.

## Strategic Priority 5: East Renfrewshire’s Carbon Footprint, Making Improvements to our Homes and Reducing Energy Usage

Modern  
 Low Carbon  
 Sustainable

A key aim of this strategy is that homes in East Renfrewshire are warm, energy efficient and affordable to heat. We want to ensure a good supply of modern, low carbon and sustainable homes.

Guiding principles that must be reflected in the strategic work for housing locally are set out in the Scottish Government’s Energy Strategy and Energy Efficiency Route Map, which outlines a programme aimed at making Scotland’s existing buildings near zero carbon. The route map sets out 2 main objectives:

1. Removing poor energy efficiency as a driver for fuel poverty;
2. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions through more energy efficient buildings and decarbonising our heat supply,



## Carbon Reduction

Scotland's Route Map for Energy Efficiency outlines the following targets:

### By 2032:

- 35% of Domestic Buildings Heat To Be Supplied By Low Carbon Technologies
- 15% Reduction in Domestic Buildings' Heat Demand Through Improvements To The Building Fabric

### By 2050:

- Carbon Emissions From All Buildings in Scotland Will Need to Near Zero

Recent increases in fuel prices mean that the cost of heating a home using mains gas and other energy sources has increased significantly for all households. The Scottish Government has declared a Climate Emergency and set a target for a million homes to be converted to use zero emission heating by 2030.

We are very conscious that changing primary home heating fuel to a low or zero carbon option involves significant costs, which may not be offset by fuel bills, and need to look carefully at what actions we can take forward that are affordable and do not contribute negatively to fuel poverty.

Reducing carbon emissions and increasing the energy efficiency of our homes whilst also reducing fuel poverty requires innovation and commitment, as well as partnership working between local housing organisations and local communities.

## Get to Zero



East Renfrewshire's Get to Zero Plan, that details how we will meet the targets set out in the Climate Change (Scotland) Act, such as the requirement of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2045, will be published imminently. Improving energy efficiency, achieving ambitious climate change targets and tackling fuel poverty are inextricably interconnected, as improved energy efficiency in our homes reduces the quantities of harmful greenhouse gasses released and these homes will require less energy to heat, reducing the cost for the resident. The LHS links the wider work being carried out by East Renfrewshire Council on reducing carbon emissions with housing and fuel poverty.

Through the lifespan of this LHS, and working collaboratively with our Get to Zero partners, we will work to identify projects that improve the infrastructure for low carbon living across all tenures, with a particular focus on Council and other social housing.

## Energy Efficiency

Scotland's Route Map for Energy Efficiency outlined that by 2040, all Scottish homes should achieve an EPC C (where technically feasible and cost effective). Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) and EPC bands are calculated using the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) methodology<sup>15</sup>.

The Energy Savings Trust Home Analytics housing stock data gives properties in East Renfrewshire the following ratings:

EPC Ratings Across ERC (All Homes)		
	No.	%
A-B	3294	8.1
C	12816	31.5
D	17404	42.8
E	5751	14.1
F-G	1302	3.2
Unknown	92	0.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>40659</b>	<b>100.0</b>

This suggests that around 60% properties in East Renfrewshire require energy efficiency measures to allow them to meet the EPC C target. Around 17% of properties fall into EPC bands E, F or G.

Housing to 2040 set out the Scottish Government's commitment to bring forward, or consult on bringing forward, increased targets for different housing tenures.

- The number of social rented homes achieving EPC B by 2032 to be maximised (to be confirmed by Scottish Government).
- All owner occupied homes to reach a minimum level of energy efficiency (equivalent to EPC C) by 2035 (where technically feasible and cost effective).
- Private rented homes (where technically feasible and cost effective) to reach EPC C by 2028.

EPC Breakdown by Tenure					
	A-B	C	D	E	F-G
Registered Social Landlord	10.5%	76.8%	10.1%	2.2%	0.4%
Local Authority	16.3%	43.6%	35.2%	4.3%	0.5%
Owner Occupied	7.2%	28.1%	45.1%	16.0%	3.7%
Privately Rented	6.5%	35.1%	43.5%	12.1%	2.8%
All	8.1%	31.5%	42.8%	14.1%	3.2%

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/standard-assessment-procedure>

The table above shows Energy Savings Trust Home Analytics housing stock data that highlights the enormity of the task that needs to be carried out to meet Scottish Government targets.

Currently 16.3% of local authority homes achieve EPC B, leaving more than 80% requiring upgrading in the next 10 years. 65% of owner occupied homes in the area may require upgrading by 2035 and more than 50% of privately rented homes by 2028.

## EESHS

The Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESHS) was introduced to improve the energy efficiency of social housing in Scotland. The EESHS was introduced in 2014 and set a first milestone for social landlords to meet for their homes by 31 December 2020. A second milestone (EESHS2) was set asking for social housing to be as energy efficient as practically possible by the end of December but is currently on hold. The Council is making good progress towards EESHS with over 98% compliance.



The Scottish Government are consulting on proposals for a replacement standard, currently known as the Social Housing Net Zero Standard (SHNZS). This includes a proposal for a fabric efficiency rating (which focuses on the amount of energy for heat consumed by a property) measured in kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year as well as a requirement to replace polluting heating systems with a clean heating alternative by a backstop date of 2045. We are currently developing a response to these proposals and will continue to monitor developments and take steps to prepare for its potential implementation.

## Energy Efficiency Scotland: Area Based Schemes (EES:ABS)

Over a number of years the Council has used available Energy Efficiency Scotland : Area Based Schemes (EES:ABS), or equivalent funding, to improve our tenants homes and support other households in mixed blocks to improve the energy efficiency and running costs in their homes. Since 2013/14, around £900,000 per year has been made available for use in local programmes.

However in the last few years it has become more challenging to maximise spend through this budget, in particular as the regulations associated with the funding have dramatically reduced the eligible owners who can participate in works programmes, and less assistance is on offer (e.g. contributions can now be up to £5,000 from an owner).

The Council promote draw down of other funding streams to complement the work through EES:ABS, such as LA Flex funding. This allows private contractors approved to work in the area, to offer additional measures to home owners in areas where current or previous EES:ABS programmes have taken place. If they meet the eligibility criteria set out these owners can get support for a range of measures, based on what their home requires.

From 2019-2022 LA Flex funding allowed:

- 3300 energy efficiency measures installed
- 1500 properties to benefit from improvements
- Measures included insulation of loft, cavity wall, internal and external and underfloor areas, and boiler replacement

## LHEES

As per our obligation from the 2022 legislation, East Renfrewshire Council has in 2024 produced and approved a Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy and accompanying development plan setting out a long term, place based approach to reducing emissions from buildings and tackling fuel poverty by identifying a solution tailored to the local area.



Our strategy has four main outcomes:

- **Outcome 1: Homes and buildings in East Renfrewshire are as energy efficient as possible;**
- **Outcome 2: Heat solutions are delivered to meet 2045 Net Zero targets and tackle fuel poverty;**
- **Outcome 3: Investment and grant funding is secured to deliver Net Zero projects; and**
- **Outcome 4: East Renfrewshire Council supports property owners to improve heating solutions.**

Led by data, LHEES has identified six priorities which will develop our Delivery Plan and help us to meet these four outcomes and those of the LHS. They are:

1. Explore the potential for Heat Network Zones around Eastwood Park and Barrhead Main Street. Potential exists in properties within these localities for anchor loads and there is sufficient heat demand. Most buildings (although not all) in the Eastwood Park zone are Council owned. Barrhead also has potential for anchor loads. Different Heat Network methods are being considered but in both zones, significant grant funding will be needed.
2. Ground Source heat pumps for socially rented properties. Spaces have been identified which show potential for small scale Heat Networks, where there are properties which are heat pump ready.
3. Increase levels of cavity wall insulation in the private sector.
4. Improve Energy Efficient Scotland: Area Based Scheme uptake. This has not been well utilised to date by homeowners due to the level of private funding contributions required.
5. Deliver improvements for non-domestic council properties.
6. Determine more appropriate solar thermal and solar PV installations. The council will take a role to direct householders to any available funding.

This is an ambitious strategy, with over 42,000 buildings in scope – nearly all of which will require some form of energy efficiency improvement over the course of the next 20 years. As the Council has the biggest influence over our own buildings; housing, schools and leisure centres, where heat demand is greatest, these buildings will have priority.

However, ideally every property should have affordable, reliable, net zero heat. However, this will be at significant expense with an estimated cost of £10.7bn in the Glasgow City Region to update private properties alone. This will not only require funding but collaborative working between the Council, Scottish Government and Scottish Power Energy Networks and public bodies, including NHS Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue and Police Scotland.

As previously mentioned, our LHEES will aid us in achieving net zero by 2045, in line with national and local targets, but it will also help us to fulfil obligations in line with other policies and legislation, such

as the Heat Networks (Scotland) Act 2021, the new Heat in Buildings bill, and the proposed Scottish Housing Net Zero Standard.

## Fuel Poverty

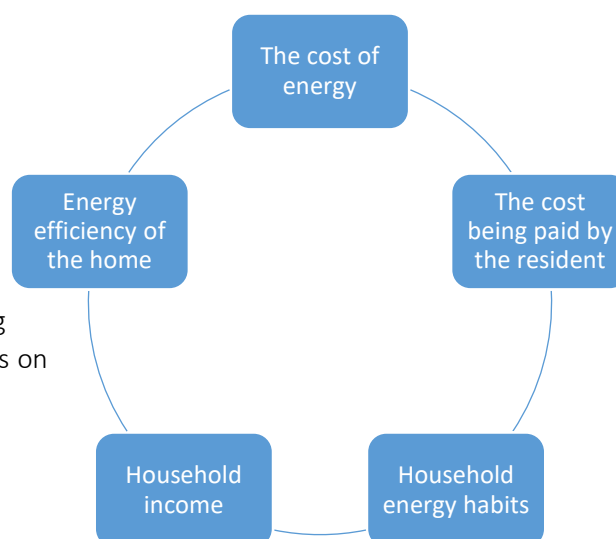
Addressing fuel poverty is a national and local priority, and local areas (Councils and their partners) are expected to adopt a joined up response to tackling this in their area.

In Scotland, fuel poverty is defined as having two elements. A household is considered fuel poor if:

1. After housing costs have been deducted, more than 10% (20% for extreme fuel poverty) of their net income is required to pay for their reasonable fuel needs; *and*
2. After further adjustments are made to deduct childcare costs and any benefits received for a disability or care need, their remaining income is insufficient to maintain an acceptable standard of living, defined as being at least 90% of the UK Minimum Income Standard (MIS).

We understand fuel poverty is driven by a combination of factors.

Rising energy prices (and affordability overall) are a critical issue at present but not something that can be influenced locally so concentration is on the remaining 4 strands.



Homes and households at risk of fuel poverty are not a single group and a range of circumstances can contribute to the risks faced.

- Low or fixed income
- Pre-payment meters
- No central heating
- Young households
- Single parents
- Most deprived areas
- Long term health conditions
- Poorly insulated homes

## Targets

The Fuel Poverty (Targets, Definitions and Strategy) (Scotland) Act 2019 set the following targets:

### By 2040

- no more than 5% of households should be in fuel poverty;
- no more than 1% of households should be in extreme fuel poverty; and

- the median fuel poverty gap of households in fuel poverty is no more than £250 (in 2015 prices before adding inflation).

These targets must be achieved nationally, but also within each of the 32 local authority areas to ensure parity for the population of Scotland.

**Target: % of socially rented properties meeting Energy standards is maximised.**

**Target: % of new homes built to silver and gold building standards is maximised.**

### Local Data

Based on the most up to date local authority level data from the Scottish House Condition Survey<sup>16</sup>:

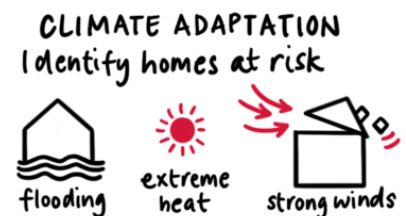
- 13% of households in East Renfrewshire are in fuel poverty; 7% of households are in extreme fuel poverty – these are both below the Scottish average.
- £650 Median Fuel Poverty gap<sup>17</sup> – in line with Scottish average.
- 16% of the fuel poor were families; 36% of fuel poor were older households.

The figures presented are expected to be an under representation of local households currently in fuel poverty, given the economic pressures building over the last few years.

Recently published national level data<sup>18</sup> records that in 2022 an estimated 31% (around 791,000 households) of all households were in fuel poverty. This is higher than the 2019 fuel poverty rate of 24.6% (around 613,000 households). Local level data is not yet available but it is expected that fuel poverty locally will have risen too.

### Climate Adaptation

Our built environment, including our housing, is not prepared to deal with the impact of our changing climate. Coordinated action is required between the Council and its partners to identify areas or properties that are most likely to be impacted and ascertain any support that can be offered to help mitigate risk.



### What you told us

In a recent survey carried out while the LHS was being developed, 72% of people surveyed told us that the target to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2045 is important to them. 12% did not feel it is important at all.

Of the 135 people who answered a question about changes they have already made to their property, 59% have installed loft insulation in their property and 39% wall insulation. 1.5% have a heat pump and 4.4% solar panels.

<sup>16</sup> Scottish House Condition Survey (2017-2019) Analysis, most recent local authority level data available.

<sup>17</sup> Where a household is in fuel poverty, the median fuel poverty gap is the actual amount that fuel poor households would require to move out of fuel poverty

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-house-condition-survey-2022-key-findings/documents/>

78% of people who responded to the survey indicated that they would be willing to make changes to their property to help reduce energy consumption and help combat that effects of climate change. 17% were unlikely to do so, whilst 5% were completely against the idea.

When asked what would prevent them from carrying out works to their property to help reduce energy consumption and help combat that effects of climate change the main obstacle cited was cost, with 69% of people believing that works would be too expensive.

Factors around reducing our carbon footprint and improving energy efficiency that are important to our residents include:

- ❖ There should be a recognition that new energy efficiency technologies are expensive to install and many questions over the short and long term impact of these remain.
- ❖ Good quality, consistent and reliable information and advice should be available to support those looking to invest in energy efficient measures and to those struggling with rising energy costs.
- ❖ The infrastructure around sustainable transport should be improved to encourage people to switch to electric cars or cycle to work.
- ❖ The focus should be on improving the energy efficiency of existing stock as well as on improving standards for new build developments.

## **Key Issues**

- ! Meeting net zero targets and improving energy efficiency.
- ! Current financial climate meaning limited resources available to assist homeowners to carry out the range and quantity of energy efficiency measures required.
- ! Cost of living crisis means homeowners and private landlords are unable to find available financing to participate in EES: ABS programmes or to carry out necessary upgrades themselves.
- ! Rising energy costs mean that the numbers of people in fuel poverty are likely to be higher than ever.
- ! Improving our understanding of private sector property condition, with less reliance on national survey data, is needed to guide our understanding of fuel poverty levels in East Renfrewshire.
- ! Improving the energy efficiency of our homes, will reduce the emissions of greenhouse gasses, and reduce how much energy is required to heat homes. By using less energy, the cost to the resident will be reduced, which could alleviate the pressures and, in some cases, lift people out of fuel poverty.

## **What We Will Do**

- 1. Identify projects to improve infrastructure for low carbon living in homes across all tenures, with a particular focus on Council and other social housing**
  - Work in collaboration with partners to deliver identified projects and actions in the Get to Zero Plan.



- Link in with related local strategies and action plans, such as LDP, local transport strategy, active travel plan and town centre action plans to collaboratively work towards improving local infrastructure.
- Development of a “sustainable” social housing demonstrator project in partnership, which encompasses a broad concept of sustainable living through which learning for future social housing developments can be shaped.

## **2. Support energy efficiency and low carbon heating in homes of all tenures**

- Implement the actions determined by the LHEES where the Council has been identified as a partner.
- Develop a business case to ensure new-build social housing meets net zero requirements for energy efficiency, construction impacts, electric vehicle charging and climate adaptation.
- Work towards ensuring maximum compliance with EESSH (council and partners) across social housing.
- Assess energy efficiency in Council housing to inform investment strategies to achieve the EESSH requirements.
- Improve energy efficiency across all tenures by maximising the use of national funding programmes, and supporting stakeholders across tenures to access this.
- Encourage and support home owners and private landlords to improve the energy efficiency of their properties and reduce emissions by ensuring access to good quality, easily accessible advice.

## **3. Target support towards households most impacted by the cost and health pressures of affordable warmth**

- Continue to monitor the impact of fuel poverty at a local level, and mitigate key triggers through targeted local campaigns.
- Use smart technology to monitor heating, dampness and other lifestyle factors, to inform advice and education for local households on achieving affordable warmth.
- Working alongside partners, continue to promote access to good quality fuel poverty and cost of living advice to East Renfrewshire residents.

## **4. Identify homes at risk of extreme weather (such as localised flooding, extreme heat, strong winds) and work to support these homes to adapt to the changing climate**

- Contribute to risk assessment studies of homes across East Renfrewshire to identify properties at risk from the changing climate.
- Provide support, including identifying funding from 3<sup>rd</sup> parties, to support properties identified at being ‘at risk’ to make adaptations for the changing climate.
- To provide generic support and advice to all households about the changing climate and adaptations that could be made to homes.

## **5. MONITORING PROGRESS**

### **Equalities**

An Equality, Fairness and Rights Impact Assessment has been carried out to ensure that our responsibilities to consider how we reduce inequalities, including those caused by socio-economic disadvantage, and to protect residents' rights, are reflected in the strategic approach that we have taken in the LHS. East Renfrewshire Councils' Equality Fairness and Rights Impact Assessment considers how the strategy can affect the needs of those protected by the Public Sector Equality Duty, the Fairer Scotland Duty and the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child. This is available with the full LHS online, or on request.

Findings from this assessment have been used throughout the development of this LHS and to inform the setting of priorities. We have reviewed the agreed outcomes and actions to ensure any negative impacts have been removed. The assessment does not identify any significantly adverse effects for particular equalities groups. Our strategy will impact upon the whole population of East Renfrewshire due to the scope of issues that it covers.

We will continue to consider the needs of the diverse groups living locally when developing new services, policies or communications over the lifetime of the LHS. Consultation has shown certain issues of importance such as accessibility of services and transparency around housing matters to all residents. The challenges surrounding housing supply and available of suitable housing options, affect many groups in different ways. These issues were universally felt most important across the local population, and these have been reflected in the vision and outcomes developed.

### **Strategic Environmental Assessment**

Pre-screening was completed and submitted to the Scottish Government's Strategic Environmental Gateway in preparing the draft strategy.

The Local Housing Strategy has minimal environmental impacts either directly or indirectly. Decisions and options surrounding new housing and strategic development sites are assessed and consulted on through the Local Development Plan process, through the recently adopted LDP2 and the emerging LDP3 coming forward over the lifetime of this LHS.

In improving the condition and energy efficiency of existing homes environmental impacts are already considered as part of the delivery programmes associated. Strong links will also be maintained to the Council’s Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategy and “Get to Zero” impact monitoring over the lifetime of the LHS.

## Annual Update

An action plan has been developed by the Council and partners to guide implementation of each of the Strategic Priorities. Each year, an update will be produced that outlines key achievements and progress made towards our commitments as a partnership. The update will also highlight any significant developments, identify any barriers to achievement and report on any change in approach required by the Council or our partners.



We will also communicate our progress annually with the community and other stakeholders who have helped co-produce our LHS, and invite them to work together with us on an ongoing basis to shape work towards our long term goals.

## LHS in Other Formats

This document is the full LHS. A summary of the strategy and our commitments is available.

We have also co-produced a visual storyboard concept with those who participated in developing our strategy. This is also available and is intended to make the conversation around our strategic housing priorities accessible and inclusive.

## **6. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- East Renfrewshire LHS 2024-29 - Engagement & Consultation Report
- East Renfrewshire LHS 2024-29 – ERC Housing Profile
- Accessible Housing Needs In East Renfrewshire Report & Action Plan – Housing LIN (2022)
- East Renfrewshire LHS 2024-29 Key Priorities Evidence Bank
- LHS Engagement Summer 2022 - Summary of Responses
- LHS 2024-29 - Equality Impact Assessment
- Strategic Environmental Assessment Pre-Screening Report
- Health & Social Care Strategic Plan Equality, Fairness and Rights Impact Assessment
- Link to local development plan 2

## 7. TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

We are committed to ensuring that we continue to respond to local housing issues over the lifetime of this strategy. We also want to build on the consultation and engagement with local residents that we have carried out in the development of this strategy.

- Would you like to tell us what you think about this strategy?
- Would you like to get more involved and have your say on housing matters in East Renfrewshire?

Contact us at:

Housing Strategy Team  
Housing Services  
East Renfrewshire Council  
211 Main Street  
Barrhead  
G78 1SY

Email: [housingserviceimprovement@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:housingserviceimprovement@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk)

Thank you for working with us to improve housing and housing related services across East Renfrewshire



**PRIORITY 1: ENOUGH OF THE RIGHT HOMES TO RENT OR BUY, IN THE PLACES WHERE WE NEED THEM**

National / Community Plan Outcome	Intermediate Outcome	Our Contribution	Critical Activities
<p><u>National Housing &amp; Regeneration</u></p> <p>Outcome 1: A Well-functioning Housing System</p> <p><u>Community Plan</u></p> <p>SO3: East Renfrewshire is a thriving, attractive and sustainable place for residents and businesses</p> <p><u>Key Targets</u></p> <p><b>Deliver at least 45 additional affordable homes rent and sale p.a. with ambition to exceed this*.</b></p> <p><i>(*will be firmed on setting of regional Housing Supply Targets)</i></p>	<p>East Renfrewshire residents have access to affordable housing that suits their needs, within their wider community.</p> <p><b>Critical Indicators:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No. of new homes built for sale and rent (ALL TENURES).</li> <li>• No. of homes provided for in identified housing land supply.</li> <li>• Affordable homes:                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) built or added to the local housing supply.</li> <li>b) delivered through innovative routes and partnership arrangements.</li> </ol> </li> <li>• No of long-term empty homes brought into effective use.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase the number and range of homes available, which are affordable to rent or buy and meet a range of local needs.</li> <li>2. Support a well-functioning local housing system by making best use of existing housing, and enabling households improved opportunities to</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the housing land supply, to ensure adequate developable land to meet identified need and demand for housing through the annual Housing Land Audit and forthcoming LDP3.</li> <li>• Support the provision of digital infrastructure as an integral part of new residential development.</li> <li>• Proactively identify sites and projects for delivery of affordable housing to achieve a robust future investment programme.</li> <li>• Identify options for delivery of new housing to rent and buy that enables movement around the local housing market for households at different life stages.</li> <li>• Work with private landlords to understand East Renfrewshire’s future private rental market and its role in meeting housing need.</li> <li>• Work in partnership to develop innovative proposals, which repurpose key brownfield land and town centre spaces, using place-making principles.</li> <li>• Use 20 minute neighbourhood principles to guide the location of new housing to sustainable locations, ensuring access to critical amenities such as school, transport and health services.</li> <li>• Develop an Empty Homes Strategy with the aim to ensure that best use is made of long term empty homes locally.</li> <li>• Review local social housing allocation policies to meet the most critical needs, whilst creating movement in the housing system</li> <li>• Development of a robust and accessible scheme for mutual exchanges across social housing partners, to support best use of existing homes.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Reduce the number of long term empty homes in East Renfrewshire</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No of homes provided for households seeking resettlement or asylum.</li> </ul>	<p>move to suitable housing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use 'buy back' schemes to tackle significant shortfalls in affordable housing of particular size, types and locations, and to support resettlement schemes.</li> </ul>
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**PRIORITY 2: HOMES THAT MEET A LIFETIME OF NEEDS, SUPPORTING RESIDENTS TO LIVE INDEPENDENTLY**

National / Community Plan Outcome	Intermediate Outcome	Our Contribution	Critical Activities
<p><u>National Housing &amp; Regeneration</u></p> <p>Outcome 3: Homes that meet people's needs</p> <p>Outcome 4: Sustainable Communities</p> <p><u>Community Plan</u></p> <p>SO4: East Renfrewshire residents are safe and live in supportive communities</p> <p>SO5: Older people and people with long term conditions in East Renfrewshire are valued; their voices are heard and they enjoy full and positive lives</p> <p><u>Key Targets</u></p>	<p>East Renfrewshire residents live in housing that suits their needs, with access to support required to maintain their independence for as long as possible.</p> <p>Critical Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of new homes/ affordable homes built to wheelchair or adaptable standard.</li> <li>No. of adaptations completed by tenure.</li> <li>Time taken to complete adaptations from assessment of need.</li> <li>No. of households receiving telecare.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work to ensure that wheelchair and accessible housing is designed and built to a high standard that meets local need.</li> <li>Work together to identify emerging needs at an early stage and ensure this influences planning ahead around new development, rehousing and adaptations</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work in partnership with the planning service and developers to influence house building in East Renfrewshire so that it delivers a housing mix that meets existing residents' identified needs.</li> <li>Ensure all affordable homes are built to the revised Housing for Varying Needs Standard, with an agreed minimum % of all new homes built to a wheelchair and adaptable standard over time.</li> <li>Work in collaboration with partners to develop an East Renfrewshire prototype of new build design for lifetime needs.</li> <li>Together Housing, Health and Social Work partners work better together to share information and plan effectively to meet individual needs.</li> <li>Work proactively to support households known to our services, and who are impacted by lifelong and limiting conditions, to plan ahead for their changing housing and support needs.</li> <li>Review existing models of social housing designed for the elderly and others who require assisted living, to ensure they are fit for the future, with modern space technology and design considerations.</li> </ul>



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<p><b>10% of all new homes for rent and sale are built to wheelchair or adaptable standard.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No of households using Care and Repair and Small Repairs Services.</li> </ul>	<p>3. Review adaptations services to ensure they are responsive, reflective of local need and support an early intervention and preventative approach</p> <p>4. Review the availability and quality of information and advice on offer to ensure service users and carers feel able to make choices for themselves, based on realistic options.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop opportunities with partners for the delivery of assistive digital technology in social housing</li> <li>Review the range of adaptations that are available for people with cognitive, neurodiversity and complex challenges.</li> <li>Consider how policies and budgets within the Scheme of Assistance could be updated to reflect growing requirements for accessible housing linked to cognitive and mental health needs, and children with complex needs.</li> <li>Review the availability of information and advice to ensure it is proactive and comprehensive and allows people to access it at an appropriate time.</li> <li>Work in partnership to ensure that access to and delivery of advice and support is consistent and person centred.</li> <li>Work closely with charities and other specialist organisations to gain expert advice.</li> <li>Develop a planning ahead campaign to encourage residents to plan ahead in terms of their housing needs.</li> </ul>
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**PRIORITY 3: WORKING TOGETHER TO DELIVER THE ADVICE AND SUPPORT PEOPLE NEED, WHEN THEY NEED IT**

National / Community Plan Outcome	Intermediate Outcome	Our Contribution	Critical Activities
<p><u>National Housing &amp; Regeneration</u></p> <p>Outcome 3: Homes that meet people’s needs</p> <p>Outcome 4: Sustainable Communities</p> <p><u>Community Plan</u></p> <p>SO4: East Renfrewshire residents are safe and live in supportive communities</p> <p><u>Key Targets</u></p> <p><b>20% reduction in households assessed as homeless due to</b></p>	<p>People who need support to find a home, or are at risk of losing their home, can access the right advice and services when they need them.</p> <p>Critical Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Satisfaction with housing options advice service</li> <li>• Households prevented from housing crisis through preventative housing options advice and support</li> <li>• No of Homeless / Repeat Homelessness applications decreasing</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Deliver accessible, comprehensive, effective and consistent housing advice and support to households.</li> <li>2. Embed a preventative approach to finding and sustaining a home, and supporting frontline services in delivery of this.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work robustly with our partners to increase access to quality, accessible housing advice and support, including a “trusted expert” approach and independent advocacy where required.</li> <li>• Increase visibility of housing advice services in the local area, reducing barriers to support and providing earlier intervention.</li> <li>• Invest in continuous and progressive training for staff delivering housing advice services across East Renfrewshire to ensure knowledge is broad and up to date, and relevant across a range of circumstances.</li> <li>• Roll out digital capability that provides modern services and access to information for those seeking a home, or at risk of losing their home.</li> <li>• Improve joint working through a social landlords’ Neighbourhood Housing Officer Network to share knowledge of neighbourhood issues and local services, and target assistance to households at the earliest stage.</li> <li>• Deliver access to mediation services to help resolve household conflict placing people at risk of housing crisis, and to build healthy relationships.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>successful prevention activity.</b></p> <p><b>Ongoing reduction in the length of time households are homeless awaiting rehousing.</b></p> <p><b>A year on year reduction in the average time spent in temporary accommodation for households who require it.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Average length of stay in temporary accommodation</li> <li>• % of households with support needs accepting support</li> <li>• Tenancies sustained for more than 12 months, or moving on to positive destinations (homeless and non-homeless origins)</li> </ul>	<p>3. Deliver a redesign of homelessness and housing allocations services which reflects the expressed needs of service users and other stakeholders.</p> <p>4. Remodel temporary accommodation options to meet demands from households facing crisis, or requiring proactive resettlement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with HSCP and other partners to target specialist support to young people and those with complex needs arising from addictions or mental health, which put them at risk of housing crisis.</li> <li>• Work closely with private landlords to monitor the impact of changing standards, requirements around rent setting and evictions, and the ongoing role of the private rented sector in providing a key housing option for local residents.</li> <li>• Use proactive engagement with service users to obtain essential feedback, and support continuing development of services through a “Service Design” approach.</li> <li>• Develop a trauma informed approach amongst staff dealing with service users, which prioritises a “Culture of Care”.</li> <li>• Develop an effective and independent peer support service for households faced with homelessness.</li> <li>• Simplify existing social housing allocations policies and processes <u>for customers</u> to make them easier to understand and navigate, provide transparency in decision making, and support clearer expectations.</li> <li>• Work with HSCP to deliver rapid access accommodation to reduce reliance on B&amp;B, and meet the requirements of the unsuitable accommodation order.</li> <li>• Pilot a small Housing First service with wrap around support for those households facing repeat homelessness and with the most complex needs.</li> <li>• Ensure our approach to rehousing homeless households minimises time in temporary accommodation, and supports a range of options for securing appropriate settled accommodation.</li> </ul>
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**PRIORITY 4: GOOD QUALITY HOMES (AND NEIGHBOURHOODS), IMPROVING STANDARDS ACROSS EAST RENFREWSHIRE**

National / Community Plan Outcome	Intermediate Outcome	Our Contribution	Critical Activities
<p><u>National Housing &amp; Regeneration</u></p> <p>Outcome 2: High Quality Sustainable Homes</p> <p>Outcome 4: Sustainable Communities</p> <p><u>Community Plan</u></p> <p>SO3: East Renfrewshire is a thriving, attractive and sustainable place for residents and businesses</p> <p><u>Key Targets</u></p>	<p>East Renfrewshire residents live in good quality homes, in neighbourhoods where they feel connected, safe and secure.</p> <p>Critical Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of Council and RSL homes meeting SHQS / EESSH standards.</li> <li>• % of owners participating in capital programme works</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maximise standards within social housing locally, in line with national targets for housing quality and energy efficiency.</li> <li>2. Gain improved insight into the condition of privately owned and rented homes, to guide services and support required locally to</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review our asset management plans to prioritise available investment towards quality, safety and future of existing social rented housing, and compliance with the Scottish Housing Quality Standard.</li> <li>• Proactively consider options for rebuild or remodelling of socially rented housing stock which cannot meet future standards, or costs are prohibitive to do so.</li> <li>• Use modern technology to enable investment in homes that face issues that most impact the health of households, such as condensation and dampness.</li> <li>• Improve the information we have about activity in the private rented sector as landlords consider future investment in their homes, as well as the profile of households living in the sector.</li> <li>• Review our Private Sector Scheme of Assistance to determine what type of support can be given to improving standards</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Social Housing compliance with property condition standards is maximised year on year.</b></p> <p><b>Establish a reliable baseline for private property compliance with condition standards, to work towards improvements.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % tenants satisfied with housing quality</li> <li>• % of tenants satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live.</li> <li>• Reduction in failed offers of social housing citing unsuitability due to location.</li> <li>• No of private rented homes registered in the area.</li> </ul>	<p>achieve cross tenure housing standards.</p> <p>3. Support investment programmes and local initiatives which support welcoming, sustainable and connected communities.</p>	<p>within private sector housing, towards emerging national standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch a “Planning Ahead” vision for housing in East Renfrewshire which includes encouraging and supporting owners and private landlords, to plan for future investment required in their homes.</li> <li>• Use the outcomes of targeted condition surveys to establish private homes which are below minimum standard, and where necessary use enforcement powers to ensure homes are fit for use.</li> <li>• Undertake an options appraisal to consider homes in mixed estates that cannot currently be made fit for the future, because they are costly or difficult to modernise, and develop a multi-tenure plan in partnership with key stakeholders.</li> <li>• Use place-making principles in the improvement of local neighbourhoods, in partnership with and to reflect the priorities local communities have identified for regeneration of their areas.</li> <li>• Work in collaboration with partners and local communities to implement the place-making local action plans.</li> <li>• Enable local communities to influence improvements in their areas through regular provision of Neighbourhood Inspections, Housing Surgeries and other robust engagement mechanisms.</li> <li>• Support improvements championed by local communities which improve sustainability and connectedness, through participatory budgeting schemes for our tenants.</li> <li>• Provide an increased presence in local neighbourhoods through our local Neighbourhood Housing Officer network, to</li> </ul>
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			help identify and address anti-social and estate management issues at an early stage.
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**PRIORITY 5: EAST RENFREWSHIRE’S CARBON FOOTPRINT, MAKING IMPROVEMENTS TO OUR HOMES AND REDUCING ENERGY USAGE**

National / Community Plan Outcome	Intermediate Outcome	Our Contribution	Critical Activities
<p><u>National Housing &amp; Regeneration</u></p> <p>Outcome 2: High Quality Sustainable Homes</p> <p>Outcome 4: Sustainable Communities</p> <p><u>Community Plan</u></p>	<p>Homes are warm, energy efficient, affordable to run, and their carbon footprint is minimised.</p> <p>Critical Indicators:</p>	<p>1. Identify projects to improve infrastructure for low-carbon living in homes across all tenures, with a particular focus on Council and other social housing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work in collaboration with partners to deliver identified projects and actions in the Get to Zero Plan.</li> <li>• Link in with related local strategies and action plans, such as LDP, local transport strategy, active travel plan and town centre action plans to collaboratively work towards improving local infrastructure.</li> <li>• Development of a “sustainable” social housing demonstrator project in partnership, which encompasses a broad concept of sustainable living through which learning for future social housing developments can be shaped.</li> </ul>

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<p>SO3: East Renfrewshire is a thriving, attractive and sustainable place for residents and businesses</p> <p><u>Key Targets</u></p> <p><b>% of socially rented properties meeting energy standards is maximised.</b></p> <p><b>% of new homes built to silver and gold building standards.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of local households experiencing fuel poverty.</li> <li>• % of Council and RSL homes meeting EESSH standards.</li> <li>• No of households receiving measures through ECO-Flex/ LA-Flex energy improvement schemes</li> <li>• No of new build homes built to silver and gold building standards.</li> </ul>	<p>2. Support energy efficiency and low-carbon heating in homes of all tenures.</p> <p>3. Target support towards households most impacted by the cost and health pressures of affordable warmth.</p> <p>4. Identify homes at risk of extreme weather (such as localised flooding, extreme heat, strong winds) and work to support these homes to adapt</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement the actions determined by the LHEES where the Council has been identified as a partner.</li> <li>• Develop a business case to ensure new-build social housing meets net zero requirements for energy efficiency, construction impacts, electric vehicle charging and climate adaptation.</li> <li>• Work towards ensuring maximum compliance with EESSH (council and partners) across social housing.</li> <li>• Assess energy efficiency in Council housing to inform investment strategies to achieve the EESSH requirements.</li> <li>• Improve energy efficiency across all tenures by maximising the use of national funding programmes, and supporting stakeholders across tenures to access this.</li> <li>• Encourage and support home owners and private landlords to improve the energy efficiency of their properties and reduce emissions by ensuring access to good quality, easily accessible advice.</li> <li>• Continue to monitor the impact of fuel poverty at a local level, and mitigate key triggers through targeted local campaigns.</li> <li>• Use smart technology to monitor heating, dampness and other lifestyle factors, to inform advice and education for local households on achieving affordable warmth.</li> <li>• Working alongside partners, continue to promote access to good quality fuel poverty and cost of living advice to East Renfrewshire residents.</li> <li>• Contribute to risk assessment studies of homes across East Renfrewshire to identify properties at risk from the changing climate.</li> <li>• Provide support, including identifying funding from 3<sup>rd</sup> parties, to support properties identified at being 'at risk' to make adaptations for the changing climate.</li> </ul>
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		to the changing climate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To provide generic support and advice to all households about the changing climate and adaptations that could be made to homes.</li></ul>
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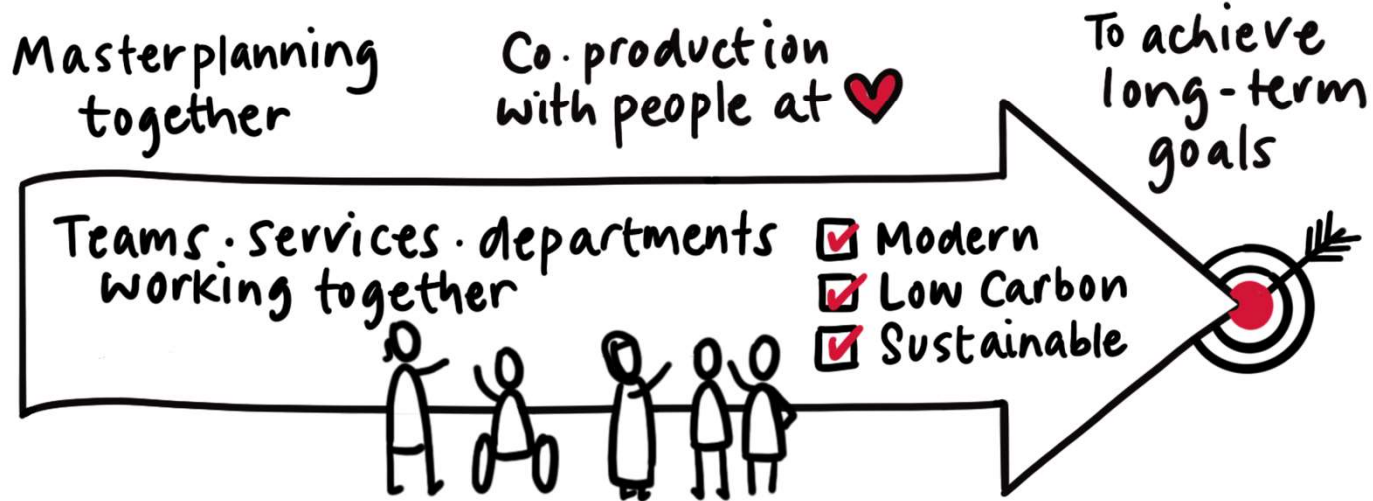
# A WELCOME HOME

LOCAL HOUSING VISION · STRATEGY · PRIORITIES



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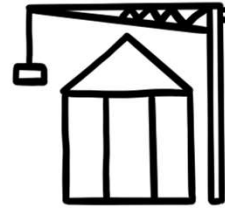
Advice and support to find a home

Thriving, welcoming, connected communities

# ENOUGH of the RIGHT HOMES to RENT or BUY in the PLACES WHERE we NEED THEM



Waiting list growing faster than new homes can be built

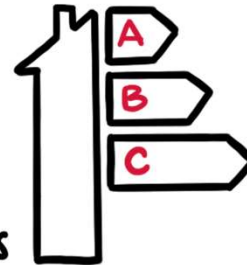


LAND for BUILDING  
Privately owned



Many ER homes = expensive and owner occupied

Need to invest in social homes to meet new standards



SHRINKING LOCAL GOVT BUDGET

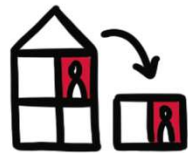
next...



- Empty Homes Strategy
- Buy Back
- Repurposing
- Town Centre Living
- Exchanges



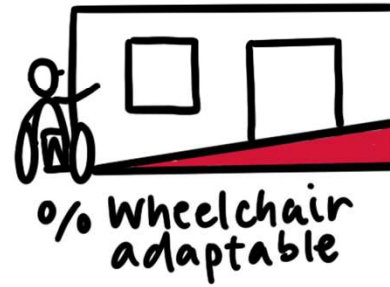
range of housing



downsizing



# HOMES that meet a LIFETIME of NEEDS, Supporting RESIDENTS to LIVE INDEPENDENTLY



Innovative and adaptable to health and ability



Encourage people to plan ahead for changing needs



Encourage developers to build homes to meet residents' needs



Adapt existing homes for different needs



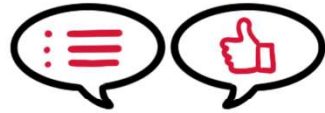
Focus on most critical needs and create movement in the housing system



# WORKING TOGETHER to DELIVER the ADVICE and SUPPORT PEOPLE NEED, WHEN THEY NEED IT



People centred services



Clear, consistent messaging and language



Transparent systems and processes



Remove barriers to access and support



ACCESSIBLE ADVICE and SUPPORT  
Trusted experts and independent advocates to increase access to quality housing

CULTURE CHANGE - Planning for the future



Keeping staff skills up-to-date



Design homelessness services to better meet users' needs

We will SUPPORT PEOPLE to...



**PREVENTING** a HOUSING CRISIS

# GOOD QUALITY HOMES (+ neighbourhoods) IMPROVING STANDARDS across East Renfrewshire

 +  +   
Many owner occupiers + Ageing population + Low or fixed income

**CROSS TENURE HOUSING STANDARD (proposed)** Owners, private and social Landlords

How will private landlords let homes in the future? 

Construction industry challenges 

MASTER PLANNING a holistic community approach with partners and residents  
Working with:

 →  Repurposing existing stock

COMMUNITIES to be  
◦ THRIVING  
◦ RESILIENT  
◦ SUSTAINABLE

HOME OWNERS and LANDLORDS  


   
Existing investment to maintain future proof social housing

# East Renfrewshire's CARBON FOOTPRINT

## Making IMPROVEMENTS to our HOMES

### REDUCING ENERGY USAGE



Working with partner organisations



Better data collection



#### TIPS ON...

- Mitigating fuel poverty
- Energy efficiency
- Cost of Living



micro

high level



LOCAL HEAT and ENERGY EFFICIENCY STRATEGY



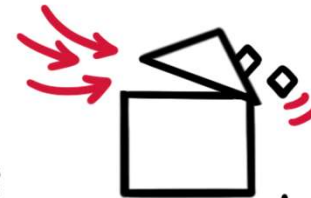
MAXIMUM EESSH COMPLIANCE



flooding



extreme heat



strong winds