



North Ayrshire
Community Planning Partnership

CPP Senior Officers Group

Thursday 27 April 2023 at 2.15 pm on Microsoft Teams

AGENDA

Time	No.	Page	Item	Presenter	Ask of CPP Partners
2.15 – 2.20	1.	-	Welcome and Apologies	Superintendent Derek Frew, Police Scotland	
2.20 – 2.30	2.	Pg 3	Minutes and Action Note from Last Meeting Discuss Minute and Action Note from meeting on 16 March 2023 (copy enclosed).	Superintendent Derek Frew, Police Scotland	Is this an accurate record of the meeting? Have all actions been completed?
WORLD					
2.30 – 2.50	3.	-	Active Travel Receive an update from Claire Fitzsimmons, Interim Senior Manager, Regeneration.	Claire Fitzsimmons, Interim Senior Manager, Regeneration, North Ayrshire Council.	Receive update and discuss future opportunities.
2.50 - 3.10	4.	Pg 8	Local Housing Strategy 2023 - 2028 Receive update from Yvonne Baulk and Fiona Ellis. <i>NAC are still waiting on feedback from our peer review by the Scottish Government which is expected towards the end of April and that the document will be updated thereafter.</i>	Yvonne Baulk, Head of Service, Housing and Public Protection, North Ayrshire Council and Fiona Ellis, Senior Manager Housing Strategy and Development, North Ayrshire Council.	Receive update and discuss future opportunities.
WELLBEING					
3.10 - 3.30	5.	-	Child Poverty and Cost of Living Receive update from Audrey Sutton	Audrey Sutton, Executive Director, Communities & Education.	Receive update and continue to support reducing Child Poverty in North Ayrshire.
GOVERNANCE					

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3.30 – 3.50	6.	-	Engagement Centre of Excellence Receive update from Jacqui Greenlees	Jacqui Greenlees, Senior Manager, Policy, Performance and Community Planning, North Ayrshire Council.	Receive update.
3.50 – 4.15	7.	-	Partner Discussion on Plans, Challenges and Requests for Support	All	Partners share plans, challenges, and requests for partner support
4.15 – 4.20	8.	-	AOCB	All	
FOR REFERENCE					
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LOIP on a page Minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IJB Minutes • Arran LP • Garnock Valley LP • Irvine LP • Kilwinning LP • North Coast LP • Three Towns LP 		



North Ayrshire
Community Planning Partnership

Meeting:	CPP Senior Officers Group
Date/Venue:	Thursday 16 March 2023 at 11.00 am on Microsoft Teams
Present:	<p>Derek Frew, Police Scotland (Chair) Paul Blackwood, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service Brian Connolly, Scottish Enterprise Jacqui Greenlees, North Ayrshire Council Andrew McClelland, North Ayrshire Council Russell McCutcheon, North Ayrshire Council Ian McMeekin, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service Audrey Sutton, North Ayrshire Council Elaine Young, NHS Ayrshire, and Arran</p> <p>In Attendance:</p> <p>Agnes Piatek-Bednarek, North Ayrshire Council (Item 3) Jennifer McGee, North Ayrshire Council (Notes)</p>
Apologies:	<p>Caroline Cameron, North Ayrshire HSCP Kaileigh Brown, The Ayrshire Community Trust Anne Campbell, Ayrshire College Rhonda Leith, North Ayrshire Council</p>

No.	Item	Responsible
1.	<p>Welcome</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted.</p>	Noted
2.	<p>Minute of Previous Meeting and Action Note</p> <p>Minutes from the meeting held on 24 November 2022 were approved and updates on the action tracker were provided.</p>	Noted
3.	<p>Climate Change Steering Group</p> <p>Agnes Piatek-Bednarek provided Senior Officer with an update on the work of the Climate Change Steering Group.</p> <p>A Piatek-Bednarek advised Senior Officers that the Climate Change Steering Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts as a sounding board and critical friend to support and challenge the implementation of the North Ayrshire Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy. • Bring ideas, lessons learned and best practice from elsewhere in the UK and internationally around climate change mitigation and adaption. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise on approach to achieving net zero carbon by 2030. Contribute wider policy knowledge on the sustainability and climate change. Promote North Ayrshire's actions on climate change. Contributes to the review and refresh of the North Ayrshire Council Environmental and Climate Change Strategy as required. <p>A Piatek-Bednarek highlighted that the vision of the Steering Group is for a sustainable, climate ready North Ayrshire where we all play our part as a local authority, business, school, community group or individual. Working in Partnership is key to delivering our net zero carbon ambitions.</p> <p>A Piatek-Bednarek advised Senior Officers what there are even workstreams, each with actions which have been developed into a roadmap illustrating how net-zero Carbon status will be achieved by 2030. The workstreams are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable warmth A Green economy Transport and travel Natural environment Sustainable operations Climate change adaptation Emissions absorption <p>A Piatek-Bednarek also advised that, since 2005 area-wide emissions in North Ayrshire have reduced by 49%.</p> <p>E Young commented that in terms of all three themes of the LOIP, are we as a CPP looking at the golden threads between the themes and collaboratively agreeing what we are working on as a priority.</p> <p>A Sutton commented that from a North Ayrshire perspective, we are in the early stages of a creating a new Council Plan and the LOIP fits in closely with this.</p> <p>R McCutcheon commented that the three LOIP themes are very important, and it is important that we triangulate everything we do would add more value.</p> <p>A Piatek-Bednarek highlighted in sustainability is very complex, however it is all connected with all the work we do such as poverty and climate change.</p> <p>The Chair thanked A Piatek-Bednarek for her update.</p>	Noted
5.	<p>Wellbeing Alliance</p> <p>Malcolm McPhail provided Senior Officers with an update on the work of the Health and Wellbeing Alliance.</p> <p>M McPhail highlighted that the Covid-19 pandemic, energy crisis and cost of living crisis has accelerated the appetite for local authorities and their partners to look at leisure services more broadly and re-examine purpose of their provision. The key consideration is aligning the broader strategic outcomes, particularly Health and Wellbeing. In North Ayrshire, the establishment of the Health and Wellbeing Alliance (HWBA) by consensus is the chosen approach to actively deploy transformational change in relation to strategy, partnership relationships, programming, and monitoring.</p> <p>M McPhail advised that a HWBA Steering Group has been formed and is making good progress in shaping the landscape for the new HWBA Board. The Terms of Reference for the Board have generally been accepted with a few minor adjustments to be approved. It is anticipated that the Steering Group will be</p>	

	<p>looking to establish the HWBA Board by mid-summer and the Working Group soon after with initial pilot programmes in place by late summer/early autumn.</p> <p>E Young commented that wellbeing is everyone's business, and we are seeing more partners articulate their contribution in terms of national and local strategies/conversation.</p> <p>The Chair thanked M McPhail for his update.</p>	Noted
7.	<p>Child Poverty and Cost of Living</p> <p>A Sutton provided Senior Officers with an update on Child Poverty and Cost of Living.</p> <p>A Sutton advised Senior Officers that in terms of progress, the mini enquiry action plans have been drafted based on the three thematic approaches: - No Wrong Door, Employability, Food and two locality approaches; – North Ayrshire Islands: Arran and Cumbrae.</p> <p>A Sutton also advised that £80,000 (£63,000 Resource and £17,000 Capital) of funding has been received from the Scottish Government for both Arran and Cumbrae. The funding will be used to target immediate need and help those who are struggling due to the cost crisis and for existing schemes and/or other new support where they feel the need is greatest.</p> <p>A Sutton highlighted that the Council are developing a 'tell us once' approach where information is shared between services and partners to prevent duplication alongside automation of benefits and the use of data.</p> <p>A Sutton also highlighted the resources being developed for all partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postcards for use by all partners • Video case studies • Roadshows in localities – welcome support of all partners • Support Q&As next steps: • Review of mini-enquiry action plans with partners • Report on progress • Identify appropriate KPIs • Child Poverty Report and Action Plan to Cabinet, IJB and CPP Board before summer recess • Locality mini-enquiries and local action plans. <p>P Blackwood commented that Scottish Fire and Rescue will be providing welfare packs and crisis boxes for those in need and will be available from the 27 stations across Ayrshire. A Sutton advised that she will link P Blackwood in with Donna Morrison around contributing period products for the welfare packs/ crisis boxes.</p> <p>The Chair thanked A Sutton for her presentation.</p>	<p>A Sutton</p> <p>Noted</p>
8.	<p>Peoples Panel 2022</p> <p>Jennifer McGee provided Senior Officer with a presentation on the outcomes of the Peoples Panel for 2022.</p> <p>The presentation highlighted that 622 panel members responded to the 2022 People's Panel survey. This was significantly lower than the 2020 survey, however it was the first since survey since the pandemic and a lot of the trends reflected this.</p>	

	<p>The survey was split in to six themes: - digital access, fair for all, wellbeing and safety, community and views on aspects Council performance and communication. An overview of the results for each of the six themes were provided.</p> <p>J McGee advised that in terms of next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The full report would be shared on the CPP Website • Contact would be made with services that had questions included in the survey. • Creation a 'you said we did' document. • Creation a new action plan. • Peoples Panel Membership Refresh. <p>R McCutcheon and A Sutton asked if it would be possible to have a copy of the report. J Greenlees advised that she would forward this on to them both.</p> <p>The Chair thanked J McGee for her presentation.</p>	<p>J Greenlees</p> <p>Noted</p>
9.	<p>AOCB</p> <p>A Sutton advised that she met with the Improvement Service around looking at the information we have rather than the data we have to inform our immediate cross cutting actions. The Improvement Service are interested in us looking at this from a partnership environment and looking at information to inform interventions rather than reporting data.</p> <p>There was also discussion around the setting up a potential pathfinder project in North Ayrshire which would be supported by the Transformation Team and partners.</p> <p>Senior Officers were happy to support this work.</p>	<p>Noted</p>



North Ayrshire
Community Planning Partnership

Community Planning Senior Officers Group Action Tracker 2023

No	Date of Meeting	Action	Responsible	Notes for April meeting
1.	16.06.22	Update on the creation of a CPP Menu.	J Greenlees	Scheduled for a future meeting
2.	16.06.22	Update to be provided on functions referred to by the Council to the LPs.	A Sutton	Scheduled for future meeting.
3.	24.11.22	Update on SPA Pilot in Fullarton, Irvine	A Sutton/D Frew	Update will be provided when appropriate.
4.	26.01.23	Discuss how Green Health work links in with LOIP Impact Tool.	J Greenlees	Meeting to be arranged with Green Health Team
5.	26.01.23	Senior Officers approved using ALISS programme for Community Directory.	J Greenlees	CPP Team are currently obtaining quotes from local companies to build this in to current CPP website.
6.	26.01.23	Impact and good ways of working - joint quarterly locality network meetings	R Leith	Update will be brought to a future meeting.
7.	16.03.23	Copy of Peoples Panel report to be forwarded to A Sutton and R McCutcheon.	J Greenlees	Action complete.



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

North Ayrshire Council Draft Local Housing Strategy 2023 - 2028



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Welcome

We want all our people to live in the right homes, in great places, with access to any support services they need.

To achieve this ambition, we (the Council) have agreed four overarching outcomes with local people. Each of the chapters in this document is based on one of those outcomes, the delivery of which is supported by an action plan. While most actions are designed to apply to the area as a whole – some locations face unique challenges. In those cases, we have identified area-specific actions. This is particularly true for our island communities.

Throughout this document, we have used plain English and avoided ‘jargon’. We have included links to supporting documents and where terms may be unfamiliar to the reader, definitions are provided by placing the cursor over the word in question.

When developing this strategy, we complied with guidance and legislation. We have also made sure we have linked into the wider strategic landscape - in particular, the four key strategies detailed within the Housing to 2040 Scottish Government national strategy. This ensures the strategy is robust, fit for purpose and supports and promotes fairness and equality to everyone in our area.

Our places support thriving and inclusive communities

Our homes are in good condition and people can access any support services they need

Our people have affordable homes in the place they choose to live

Our homes are energy efficient and release less emissions

Housing to 2040

This Local Housing Strategy mirrors the format of the national housing strategy ‘[Housing to 2040](#)’, described as the “first ever long-term national housing strategy” which sets out a national vision for what housing “should look like and how it will be provided to the people of Scotland”. Recognising the links between good housing, vibrant communities, and health and wellbeing outcomes, the programmes set out in ‘Housing to 2040’ are seen as crucial to Scotland’s recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. There are four main ‘parts’ in the national strategy, each with its own overarching priority outcome, which we have adopted, to ensure the best housing outcomes for our people. North Ayrshire Council Plan 2019-2024

The [Council Plan](#) sets out the policy direction for our local area, against two main objectives 1) 'Aspiring Communities' – “active and strong communities where children and young people experience the best start in life...[which] have a growing...economy,...people enjoy good life-long health and well-being,...[and] are safe”, and 2) 'Inspiring Place' - effective infrastructure, digital connectivity; affordable modern and well-designed homes that meet resident's needs; vibrant welcoming and attractive places; and a sustainable environment.

Locality Plans

Locality planning is one of the ways local communities can work with public and third sector organisations to improve peoples' lives and neighbourhoods. This approach focusses on 'reducing inequalities' and 'enabling communities to participate in neighbourhood decisions.' Each of our localities has a plan that sets out the specific priorities for that area.

Strategic Commissioning Plan

Our Health and Social Care Partnership works to ensure that people living, working within and visiting North Ayrshire have access to the support and services they require when needed. How the partnership works together to deliver high quality, safe and sustainable care, is set out within their [Strategic Commissioning Plan](#) for North Ayrshire.

There are a range of strategic plans and policies which inform the LHS and which will help deliver key strands of the action plan as detailed below.

TABLE 1: OTHER STRATEGIC INFLUENCES (NB: THIS LIST IS NOT INTENDED TO BE EXHAUSTIVE)

National Policy	Local Policy
Creating Places	Safer North Ayrshire Strategy
Designing Streets	North Ayrshire Community Wealth Building
Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH)	Economic Development and Regeneration Strategy 2016-25
Getting it Right for Every Child	North Ayrshire Local Outcomes Improvement Plan
Green Infrastructure: Design and Placemaking	North Ayrshire Health & Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan "Caring Together"
'Housing to 2040'	Empowering Inclusion Independent Advocacy Strategic Plan 2019-2021
National Planning Framework	Reshaping Care for Older People in Ayrshire and Arran
Place Principle	North Ayrshire Children's Services Plan
Planning Advice Note 77: Designing Safer Places	North Ayrshire Health & Social Care Partnership Organisation Development Strategy 2018-2021
Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS)	Local Development Plan
Scottish Planning Policy	Open Space Strategy

Collaboration

It is those who live or work in North Ayrshire that are best placed to help us identify local challenges and solutions. Our strategy has been developed in collaboration with our communities, our community planning partners, and the organisations involved in supplying housing and housing support services.

Our community involvement is founded on the 'National Standards of Community Engagement.' The standards have been woven into our consultation process and have ensured our engagement approach of 'Opportunity and Influence' has been realised.

Influence is the power our people have, to shape and inform policy through their comments, views, and feedback. Opportunity has been maximised by providing a range of ways in which our stakeholders can engage with us. Below is a summary of the consultation methods used to inform the development of this strategy.

TABLE 2: HOW WE CONSULTED DURING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS STRATEGY

METHOD	HNDA	IMPACT ASSESSMENT	LHS
Discussion Groups	-	✓	✓
Focus Groups	-	✓	✓
Interviews	-	✓	✓
Professional Review	✓	✓	✓
Social Media	✓	✓	✓
Survey	-	✓	✓
Strategic Partnership Groups	✓	✓	✓
Targeted Stakeholders	✓	✓	✓
Tenant Participation (RTOs)	✓	✓	✓
Website	✓	✓	✓
Webinar/Workshops	✓	✓	✓

Meaningful and inclusive engagement will continue to be the foundation of everything we do during the lifetime of this strategy. This means ongoing tenant participation, resident collaboration in development and regeneration programmes, as well as opportunities for tenant led budgeting and business planning.



We will	Where	Building on	By	And know we are successful if/when
Ensure our tenants decide how all the monies allocated to the annual 'tenant led' budget is spent	across our area	existing policy & procedure / systems & services	2023	100% of the spend of money allocated for tenant led budgeting has been decided by our tenants
Submit our annual business plan to our tenant led 'Housing Business Plan Group' for approval	across our area	existing policy & procedure / systems & services	2023	100% of our business plans are approved by our tenant representatives
Ensure tenants inform and influence our estate-based regeneration programme	across our area	existing policy & procedure / systems & services	2023	100% of EBRP have a project specific newsletter published which summarises resident feedback and our response
Refresh our Tenant Participation Strategy to focus on ways hard to reach groups can have the same opportunity and influence as anyone else in our area	across our area	our award-winning tenant participation approach	2023	a refreshed Tenant Participation Strategy is adopted by the Cabinet of North Ayrshire Council
Publish annual performance updates and issue to our tenants by email, social media and on our website	across our area	existing policy & procedure / systems & services	every October	our annual performance information has been published
Update the North Ayrshire Network on our performance against the Charter twice yearly	across the area	existing policy & procedure / systems & services	May & January	the North Ayrshire Network has received its six-monthly update

Impact

We have undertaken a range of impact assessments relevant to the development of this strategy to ensure that fairness and equality were part of our policy planning throughout. These assessments have been drawn together into a single document for ease of reference. 'Assessing Strategic Impact: Local Housing Strategy 2023-2028' [\(add link after all consultation complete\)](#). Below is a summary of impact assessments undertaken:

- **Child Rights and Wellbeing:** The policy direction in our strategy will have an indirect impact on the lives of our children but will nonetheless, have a positive impact on their lives and wellbeing, either by improving living conditions, providing mechanisms to alleviate poverty, or providing child friendly estates
- **Equality:** The strategy has been assessed as having no negative or discriminatory aspects and many positive impacts on the equality groups
- **Health Inequalities:** This strategy has been assessed as promoting positive health outcomes for local people
- **Human Rights:** The Local Housing Strategy is the 'parent' strategy for, and will direct the provision of, housing related plans and policies in the area for the period 2023-2028. We have assessed our policy direction against human rights considerations and are confident this document continues to protect these rights for the people of North Ayrshire
- **Islands:** Our islands impact assessment has helped 'island-proof' our strategy and ensure that policies meet the needs of our island communities. Whilst policy interventions in our strategy are intended to be rolled out across the whole of North Ayrshire, in some instances, island specific interventions have been identified to address island specific challenges
- **Strategic Environmental Assessment Pre-Screening Notification:** Submitted to the Scottish Government, noting that we had concluded our strategy is not likely to have any significant environmental effects (which are not already subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment elsewhere), and for this reason will not require a full strategic environmental assessment to be carried out. No further action requested by the SEA Gateway.

Evidence

This strategy is based on our [Housing Need & Demand Assessment 2020](#) which has been designated as 'robust and credible' by the Scottish Government. Where figures are provided in this document, unless stated otherwise, they have been taken from the Housing Need & Demand Assessment. We have also carried out additional research as part of our collaboration approach, and corroborated feedback has been woven into this document.

Resources

We have developed our strategy mindful of the finite resources which are available to us. It is for this reason that value for money, economies of scale and pooling resources across partners underpin our goals. Our strategy supports our 'Community Wealth Building' approach to economic recovery in the area.

Progress

This is not our first local housing strategy, and we cannot move forward without considering and building on the progress we have already made. We have strived to continually improve our performance, learned lessons from the range of work and projects we have undertaken, and shared good practice along the way. The previous North Ayrshire Local Housing Strategy (2018-2022) set out a series of commitments against five outcomes. We have summarised our achievements against these priority areas of Supply, Condition, Place, Homelessness, and Support.

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Supply: The supply of housing meets the needs and aspirations of local people

- ✓ Increased the supply of land available for housing through the allocation of additional sites within our Local Development Plan s
- ✓ Over 800 new social rented homes were built across our area (by the Council and our partners)
- ✓ Purchased 28 second-hand properties for use as social housing
- ✓ Purchased 19 empty homes and brought them back into use
- ✓ Reviewed our affordable housing policies and removed the requirement for developer contributions
- ✓ Reviewed, revised, and relaunched the North Ayrshire Allocation Policy
- ✓ Revised our Council housing rent structure, in consultation with our tenants
- ✓ Introduced a Local Lettings Initiative on Arran
- ✓ Provided the North Ayrshire Empty Homes Loan Fund in partnership with the Scottish Government
- ✓ Addressed the stock mismatch on Cumbrae by increasing all housing types, but focusing on the provision of 20 new amenity homes
- ✓ Initiated a new self-build approach that will see six fully serviced plots for sale in Largs

Condition: People live in good quality homes that they can afford to heat

- ✓ Reviewed and refreshed our Scheme of Assistance
- ✓ Established a 'multi-agency' task force who work together to address complex property condition issues in the private sector
- ✓ Introduced a new 'Missing Shares' approach to help owners in tenement blocks carry out essential common repairs
- ✓ Launched our 'Pre-Tenancy Support Service' to provide specialised advice and inspection services to private sector landlords and increase awareness about the required minimum standard of properties
- ✓ Over 98% of our social housing meets the 'Social Housing Quality Standard'.
- ✓ Over 97% of our social housing meets the current Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing
- ✓ All but one of our new housing developments met the Scottish Government's Greener Standard. The remaining 'pilot project' used off-site construction and achieved Bronze Active Status for Sustainable Buildings and Silver Status for Carbon Dioxide Emissions
- ✓ Built two 'sustainable demonstrator' homes, which showcased renewable energy systems, smart lighting, and home security controls, upgraded insulation, triple glazing, and various water conservation measures
- ✓ Engaged with young people, communities, and local businesses to tackle climate change
- ✓ Provide energy efficiency advice and utilise the Local Energy Advice Forum (LEAF) to provide holistic services to residents

- ✓ Secured funding to offer energy efficiency measures to 'fuel poor' and 'extremely fuel poor' households (e.g., external wall, loft and cavity wall insulation and solar PV technology)
- ✓ Explored and delivered our first district heating systems (in Stevenston, Dalry and Largs)
- ✓ Retrofitted solar PV panels on 500 properties

Place: Our homes are located in strong, stable, and safe communities

- ✓ Launched our 10-year, £10 million Estate Based Regeneration Programme
- ✓ Considered the Place Standard as part of all new Council housing projects and encouraged our partners to use Designing Streets guidance for all sites
- ✓ Built new town centre homes in Stevenston, Saltcoats, Dalry, Irvine, Largs and Kilbirnie
- ✓ Sought to ensure that Secure by Design accreditation is obtained for all new Council housing projects and encouraged our partners to do the same
- ✓ Reviewed and enhanced our public space CCTV service provision
- ✓ Developed and implemented a new Safer North Ayrshire strategy

Homelessness: Homeless services focus on early intervention, prevention, and sustainable housing solutions

- ✓ Embedded housing options into our homeless processes
- ✓ Refreshed our housing support approach significantly increasing tenancy sustainment as a result

- ✓ Successfully closed two units of hostel provision and replaced it with a range of furnished accommodation across North Ayrshire
- ✓ Provided support to every homeless household
- ✓ Linked all children affected by homelessness with primary health care, and ensured their temporary accommodation supports study and access to their wider social network
- ✓ Developed a prison discharge protocol to minimise the risk of homelessness and repeat offending
- ✓ Prepared and implemented a 'Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan', which includes a 'Housing First' programme
- ✓ Established a specialist team to respond to the needs of homeless people with addictions and mental health issues
- ✓ Together with Health Improvement Scotland, maximised opportunities to prevent homelessness within health systems
- ✓ Started to develop pathways into employment for homeless people

Support: People receive the support they need to live independently at home, for as long as possible

- ✓ Exceeded our target by building 170 new sheltered housing unit flats to date
- ✓ Refurbished 142 sheltered housing unit flats
- ✓ Exceeded our target and provided 48% of new builds that are suitable for older people
- ✓ Included amenity housing in all our new build sites
- ✓ Introduced community hubs in sheltered housing across the area
- ✓ Included dementia friendly designs in all our new build specialist housing

- ✓ All new homes are designed as 'homes for life' and easily adapted if the occupants need change
- ✓ Built a 'demonstrator flat' to showcase how assistive technology can enable independent living
- ✓ As at May 2022 we have helped resettle 291 displaced people (71 households) from conflict areas in Syria, Afghanistan and Ukraine and provided them with the support they need to successfully integrate within our communities
- ✓ Worked with the HSCP (Health and Social Care Partnership) to maximise the benefits of new specialist supported accommodation and developed a new supported accommodation housing model
- ✓ Exceeded our target and provided 15% of new builds that are suitable for wheelchair users
- ✓ Included new specialist housing in existing housing estates
- ✓ Developed a joint improvement group with the Health and Social Care Partnership, which focuses on improving service delivery of equipment and adaptations

More homes at the heart of great places

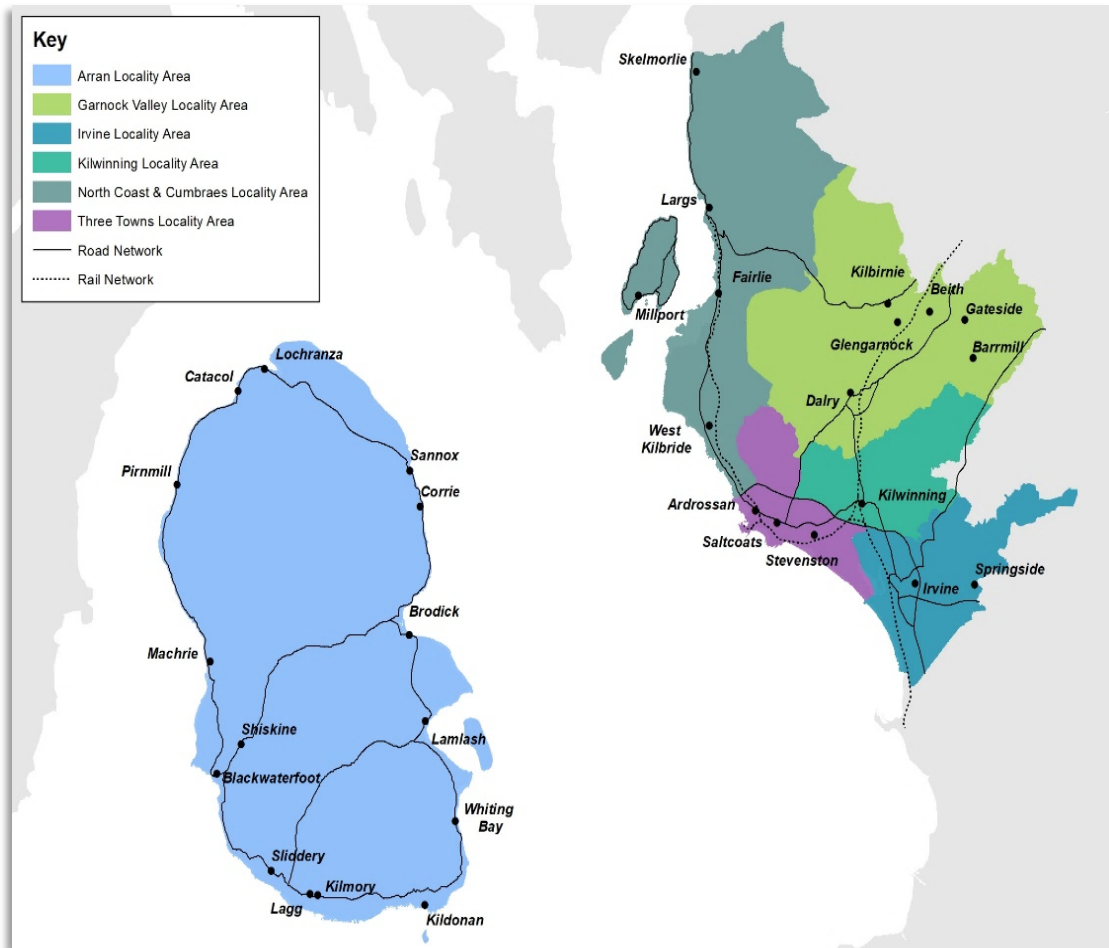
Our places support thriving and inclusive communities

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Stronger & More Vibrant Places

FIGURE 1: NORTH AYRSHIRE'S LOCALITY AREAS



Located on the West Coast of Scotland and with a population of circa 135,000, North Ayrshire is a unique housing market area. It is a diverse mix of rural, urban, and island communities, split into six localities: Arran, Garnock Valley, Irvine, Kilwinning, North Coast & Three Towns. Whilst North Ayrshire is a ‘contained’ housing market (i.e., most people who buy a home here already live here), we realise there is significant migration across the localities. This is with the exception of our island communities where housing is mostly bought by people who do not currently live on that island, or even within North Ayrshire.

“We all want to live in a North Ayrshire we can be proud of – a place where no one lives in poverty...economy is growing, building wealth and prosperity for everyone and we support each other” (North Ayrshire Council Plan, 2019-2024)

The North Ayrshire economy faces significant challenges. Our employed people tend to work in lower paid jobs, and we also have high levels of unemployment and economic inactivity. Whilst the situation has improved over recent years, the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (2020) ranks our area as one of the most deprived in Scotland - particularly for

employment, income, and health – noting that four out of every 10 local households are living in deprivation.

It is for these reasons that the Council is committed to a [Community Wealth Building](#) approach, building on the progress of the [Ayrshire Growth Deal](#), which is expected to generate up to 7,000 new jobs across Ayrshire in the next 15 years. We are also working with the Arran Economic Group and Arran Development Trust to find additional solutions to the economic sustainability of Arran - this work is supported by the £3.6 million 'Rural & Islands Housing Fund'.

Corporately, our [Regeneration Delivery Plan](#) outlines a place-based approach to regeneration. The plan's focus is on both the short-term recovery from COVID-19 and, in the longer-term making our area more successful for everyone, improving our places, establishing thriving town centres, supporting health and well-being, and providing more opportunities for a better quality of life. Housing can make a strong contribution to regeneration by contributing to positive health outcomes and supporting a sense of community.

We will	Where	Building on	By	And know we are successful if/when
use our role as a major house builder to maximise local employment & training opportunities, & encourage our partners to do the same	across our area	existing policy & procedure / systems & services	2023+	apprentices are employed for new build projects

Housing Renewal Areas

Where it is identified that a significant proportion (at least 50%) of properties within an area are of a substandard condition, our Private Sector Housing Team will undertake a range of consultation and consider ways to bring it back up to an appropriate standard, this may include its designation as a Housing Renewal Area.

We will	Where	Building on	By	And know we are successful if/when
consider designating Housing Renewal Areas if local people are concerned and at least 50% of the properties in that area are substandard	across our area	the work of the multi-agency task force	2023+	100% of the requests to designate a Housing Renewal Area are considered by the task force

Town Centres

Towns and town centres should be vibrant, creative, enterprising, and accessible, but as retail patterns evolve this is becoming more challenging. We are committed to supporting local town centres to re-purpose and diversify. Providing housing in town centres benefits

the area because the people who live there contribute to the overall safety and regeneration of that location.

The [Local Development Plan](#) sets out our approach for ensuring that town centres continue to be at the heart of people's everyday activities. Large private developers often find town centre sites too small for their projects, however, this creates an opportunity for social housing or small developers to step in and build on small gap sites in our towns.

We will	Where	By building on	By	And know we are successful if/when
maximise opportunities for providing homes in and around our town centres	across our area	our annual Strategic Housing Investment Plan	2023	7% of all new build social housing is in or around town centres

Council Estates

We have committed to investing £10 million in our Council housing estates between 2019-2029. The money will be used to address issues which cause residents to become dissatisfied with their areas, such as poor external appearance, insufficient parking, antisocial behaviour, lack of green space or little area-distinctiveness.

In consultation to inform our estate-based programme, the North Ayrshire Tenants Network advised as follows:

“Helps build communities so that people take pride in where they work and live, have a sense of belonging and paves the way for future generations”

Our improvement programme will look at options for house types that are no longer in demand (e.g., bedsits), as well as for solutions to disrepair in mixed-tenure blocks, which are often in poorer condition because some owners either cannot afford or will not contribute to common repairs.

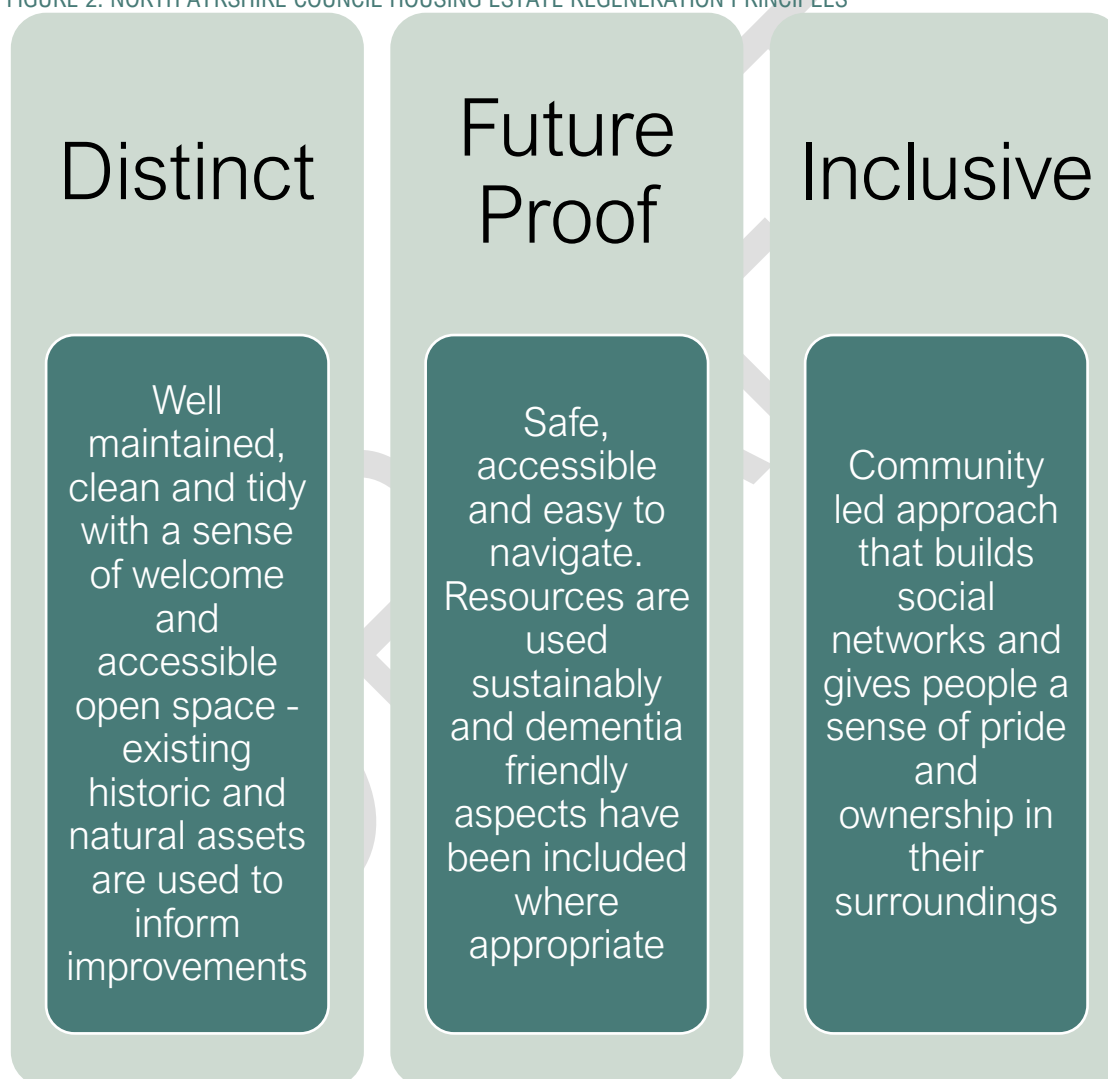
All our regeneration work has been guided by '[Creating Places](#)' and is based on the Place Standard, which has been embedded into all our estate based processes. Our aim is to deliver regeneration progress against three overarching goals – Distinct, Future Proof and Inclusive. The programme is subject to ongoing review for the purpose of continuous improvement.

We place our tenants firmly at the centre of our estate-based regeneration work, asking them to tell us what their priorities for their local area would be. We also allocate around £500,000 per annum as part of a 'Tenant Led Budget', which supports the regeneration programme. These two commitments are actions in the 'Collaboration' section (page 3).

The consultation process highlighted that some tenants would appreciate the opportunity for smaller estate-based issues to be responded to more quickly therefore reducing the escalation of degeneration by giving more responsibility to local area housing teams to quickly identify and resolve issues.

We will	Where	By building on	By	And know we are successful if/when
provide our housing officers with an annual budget that allows them to quickly respond to ad-hoc housing management issues to minimise the risk of them escalating, and supporting settled communities	across our area	-	2023+	projects are delivered against this budget on an annual basis

FIGURE 2: NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL HOUSING ESTATE REGENERATION PRINCIPLES



Attracting Investment

We recognise that house building is important to the area's economy and is a way of reversing population decline. As we start to see the benefits from both our 'Economic Recovery & Renewal' and '[Community Wealth Building](#)' approaches, North Ayrshire will

become more attractive to people who wish to move here from outwith the area. It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that we will also see an increase in demand for housing.

Since 2018, the number of 'completions' of new build housing has been increasing (for both private and social housing). This demonstrates a strengthening of the private housing market in North Ayrshire alongside our ambitious programme of delivering new affordable social rented homes. The most recent Housing Land Audit shows that COVID-19 did have an impact on social housing build-rates during 2020/21, but that significant levels of delivery are expected over the next five years.

Our Strategic Housing Investment Plan is expected to deliver 1,625 new homes by 2028, and private developers are expected to deliver 1,300 new homes during the same period. These homes will be energy efficient and will focus on meeting housing need as well as tackling child poverty.

Housing Supply Targets

We have set our minimum supply targets for new build completions by considering a number of factors, such as the Housing Need & Demand Assessment 2020, recent and anticipated build rates, and committed investment in affordable housing. A full explanation of how our targets were set is available on our website ([Housing Supply Targets](#)).

FIGURE 3: HOUSING SUPPLY TARGETS



Private Development

Our Local Development Plan outlines our general proposals for planning policies, designating land use, and identifying where development should and should not be carried out. The Local Development Plan takes a design-led, holistic approach towards all housing developments (public and private alike). It sets out planning policy that enhances areas by considering the balance between a successful and sustainable place, natural and resilient place, connected place, and low carbon place. The development plan encourages private developers to build homes that meet people's specific needs as well as building affordable homes to buy. Our planning application process provides a further opportunity to ensure that developers respect placemaking principles.

It is more expensive to build new homes on our islands, than is the case on the mainland. There are several reasons for this, including higher general cost of living, expensive transport costs, higher fuel costs, infrastructure issues, limited on-island construction companies and poor digital connectivity. Since COVID-19, such issues have been accentuated and we are noting a reluctance from mainland construction companies to work

on the islands. All this points to a need for local supply chains to be developed, alongside local business capacity. These issues are being explored as part of our [Community Wealth Building](#) ambitions and Island Recovery Plan.

Build to Rent

'Housing to 2040' recognises build to rent as an attractive option for many investors. It is seen as a way of improving the private rented sector because investors are more likely to develop long term strategic management approaches, whilst continuing to invest in their assets to retain future sale values. This type of housing, like all private investment decisions, is governed by market influences. Where private developers indicate a desire to invest in this type of housing, we will support and facilitate their proposals where possible.

Creating Places

The places we live, work and play have a significant impact on our wellbeing. High quality places are safe, easy to move around, provide people with access to services, employment, education, and other opportunities, as well as influencing people to live more healthily and sustainably. A good place has areas where communities can gather for mutual support and self-help. This reduces isolation and loneliness and creates vibrant sustainable neighbourhoods with a sense of community. Designing out crime and increasing perceptions of personal safety are important steps towards the long-term sustainability of a place - the [Safer North Ayrshire Strategy](#) sets out the framework for working together to make North Ayrshire safer.

The creation of good places is underpinned by the national [Place Principle](#), which is a way of bringing ideas about services, investments, and assets together, making everyone accountable for the decisions taken about these resources, and recognising that a "joined-up, collaborative... approach enables better outcomes for everyone." The [Place Standard](#) has been developed to help communities explore and identify local issues and ways of addressing them. We have embedded this tool into the processes which govern our new Council House Development programme.

'Housing to 2040' introduces the 20-minute neighbourhood, which focuses on living well locally, giving people the ability to meet most of their daily needs nearby, and are complemented by reduced car reliance and safe walking, wheeling, and cycling routes. The goal is to support a better quality of life in our places, whilst making our towns and villages more resilient.



New social housing is already developed in places with existing stock and amenities, meaning 20-minute neighbourhoods are an existing part of our social housing supply programme. The Scottish Government aim to publish new planning guidance to help guide the concept of 20-minute neighbourhoods in the private housing sector. Meanwhile, our existing planning policies have place-making principles, that promote 20-minute neighbourhoods, embedded within them. We are well placed for taking on any further guidance from the Scottish Government

Looking at our islands, Cumbrae is already a 20-minute neighbourhood, given that there is only one town on the island. On Arran, focussing on 20-minute neighbourhoods will help us make sure our investment decisions deliver the maximum possible benefits for local people. By directing island development towards existing communities, we can strengthen the long-term viability of those communities, support local business, increase the effectiveness of support services, reduce isolation, and protect the wider environment.

We will	Where	By building on	By	And know we are successful if/when
develop an energy efficiency strategy for all new build social housing and encourage our partners to do the same	across our area	existing policy & procedure / systems & services	2023	100% of all new build Council houses have a bespoke energy efficiency strategy
ensure new build Council homes are secure by design, and encourage our partners to do the same	across our area	existing policy & procedure / systems & services	2023	100% of all new build Council housing achieves secure by design accreditation
ensure local people have the opportunity to inform the design of new Council houses and encourage our partners to do the same	across our area	planning guidance and permitted development rights	2023	100% of all new Council housing projects are co-designed with local communities
adopt an infrastructure-first approach to neighbourhood planning in the Local Development Plan	across our area	Local Development Plan	2025	LDP3 is adopted by North Ayrshire Council
review the performance and feedback on the first district heating in North Ayrshire and use this to inform a policy approach moving forward.	across our area	the completion of the new system	2025	publication of review and recommendations

Green Spaces

Research shows that where people have access to good quality, outdoor green space, there is a corresponding positive and lasting impact on public health. The combined effects of fresh air, exercise, daylight, and social interaction, in a pleasant setting, means that people who use outdoor green spaces regularly are more likely to be physically active and

have a reduce risk of mental and physical ill-health. However, it has been noted that access to green space is still imbalanced; this is especially true for people who live in deprived areas.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, people reported that access to good quality outdoor green space made restrictions more bearable. Homes for Scotland are reporting an increased demand for private housing with gardens and close access to rural areas.

We will	Where	By building on	By	and know we are successful if/when
include 'green space' (e.g., garden, public space, streetscape etc) in our social housing developments	across our area	existing policy & procedure / systems & services	2023	70% of social housing developments include green space

Compulsory Purchase Order

Compulsory Purchase Orders, which are only implemented following Scottish Ministers approval, can be an important tool with which to support the regeneration of our places and communities. They are used to force a private land or property owner to sell their asset, where we have shown that sale is necessary to successfully complete a project that is in the public interest. However, our preference is always to purchase land or properties through negotiation and in agreement with the owner. Nonetheless, where mutual agreement cannot be reached, these orders will be considered if the situation dictates it.



Affordability & Choice

Our people have affordable homes in the place they choose to live

DRAFT



Affordable Housing Supply

Privately owned homes dominate the area, and the number has increased in all localities over the last eight years. The North Coast has seen the biggest increase in owner-occupation and on Arran almost four out of every five homes are privately owned. The private rented sector has also grown.

Improving affordability and choice across tenures will contribute to a well-functioning housing system where people can find, and afford, a home that meets their needs and is in a place that they want to live.

FIGURE 4: COMPARING PRIVATE AND SOCIAL HOUSING



Our national strategy is committed to improving the affordability, standards and security of all Scotland's homes, an ambition we share and support. However, affordability is not a concern locally. Regardless of the tenure of house our people live in, it is likely to be affordable. This is because, for private housing, both the cost of buying a home and the cost of renting one is much lower than the national average. For social housing, rents are kept low by tenant scrutiny and regulation. Locally, the cost of buying an entry level home is much the same as renting one.

FIGURE 5: NORTH AYRSHIRE WEEKLY HOUSING COSTS AS A PERCENTAGE OF LOWER QUARTILE INCOME FOR 2 BEDROOM RENTED HOMES AND LOWER QUARTILE SECOND-HAND HOMES, 2019 (SOURCE: HND A20)

Tenure	Lower Quartile Income (2019)	Lower Quartile Housing Costs	% of income required for rent / loan
Private Rent	£300 pw	£98	33%
Social Rent	£300 pw	£80	27%
Buying (80% Loan to Value / 3.5 income multiplier)	£300 pw	£83	28%
Buying (95% Loan to Value / 3.5 income multiplier)	£300 pw	£83	28%

Second Homes

There are 1,500 second homes in the area, almost all of which are located on our islands. On Arran, one in four privately owned houses are second homes; on Cumbrae this rises to 43%. This reduces the number of homes available for local people, and in turn pushes up both house prices and private rent charges.

The Scottish Government have committed to introducing new powers for local authorities, allowing them to cap the number of second homes in a given area. The intention is to provide a tool that allows us to find a viable balance between the number of second homes and the number of fully occupied homes on our islands - supporting both community sustainability and the tourism sector.

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
work with stakeholders to research the viability of a second homes 'cap'	across our areas	forthcoming powers due to be granted by the Scottish Government	2027	the publication of our findings with recommendations

Delivering Equality

The right to housing is already a recognised human right. However, there are many who cannot access market housing, as well as those who have nowhere to live. The LHS offers an opportunity to ensure that the housing system supports the needs and aspirations of all our people regardless of background, financial position, or current situation.

We will	Where	By building on	By	And know we are successful if/when
advertise our information and support services to hard-to-reach groups and minorities	across our area	existing policy & procedure / systems & services	2023	articles featured in Tenants Chat e-newsletter
review our written information to ensure it is accessible to all clients	across our area	existing policy & procedure / systems & services	2024	all clients can access our written information

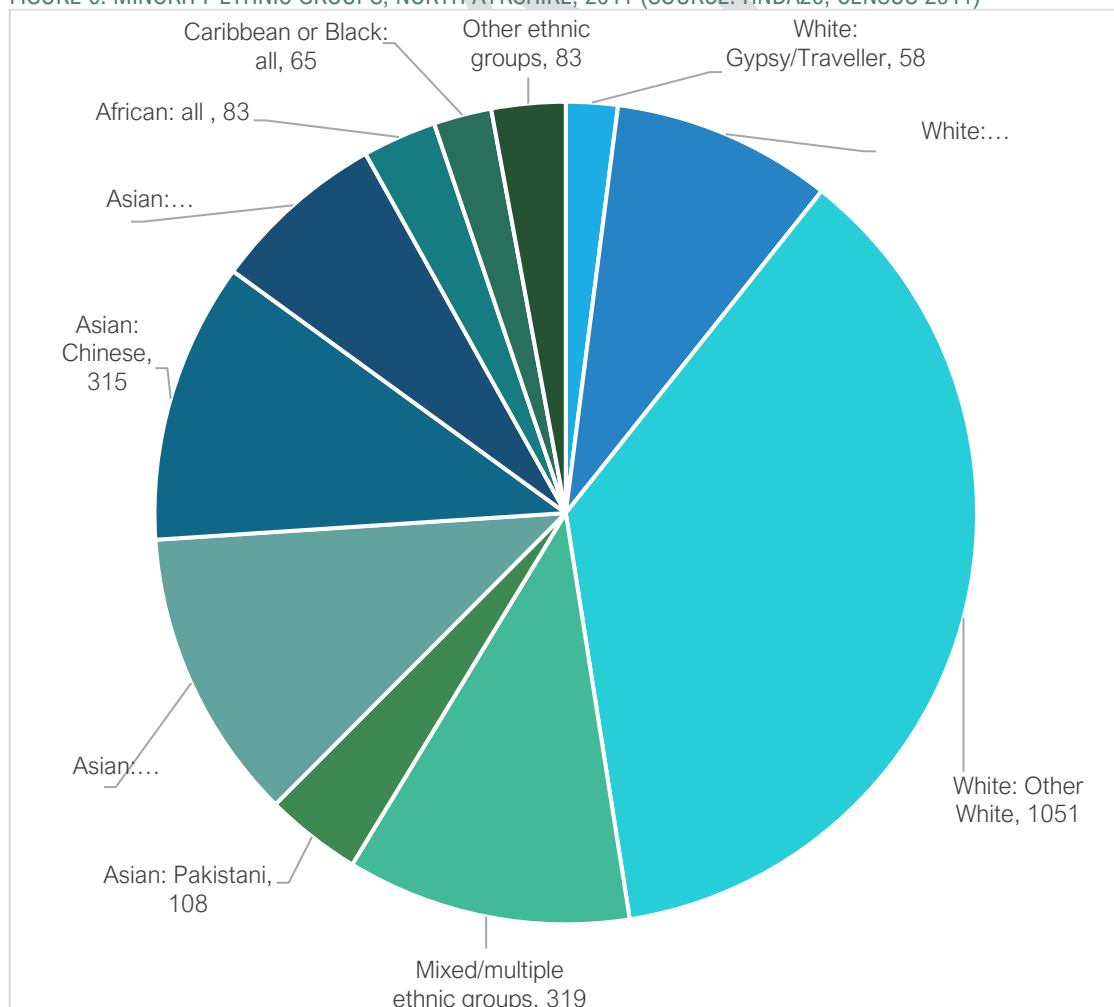
Ethnicity

Around 2,000 local people (2% of our population) classify their ethnicity as something other than 'White: Scottish/British/Irish'. Given this lack of local diversity, there is a risk that the housing needs of these communities could be overlooked.

Language difficulties, being unaware of the support available, or even a lack of cultural awareness from service providers are all recognised as barriers to housing and support services. People from different ethnic backgrounds can also face discrimination and harassment, not only within the community, but from landlords or agents. The fear and experience of racial harassment then influences, and frequently limits, the housing decisions they go on to make. For minority ethnic women, isolation, language difficulties and experiences of racism, may increase their risk of experiencing homelessness or prevent them from escaping domestic abuse.

Research shows that poverty is more prevalent for minority households. Ethnic minority groups are more likely to live in private rented properties, and because of higher levels of disrepair in this sector, are more likely to live in poor-quality housing. There can also be larger household sizes amongst ethnic minority groups, meaning an increased chance of living in an overcrowded home. Older people from ethnic minority groups can face challenges accessing and securing suitable housing.

FIGURE 6: MINORITY ETHNIC GROUPS, NORTH AYRSHIRE, 2011 (SOURCE: HNDA20, CENSUS 2011)



We will	Where	By building on	By	And know we are successful if/when
review our procedures for dealing with complaints about racial harassment and abuse and take a 'zero-tolerance' approach against tenant and resident perpetrators	across our area	our existing suite of estate management policy and process	2025	100% of racial harassment complaints are investigated 100% of upheld investigations are subject to legal recourse
translate housing information into other languages on request	across our area	existing policy & procedure / systems & services	2023	100% of requests for translated information are delivered
train our staff to understand cultural differences and challenges faced by different ethnic groups	our Housing Service	existing policy & procedure / systems & services	2024	100% of our staff are trained
provide web-based housing information pages in the most frequently spoken non-English languages	across our area	existing web-site information and translation services	2024	the publication of non-English housing information on the Council's website
provide information for people who are at risk of homelessness and domestic abuse in the most frequently spoken non-English languages	across our area	existing policy & procedure / systems & services	2023	information is published online in the most frequently spoken 'non-English' languages
seek to increase ethnic minority representation on our tenants' and residents' groups	across our area	practices which currently exist for tenants and residents' groups	2024	100% of tenant meetings welcome representation from ethnic minority representatives
run a campaign that targets welfare reform advice to ethnic minority people	across our area	the work and advice already available from our dedicated welfare reform team	2024	1 campaign is executed

Refugees & Asylum Seekers

We do not have to deal with asylum seekers on a day-by-day basis, however, we are occasionally contacted by people seeking asylum. While we do not have jurisdiction in these cases, we do provide accommodation and support, and refer each case to the appropriate authorities.

We do, however, have a proud record of supporting the UK Government's humanitarian efforts to resettle refugees who have been displaced from their own country. Since 2015, we have been working with the Home Office and the Health & Social Care Partnership, to

provide safe and secure housing for 211 people (43 families) as of 30 April 2022, who were displaced by the war in Syria. There are still families who need to be resettled, and we will continue our work over the lifetime of this strategy, supporting and helping integrate new and existing households from around the world who have settled in our area.

We have also provided support for families fleeing the conflict in Afghanistan, following the withdrawal of American and NATO forces in 2021. We will continue to support these resettlement programmes and add to the 36 Afghan nationals (8 families) who had already arrived by 30 April 2022.

More recently, the Council have responded to the humanitarian crisis created as a result of the conflict in Ukraine. We have pledged a significant number of Council properties to be used to provide accommodation for people fleeing the conflict. We are also providing support, advice, and assistance to those who have settled within the homes of North Ayrshire residents. We will continue to monitor the situation in Ukraine and will increase our pledge of assistance, should that be required.

To prepare for the arrival of these vulnerable households we have established the multi-agency 'Refugee Task Force,' to provide strategic direction, target resources, help build cross-agency capacity, ensure coordinated communications and operational support and is the vehicle for sharing learning to enhance front line service delivery. The task force includes several Council services led by Housing and including Education, Community Learning & Development, Employability, as well as Health and Social Care Partnership, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire & Rescue, Department of Work & Pensions and the third sector.

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
ensure that refugees, asylum seekers and other displaced people affected by conflict are supported to live in safety within our local area	across our area	existing policy & procedure / systems & services	2023+	100% of refugees and people displaced by conflict who are housed in our area received support
work with national agencies to offer humanitarian responses for refugees and asylum seekers when needed	across our area	existing policy & procedure / systems & services	2028	At May 2022, 211 Syrians, 36 Afghans and 44 Ukrainians were supported to resettle in our communities

Travelling Showpeople

There are no Travelling Showpeople communities based in North Ayrshire. The closest community of Showpeople is in Glasgow and given the better transport links from the city to the rest of the country, it is unlikely there would be an incentive to move to North Ayrshire. Nonetheless, we keep the situation under review to ensure we will be able to respond, should this situation change.

Gypsy/Travellers

We acknowledge and respect Gypsy/Travellers as a distinct ethnic group with history and traditions including the nomadic lifestyle that can form part of this identity.

Our research has indicated that there is sufficient accommodation for Gypsy/Travellers in our area. Our Gypsy/Traveller population has told us that their preferred housing solution is the Council owned site. Our site in Irvine has sixteen pitches (four are level access), each with its own amenity building where hot water, bathing and kitchen facilities are provided, and electricity is available at a reduced cost. On-site services include a site manager, regular GP surgery, visits from community link workers, and an educational tutor for secondary age pupils.

Whilst our site has met the quality standards described in the Scottish Government's 'Improving Gypsy/Traveller Sites' since 2018, we understand this to be a minimum standard, and we have continued to improve and upgrade the site. In response to requests from site tenants, we identified a £75,000 budget, which allowed us to install new kitchens and doors in our amenity units and improve safety and security on each pitch by installing gates, fencing, and resurfacing. Free Wi-Fi is available at the on-site community room, and through the Connected Scotland programme we have provided 15 families with free Wi-Fi devices – each with 2 years unlimited access to the internet. We have applied for more devices to support the remaining tenants and families living in mainstream housing.

Moving forward we remain committed to ensuring our site continues to meet the needs of our Gypsy/Traveller community and we will explore options to identify the most appropriate upgrades and changes that we can carry out on site, to best support our residents. We have a dedicated officer who acts as a sole point of contact for our Gypsy/Traveller community, and who can offer advice and support where needed and support the Redburn Grove Tenants Group, who represent the interests of our local Gypsy/Travellers community and influence local decision making.

On average, we have around 40 unauthorised encampments in our area each year, though this number includes multiple counts of the same family who may stay at various locations during their time in our area. We always engage with the families who visit by carrying out a 'Needs & Welfare' Assessment, to help us understand people's reasons for visiting. In 2021, the reasons given were: for work (5 families); like the area (2 families); traditional stopping (one family) and other reasons (1 family). Given that only one family indicated that they were passing through our area, we will not identify an 'authorised' overnight stop.

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
engage with Gypsy/Travellers to ensure that housing solutions meets their needs	across our area	existing policy & procedure / systems & services	2023	all tenants on Gypsy/Travellers site are engaged with annually
listen to Gypsy/Travellers from unauthorised encampments so that	across our area	existing policy & procedure / systems & services	2023	100% of Gypsy/Travellers living in unauthorised

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
we can better understand and respond to their needs.				encampments are approached for their comments
explore options for Gypsy/Traveller living at Redburn Grove, Irvine, to enjoy the benefits of a Scottish Secure Tenancy	our travellers' site	-	2024	the publication of our findings, and supporting action plan (if feasible)
carry out an options appraisal on a number of potential Gypsy/Traveller site improvements and submit our recommendations to the Cabinet of North Ayrshire Council	our travellers' site	improvements carried out the site, after we were satisfied it complied with minimum standards as set out by the Scottish Government	2024	the submission of a Cabinet Report

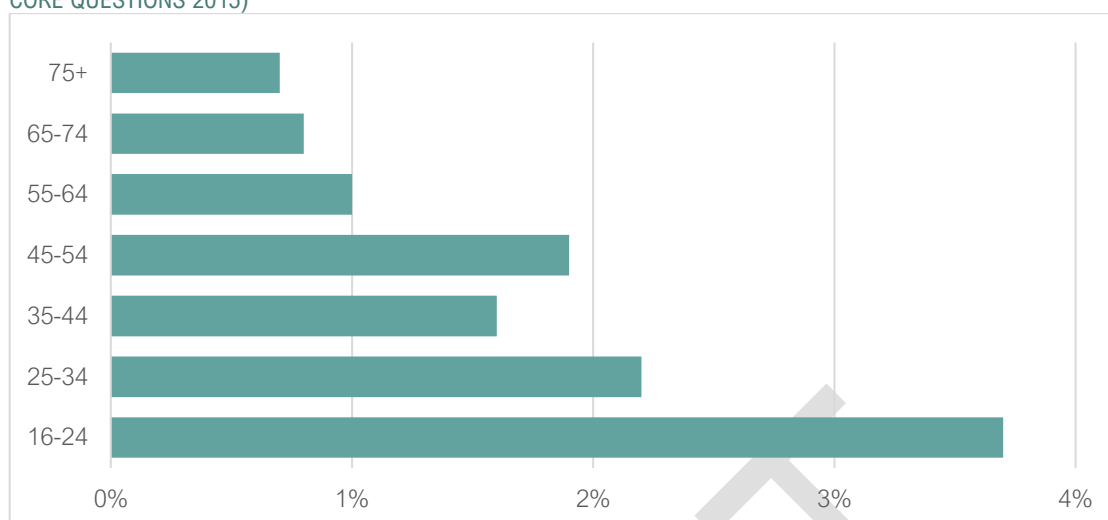
LGBTQ+

Around 4.6% of the overall population is thought to be LGBTQ+, which equates to 6,200 people in North Ayrshire. The proportion appears to decrease with age, though this could be because older people may be more reluctant to disclose sexual orientation or gender identity, or an overrepresentation of younger people in the survey sample.

Research has found that “[LGBTQ+] social housing residents do not believe they are being listened to, taken seriously, or treated equally.” These findings correlate with what our own LGBTQ+ community has shared with us. Whilst most said they felt part of their local community, almost 15% have experienced harassment because of their sexuality or gender identity, and the same number did not feel safe in their home. A quarter felt their landlords did not understand the housing issues they faced and less than 20% felt their landlords treated them equally.



FIGURE 7: SEXUAL ORIENTATION BY PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION & AGE, 2015 (SOURCE: SCOTTISH SURVEYS CORE QUESTIONS 2015)



We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
take a 'zero tolerance' approach to any form of harassment or bullying directed towards our tenants	across our area	existing policy & procedures	2023	100% of complaints received are investigated 100% of complaints upheld are subject to legal action
establish LGBTQ+ champions across our housing service	across our area	-	2023	we have a LGBTQ+ champion in each mainland locality
train our staff to be aware of the issues and challenges faced by the LGBTQ+ community	across our area	-	2024	100% of our staff are trained
increase awareness of LGBTQ+ housing issues amongst private landlords	across our area	our existing newsletter	2023	we publish a 'Private Sector Matters' newsletter article outlining the issues that LGBTQ+ tenants experience
regularly promote and advertise our commitment to the LGBTQ+ community across social media and other mediums	across our area	existing policy & procedure / systems & services	2023	4 posts per annum
encourage our LGBTQ+ tenants and residents to participate as part of existing TARAs	across our area	existing policy & procedure / systems & services	2024	100% of tenant meetings are open and include representation from LGBTQ+ communities

Homeless Prevention and Alleviation

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 places a statutory duty on local authorities to carry out an assessment of homelessness and to prepare and submit to Ministers, a strategy (as part of the Local Housing Strategy) for the prevention and alleviation of homelessness.

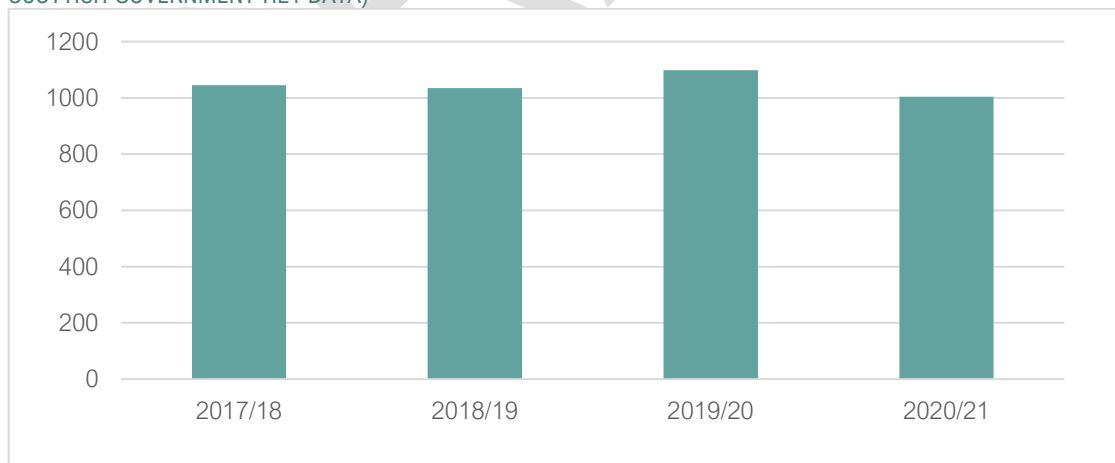
The Scottish Government established the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group in 2017 to identify solutions to eradicate homelessness in Scotland. Following consideration of the Action Group's recommendations, the Scottish Government required local authorities to develop and implement a Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan demonstrating how the local authority will consider current and future homeless demand and work in partnership to transform services to prevent homelessness and minimise the length of time people spend in temporary accommodation.

The Scottish Government are preparing new legislation to enhance the rights of people at risk of homelessness by placing statutory duties on public bodies including the Health and Social Care Partnership, Education, Police Scotland, and the Scottish Prison Service to identify people at risk of becoming homeless and to respond to prevent this from happening.

Homelessness in North Ayrshire

During 2020/21, 1,004 households made a homeless application in North Ayrshire, which was a 9% decrease on the previous year. The decrease is mainly as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. During the first quarter, and at the start of lockdown, there was a 32% reduction in approaches. Previously, homeless applications had increased by 5% between 2017/18 and 2019/20.

FIGURE 8: TOTAL APPLICATIONS FOR HOMELESS ASSISTANCE, NORTH AYRSHIRE, 2017-2021 (SOURCE: SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT HL1 DATA)



Homelessness by Gender and Age

The majority (59%) of homeless people in North Ayrshire are aged between 26 and 59. Young people aged between 16 and 25 account for 27% of applications. There are a higher proportion of men (59%) than women represented, with men aged between 26 and 59 being the highest presenting group, making up 42% of all homeless applications.

FIGURE 9: HOMELESSNESS BY AGE AND GENDER (SOURCE: NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL CIVICA DATABASE)

Gender	Age	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Female	16 to 17	1%	1%	2%	1%
Female	18 to 25	12%	10%	11%	12%
Female	26 to 59	29%	30%	29%	26%
Female	60+	2%	2%	2%	1%
Female	Total	44%	43%	44%	41%
Male	16 to 17	1%	1%	2%	1%
Male	18 to 25	13%	13%	11%	12%
Male	26 to 59	39%	40%	41%	42%
Male	60+	3%	2%	2%	4%
Male	Total	56%	57%	56%	59%
All	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Household composition

75% of homeless applications are from single people, compared to 66% nationally.

FIGURE 10: HOMELESSNESS BY FAMILY COMPOSITION (SOURCE: SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT HL1 DATA)

Gender	Household Type	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Female	Single Person	22%	19%	21%	21%
Female	Single Parent	14%	12%	15%	14%
Female	Couple	3%	5%	2%	2%
Female	Couple with Children	4%	5%	4%	2%
Female	Other	1%	1%	1%	<1%
Female	Other with Children	1%	1%	1%	1%
Female	Sub Total	45%	43%	44%	41%
Male	Single Person	51%	52%	51%	54%
Male	Single Parent	1%	<1%	1%	1%
Male	Couple	3%	2%	3%	2%
Male	Couple with Children	1%	2%	1%	1%
Male	Other	<1%	<1%	<1%	0
Male	Other with Children	0	<1%	<1%	<1%
Male	Sub Total	55%	57%	56%	59%

Reasons for Homelessness

The main reason for homelessness in North Ayrshire during 2020/21 was due to a dispute within the family home and accounted for 26% (261) of applications. This is a change from previous years where people being asked to leave the family home was the main reason for homelessness, during 2020/21 this accounted for 201 approaches (20%). This may be an impact of the COVID-19 lockdown which placed significant pressure on families. The third most significant reason for approach (15%) was due to domestic abuse.

FIGURE 11 REASONS FOR HOMELESSNESS APPROACHES, FOR NORTH AYRSHIRE & SCOTLAND 2020/21 (SOURCE: SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT HL1 DATA)

Reason for approach 2020/21	Scotland	NAC
Termination of tenancy / mortgage due to rent arrears / default on payments	1%	0%
Other action by landlord resulting in the termination of the tenancy	4%	6%
Applicant terminated secure accommodation	1%	1%
Loss of service / tied accommodation	1%	1%
Discharge from prison / hospital / care / other institution	5%	8%

Reason for approach 2020/21	Scotland	NAC
Emergency (fire, flood, storm, closing order from Environmental Health etc.)	1%	0%
Forced division and sale of matrimonial home	0%	0%
Other reason for loss of accommodation	5%	3%
Dispute within household: violent or abusive	14%	15%
Dispute within household / relationship breakdown: non-violent	22%	26%
Fleeing non-domestic violence	4%	9%
Harassment	2%	2%
Overcrowding	2%	2%
Asked to leave	27%	20%
Other reason for leaving accommodation / household	10%	4%
All	100%	100%

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse accounted for 513 homeless applications between 2017 and 2021, 78% of which were from women. Police Scotland figures indicate domestic abuse in North Ayrshire has been higher than the Scottish average since 2009. It should however be recognised that we have driven a multi-agency media campaign over the last five years promoting a zero-tolerance approach to domestic violence and detailing the availability of services.

The North Ayrshire Violence Against Women Partnership are committed to tackling violence against women and girls, working together to deliver services which respond to national and local priorities in line with the Equally Safe Strategy. The Partnership deliver an ambitious action plan aligned to the Safer North Ayrshire Strategy. Over the last three years they have focussed on delivering programmes within schools, tackling gender inequality and challenging stereotypical behaviour, a Safe Space initiative across various local businesses, an ending domestic abuse media campaign, a training framework across community planning partners and the annual 16 days of action campaign to end violence against women and girls across North Ayrshire.

In 2021, the Council, registered social landlords, Women's Aid and Police Scotland launched a Domestic Abuse Policy for North Ayrshire residents, setting out our joint commitments to tenants and residents affected by domestic abuse.

Our Home Security project supports residents of domestic abuse who choose to stay within their own home. On an annual basis an average of 260 households are provided with advice, support and where required the installation of security measures to a person's home to ensure they feel safe.

The provision of support services for people affected by domestic abuse is necessary to address inequality and ensure access to health care, education, advice, and information. The Council funds supported accommodation provision, and outreach services for women at risk of violence. The specialist provision is currently provided by Women's Aid.

We have a Multi-Agency Assessment Screening Hub based within Kilmarnock Police station set up to reduce the prevalence of domestic abuse in North Ayrshire. A Housing Support worker based within the service provides person-centred housing options, support and

guidance to families impacted by domestic abuse. The officer works closely with the Housing Advice Team, Housing Support, and other agencies to ensure that the appropriate supports are in place to achieve safe sustainable outcomes for households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

In partnership with NHS Ayrshire and Arran, East Ayrshire Council and South Ayrshire Council, we have set up a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference system. The risk assessment conferences are local meetings where representatives from statutory and non-statutory agencies meet to discuss individuals at high risk of serious harm or murder as a result of domestic abuse. The meeting provides a safe environment for agencies to share relevant and proportionate information about current risk, after which agencies agree actions to reduce risk and increase safety. The primary focus of the conferences is to safeguard the adult victim; however, they also link with other processes and agencies to safeguard children and manage the behaviour of the perpetrator.

We do not differentiate service delivery based on gender, and men who are victims of domestic violence have access to the same level of support that women do.

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
<p>Through the 'Violence Against Women Partnership 2021-2026, deliver the North Ayrshire violence against women and girls action plan aligned to the 'Equally Safe' strategy the priorities of which are detailed below:</p> <p>Scottish Society embraces equality and mutual respect and rejects all forms of violence against women and girls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Positive gender roles are promoted</i> • <i>People enjoy healthy positive relationships</i> • <i>Children and young people develop an understanding of safe, healthy, and positive relationships from an early age</i> • <i>Individuals and communities recognise and challenge abusive behaviour</i> <p>Women and girls thrive as equal citizens: socially, culturally, economically, and politically</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Women and girls feel safe, respected, and equal in our communities</i> 	across our area	the work of the Violence Against Women partnership and Equally Safe Strategy	2026	<p>there will be a reduction in domestic violence (stats to be agreed by partners during consultation)</p> <p>we have achieved the Violence Against Women National Standards accreditation</p>

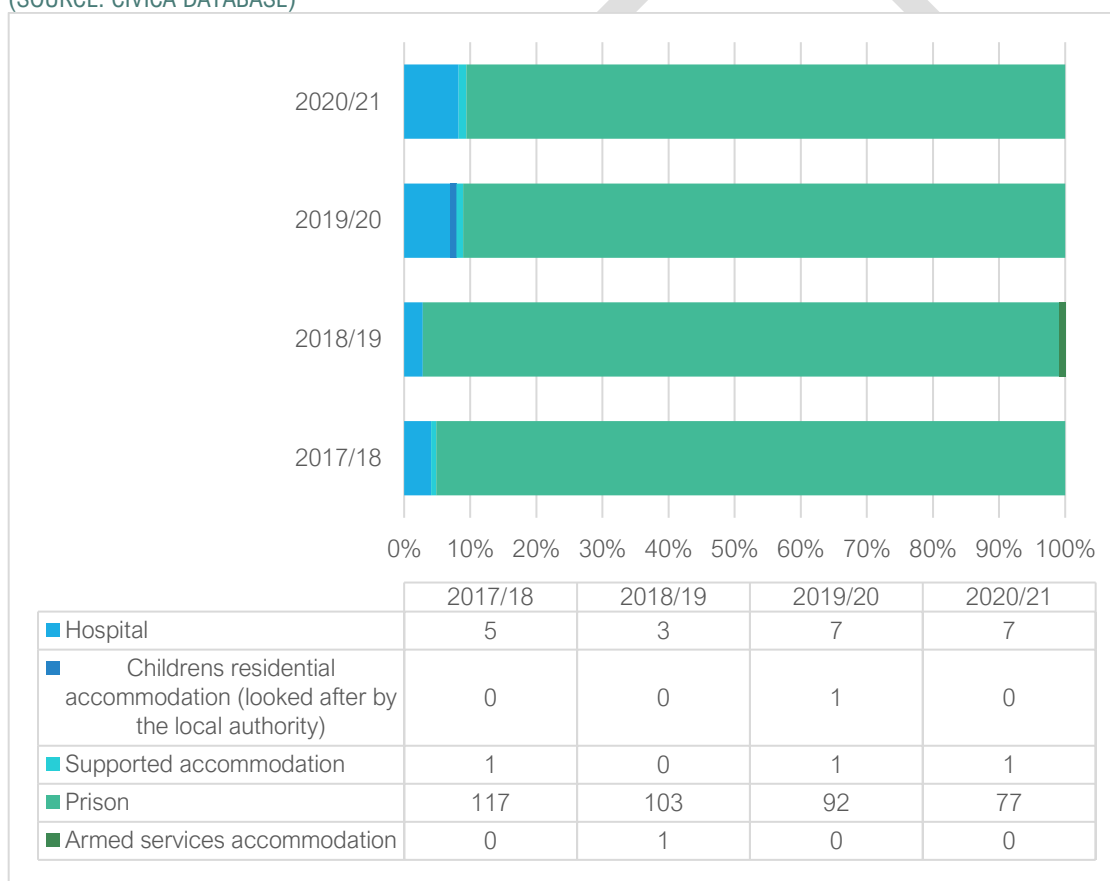
We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Women and men have equal access to power and resources</i> <p>Interventions are early and effective, preventing violence and maximising safety and wellbeing of women, children, and young people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Justice responses are robust, swift, consistent, and co-ordinated</i> • <i>Women, children, and young people access relevant, effective, and integrated services</i> • <i>Service providers competently identify violence against women and girls and respond effectively to women, children and young people affected</i> <p>Interventions are early and effective, preventing violence and maximising safety and wellbeing of women, children, and young people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Justice responses are robust, swift, consistent, and co-ordinated</i> • <i>Women, children, and young people access relevant, effective, and integrated services</i> • <i>Service providers competently identify violence against women and girls and respond effectively to women, children and young people affected</i> <p>Men desist from all forms of violence against women and girls and perpetrators of such Violence receive a robust and effective response.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Justice responses are robust, swift, consistent, and co-ordinated</i> • <i>Men who carry out violence against women and girls are identified early and held to account by the criminal and justice system</i> 				

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant links are made between the experiences of women, children, and young people in the criminal and civil justice system 				

Leaving Institutions

During 2020/21, 85 households made a homeless presentation following discharge from an institution. This is a decrease of 15 households (16%) on the previous year, the number of approaches has dropped year on year since 2017/18, with a significant drop experienced during lockdown.

FIGURE 12: DISCHARGE FROM PRISON/HOSPITAL/CARE/OTHER INSTITUTION, NORTH AYRSHIRE, 2017-2021
(SOURCE: CIVICA DATABASE)



Hospital Discharge

During 2020/21, there were seven approaches for homeless assistance from households on discharge from hospital. The Health and Social Care Partnership are currently reviewing the hospital discharge processes, with a view to developing a revised protocol to ensure consistent pathway planning and processes for people being discharged from a residential healthcare setting.

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
Work with our partners to develop a hospital discharge pathway	across our area	existing policy and procedures	2023	0% of those leaving a health care setting will be homeless

Children & Young People

The 'Housing/Throughcare' protocol details our integrated service response so that no young person becomes homeless on leaving care and that care leavers are provided with appropriate levels of support to achieve independence. The protocol is based on the principle that care leavers should have access to secure accommodation and is complemented by our Housing Allocations Policy, which recognises Young Care Leavers as a group given reasonable preference to housing.

The effectiveness of this approach is evidenced by the low level of young people leaving care represented within the Homelessness statistics, with only one approach in the last four years.

The adverse effect of welfare reforms, in particular the Local Housing Allowance and Shared Room Rate reduces the housing options available to young people. Given the proportion (27%) of young people represented within homelessness statistics we need to develop prevention activities and enhanced housing advice targeted at this group.

During 2020/21, 197 homeless applicants had children within the households, this amounted to 353 children being homeless within the year. We strive to ensure that our temporary accommodation meets the needs of children and is within an area that allows them continued access to their social networks. However, given the adverse effects of homelessness on children, prevention of its occurrence remains our primary focus.

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
ensure our housing policies are 'young people friendly'	across our area	existing policy & procedure	2023	young people (under 25 years) have had a chance to collaborate on our policies
ensure that all Council housing in our area has a rent level below the local housing allowance, and encourage our partners to do the same	across our area	existing affordable rent levels	2024	100% of all Council housing has rent set at below the local housing allowance
continue to work with the HSCP to support young people make the transition from care to a home of their own	across our area	existing policy & procedure	2024	100% of young people are supported as they leave care and move into their own home

consider the pathways into housing for young people to maximise housing options specific to their needs and reduce the risk of homelessness	across our area	approach to housing options	2024	fewer young people become homeless
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Prison Discharge

Levels of homelessness following prison discharge remains high, with 77 approaches during 2020/21 amounting to 8% of homeless applications. (see Fig 11).

The Council Housing Service has a dedicated Housing Advice Officer working within HMP Kilmarnock and provides a satellite service to other Scottish Prisons. The officer has access to the prison discharge lists three months in advance and contacts all prisoners from North Ayrshire who are willing to work with them, to ascertain their housing needs on discharge, with an aim to prevent homelessness where possible.

The North Ayrshire Homelessness Taskforce took the decision to focus on prevention and early intervention activities on this area to break the link between prison discharge and homelessness. This resulted in the development of an Integrated Prison Discharge Protocol aligned to the SHORE standards during 2019. The protocol details the strong collaborative working across partners to ensure the pathways into Housing, Health, Addiction, Mental Health, and Third Sector services are seamless for people leaving prison.

The protocol promotes barrier free access to services to ensure that people can access the services required to enable them to sustain their accommodation, reducing the risk of future homelessness and repeat offending. There has been a delay in implementing the protocol due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The North Ayrshire Housing First programme focusses on the needs of people with complex needs who have a history of offending behaviour with the aim of improving outcomes for this group.

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
implement the integrated prison discharge protocol	across our area	existing policy & procedure	2023	Homelessness as a result of prison discharge is reduced to below 5%
implement 20 units of housing first per annum	across our area	Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan	2023	more than 88% of homeless people sustain their permanent accommodation

Leaving the Armed Forces

In 2020/21, 28 veterans approached the Council for homeless assistance, with the main reason being relationship breakdown or being asked to leave the family home. There were no approaches for homeless assistance due to veterans being discharge from the armed

forces. 24 of the 28 applicants advised that they had served at least five or more years ago, with only four advising that this was within the last five years.

Veterans First Point launched in North Ayrshire in 2017, this generated an increase in the level of veterans accessing services including homelessness assistance. The service works closely with Housing Services and ensures that, where there is a housing need, the veteran is appropriately referred and supported.

In 2020, we renewed our pledge to uphold the 'Armed Forces Covenant' - "[All] Those who serve [or have served] in the Armed Forces...and their families, should face no disadvantage...in the provision of public...services".

We recognise that service personnel, who have lived in Ministry of Defence housing for many years, and may have had to move often, might not have strong links with any particular area.

Therefore, we treat their housing applications sympathetically, and award 'enhanced priority' for social housing when their date of discharge is confirmed. This ensures our veterans are not disadvantaged when applying for social housing and that they receive a timely offer.

Likewise, where a family is leaving armed forces accommodation in exceptional circumstances, for example where the service member has been killed in action, we award the same priority to the family as we would have, had the veteran still been part of the household.

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
give enhanced priority for service personnel and their families when their date of discharge is confirmed	across our area	existing policy & procedure	2023+	100% of armed forces applicants given enhanced priority when date of discharge confirmed
hold a monthly 'Armed Forces Housing Surgery' where personnel can discuss their housing options	across our area	existing policy & procedure	2023+	12 Armed Forces surgeries are held each year
ensure that service personnel leaving the forces because of injury or disability, are assessed by an Occupational Therapist, and receive housing best suited to their needs	across our area	existing policy & procedure	2023+	100% of applicants who leave the armed forces due to injury or disability are assessed by an OT

Temporary Accommodation

We have a duty to provide all homeless households with temporary accommodation while their homeless application is being assessed. For those assessed as unintentionally

homeless, this duty is extended until they are permanently housed. As at the end of March 2021, we had 270 households residing within temporary accommodation in North Ayrshire.

In line with our Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan, we have focussed on reducing the number of hostel units in North Ayrshire and reducing the length of time people spend in temporary accommodation. We have successfully closed two medium sized hostels reducing hostel bedspaces by 50 over the last three years. We have increased our supply of dispersed accommodation to ensure we meet the temporary housing needs of homeless people. In addition, we have worked alongside Women's Aid to close two units of refuge accommodation and increase the supply of dispersed accommodation available for women fleeing violence.

FIGURE 113: NORTH AYRSHIRE TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION PROFILE (SOURCE: NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL HOMELESS SERVICE)

Type of Accommodation	Units	Description
Dispersed	240	Self-contained furnished accommodation with floating support
Emergency Hostel Accommodation	20	Supported short stay hostel provision
Refuge Accommodation	1(8)	8 bed refuge unit with on-site support provided by Women's Aid
Dispersed for women fleeing violence	19	Dispersed furnished refuge accommodation with Women's Aid floating support
Total bedspaces	280	

Duration of stay in temporary accommodation

The homeless taskforce took the decision to pilot a policy of 100% allocations to homeless households for three months from January to March 2020 to clear the backlog of homeless households within temporary accommodation and to reduce the duration of homelessness. The pilot was extended for a period due to the impact of COVID-19 and had a significant impact on reducing the duration of homelessness for our longest case. The table shows a snapshot of the percentage of homeless households waiting on an offer of housing on the 31 March each year.

FIGURE 1124: DURATION OF HOMELESSNESS SNAPSHOT AS AT 31ST MARCH 2022 (SOURCE: NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL CIVICA DATABASE)

Year	Homeless duration < 6 months	Homeless duration 6 – 12 months	Homeless duration >12 months
2019/20	24%	64%	12%
2020/21	53%	29%	18%
2021/22	78%	13%	9%

As the implementation of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan progresses, and homeless households are housed more quickly, the overall requirement for temporary accommodation will be reduced. This is because each property will turn over more frequently each year. In addition, the Housing First approach will improve the levels of tenancy sustainment for our customers with complex support needs, reducing the demand for temporary accommodation due to homelessness.

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
reduce the length of stay in temporary accommodation by 50% from 26 weeks to 13 weeks	across our area	Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan	2024	13 weeks is the average length of stay for homeless households in temporary accommodation
continue to provide Housing First accommodation for our most vulnerable clients at a rate of 20 per year	across our area	Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan	2024	increased tenancy sustainment (88%) Delivery of 20 units of Housing First per annum
reduce the level of temporary accommodation across North Ayrshire	across our area	Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan	+2024	there are fewer units of temporary accommodation required and provided

Housing Outcomes for Homeless People

74% of people assessed as either homeless or threatened with homelessness unintentionally, and whose case was closed during 2020/21, secured settled permanent accommodation, this is lower than the national average of 80%. North Ayrshire are above the national average on the allocation of local authority tenancies at 48%, however allocations by our registered social landlords are below the national average at 20%.

FIGURE 15: HOUSING OUTCOMES (SOURCE: SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT HL1 DATA)

Settled outcomes	Scotland	North Ayrshire
local authority tenancy	42%	48%
registered social landlord tenancy	32%	20%
private let	6%	6%
Total	80%	74%

FIGURE 16: HOUSING OUTCOMES (SOURCE: SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT HL1 DATA)

Scot Gov Outcomes Assess 1 & 4	Scotland	North Ayrshire
Returned to previous address or family/friends	11%	20%
Other - Known	8%	6%

We have a higher proportion of households returning home or moving in with relatives following a period of homelessness. This could be because of our recording practice as we accept a homeless application for all households threatened with homelessness within 2 months, many of whom resolve their family situation and return home.

Throughout homelessness, officers will continue to provide advice and assistance to prevent the occurrence of homelessness, often resulting in a return to the family home and the closure of the homeless application.

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
review the proportion of social rented lets to homeless people	across our area	Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan	2024	homeless people are rehoused within 13 weeks

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
to minimise the duration of homelessness		and existing plans		
Make sustainable lets to homeless people	across our area	Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan	2024	increased tenancy sustainment to 88%
work with private landlords to increase the level of private sector housing for homeless people	across our area	existing plans	2024	a higher proportion of homeless people access private sector housing as a sustainable housing outcome
review our approach to prevention and early intervention to enable people to remain within their family home as opposed to making a homeless presentation	across our area	existing plans	2024	fewer homeless people return home as a homeless outcome .

Island Homelessness

The level of homeless applications from residents on our island communities is exceptionally low with less than 3% of homeless approaches coming from island residents. The main reasons for an approach from island households is 'Other action by landlord resulting in the termination of the tenancy' accounting for 35% of all islands approaches in 2020/21

We have undertaken work to improve access to advice and information including holding 'surgeries' on the islands to allow people who are homeless or potentially homeless to seek advice and support without leaving the island, these were not well attended. We now work with island dwellers threatened with homeless to find the most suitable housing outcome relevant to their individual circumstances. We will build on the lessons learned during the COVID-19 lockdown, to increase access to homeless services for those living on our islands.

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
evaluate the impact of the Arran Local Lettings Initiative	on our islands	the work carried out to allocate new build homes on Arran	2023	publication of research and recommendations
review the Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme and recommend future approach	on our islands	existing policy & procedure / systems & services	2024	publication of the review and action plan (as appropriate)
work with private businesses to resolve lack of key worker housing on our islands	on our islands	existing policy & procedure / systems & services	2023	ongoing partnership working

Partnership working

The multi-agency, North Ayrshire Homelessness Task Force, supported by a number of operational working groups, drives the strategic direction of homeless prevention and alleviation activities aligned to national and local priorities. The task force is also the governance group for the North Ayrshire Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan detailed below. Membership comprises of the Council, Justice Services, the third sector, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, the Health and Social Care Partnership, NHS Ayrshire and Arran, SERCO, Elected Members, and people with lived experience. The task force was set up during 2017 to develop an integrated, prevention focussed approach to households with complex needs to minimise the risk of homelessness and repeat homelessness, whilst delivering sustainable housing outcomes for vulnerable people.

Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019 - 2024

Our Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan sets out how North Ayrshire Council and its partners will work together to implement a housing led approach to meeting the needs of homeless households. Where it is not possible for us to prevent homelessness, our priority is to secure a settled housing option for every homeless household as quickly as possible. Our rapid rehousing objectives are detailed below.

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
prevent homelessness wherever possible	across our area	Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan	2024	levels of homelessness will reduce
reduce the time spent by homeless people in temporary accommodation	across our area	Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan	2024	length of stay in temporary accommodation reduces from 26 weeks to 13 weeks
reduce the number of hostel places and increase dispersed accommodation	across our area	Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan	2024	the number of units of hostel accommodation will reduce by 25-50 units
reduce the overall number of units of temporary accommodation required	across our area	Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan	2024	50 fewer units of temporary accommodation available
implement housing first for our most complex and disadvantaged service users	across our area	Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan	2024	100 units of Housing First delivered
shift funding away from residential support to floating support	across our area	Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan	2024	appropriate levels of support available to prevent and alleviate homelessness

Prevention of Homelessness

Our priority over the next five years is to work with partners to develop a whole systems approach to the prevention of homelessness through early intervention, building on the excellent relationships and processes already in place.

Our Housing Advice team provide an enhanced housing options service to any resident in North Ayrshire at risk of homelessness. Officers assess risk, identify housing options and link in support and advice services as required to minimise the risk of homelessness.

We fund third sector Housing Advice Services in North Ayrshire to ensure households have access to independent advice and advocacy throughout periods of homelessness or where representation is required to challenge court action. This service also undertakes work in all local secondary schools providing advice to senior pupils to reduce the risk of homelessness.

The North Ayrshire Housing Support service works with households who are homeless or tenants who require additional help to sustain their accommodation. This experienced team works in partnership with specialist services including money and debt advice, addiction and mental health teams, wider health and social care partners, employability services and welfare benefits, to ensure households at risk get access to the most appropriate level and type of support to enable them to sustain their accommodation.

We have a duty to provide housing support services to people assessed as unintentionally homeless where they have a housing support need as defined under the Housing Support Duty 2013.

During 2020/21, 47% (534) of all North Ayrshire homeless applicants were assessed as having a support need. Of these, 32% identified only one support need, 12% identified as having two, with 4% (44) advising three or more support needs. Comparing this to the analysis undertaken to inform the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan during 2018, there are 6% fewer households presenting with support needs, however homeless households with higher level and complex support needs remains high.

Every homeless person in North Ayrshire has a support needs assessment undertaken and a dedicated Housing Support officer will provide services throughout the period of homelessness to help them prepare for independent living. Where required, support provision will continue when a person moves into their own home to ensure they are able to sustain their accommodation, reducing the risk of repeat homelessness. Where there is a need for specialist support provision, the support officer will work in partnership with other services to ensure homeless people have access to the support required.

Homeless people with complex needs are supported through our Housing First programme delivered by a specialist multi-agency team comprising of officers from Housing Support, Housing Advice, Addiction Services and Mental Health Services. The support is enhanced by the work of a commissioned peer support service provided by Turning Point Scotland. Since 2019 we successfully resettled 59 homeless people with complex needs through this programme with a tenancy sustainment level of 88%.

Riverside homes have embarked on a Housing First Model for women with children at risk of homelessness. Following their successful application to the Homeless prevention fund (administered by the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations), Riverside homes secured funding to deliver the Housing First for family's project. At present, support is being focussed on existing Riverside Homes tenants with families and families who have recently been re-housed following a homeless application, there is an intention to extend this to women experiencing violence in tandem with Women's Aid.

The above is a snapshot of some of the work being undertaken as part of our prevention focus. Over the next five years our priority will be to integrate the work of partners, ensuring housing issues are considered and risks identified and responded to at the earliest opportunity to minimise the risk of homelessness. This will be aligned to the new Prevention Duty currently being prepared by the Scottish Government.

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
review our existing housing options advice provision to ensure we are maximising the opportunity to prevent homelessness	across our area	existing prevention work	2024	homeless presentations reduce year on year
respond in partnership with statutory and third sector agencies to planned national changes to homelessness prevention legislation	across our area	forthcoming legislation from the Scottish Government	tbc	publication of our response
identify an action plan for housing insecurity and hidden homelessness	across our area	forthcoming national research (tbc)	tbc	publication of our action plan
Make sustainable offers of housing to homeless people and provide appropriate support to enable them to retain their home	across our area	existing policy & procedure / systems & services and our Charter commitment	2024	more than 88% of homeless people sustain their permanent accommodation

The Rented Sector

Private Rented Sector

According to current Council Tax data, the Private Rented Sector accounts for 12% of North Ayrshire's total housing stock, ranging from 10% to 14% across the localities. Private rented homes are therefore an important component of our housing system.

The Private Rented Sector is a vital part of our housing supply. It provides a housing option for people who cannot afford to buy but who would have little chance of securing a social rented home. Private renting is also a way of supporting a responsive, dynamic workforce,

offering mobile workers a place to live when they move to a new area. All private landlords must be registered with us before they rent out homes. [Registrations](#) can be made either on-line, or in writing, and a fee applies.

We will continue to do all we can through our [Scheme of Assistance](#), to support private landlords to provide rented homes that meet the highest tenancy and condition standards possible.

Rent Pressure Zones

We are part of the 'Ayrshires' [Broad Rental Market Area](#).' This is important because the average private sector rents from across North, South and East Ayrshire are used to set the [Local Housing Allowance](#) – which in turn 'caps' how much housing benefit people get through their Universal Credit.

However, because the figure is calculated from across Ayrshire, which has some of the lowest private sector rents in the country, there is a risk that in more pressured housing markets - such as Arran – rents may be much higher than average. In these areas, private tenants may not benefit from the Local Housing Allowance in the same way as people in other parts of Ayrshire do. If someone's housing benefit element does not cover their rent costs, they must find the money themselves to make up the shortfall.

Rent pressure zones effectively limit how much private sector rents can increase by in each area. We can apply to the Scottish Government to have areas designated as a 'rent pressure zone' if the private sector rents in that area are rising too much, causing problems for the tenants and where we are under pressure to provide more housing. Over the lifetime of this strategy, it is anticipated that the Scottish Government will deliver on their commitment to reform Rent Pressure Zones, allowing a more localised approach for areas experiencing the impacts of high rents.

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
Research the need for rent controls	across our areas	forthcoming rent control legislation	2027	publication of our findings and recommended actions to be taken (as appropriate)

Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme

Our Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme was set up to help people who want to rent a home from a private landlord but are unable to afford the cash deposit to do so. For a period of 6 months, we act as guarantor and provide the landlord with a written guarantee for the deposit during that time. Meanwhile, the tenant pays the actual deposit in instalments. The scheme is available to people with a connection to North Ayrshire and focuses on assisting people who are in receipt of benefits or have a low income and who are homeless, potentially homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless.

During the past two years landlord participation in the scheme has declined, despite every effort being made to advertise the scheme and encourage landlords to participate. The main reasons are as follows:

- Universal Credit has had a significant impact as landlords are apprehensive about accepting an application with no guarantee of rental payments. Landlords continue to struggle with housing element payments even though they can apply for Managed Payments
- There are very few available properties and very few landlords/letting agents willing to work with the scheme
- COVID-19 compounded this with the introduction of extended notice periods and as a result private sector rents have also increased in North Ayrshire by *6.8%. This means a lot of properties in the private rented sector are above the Local Housing Allowance rate and are now out of reach to most applicants wishing to use the Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme.

**Scottish Government Private Sector Rent Statistics: 2010 - 2021*

Houses in Multiple Occupation

There are eleven Houses in Multiple Occupation in North Ayrshire - most are managed by support organisations who provide care services. However, a few are the result of business owners choosing to provide shared accommodation for their staff. Nonetheless, there is no evidence to suggest that locally we need to focus on increasing this type of housing.

Tied Accommodation

Tied accommodation means you live in housing that comes with your job. While you are in employment you can continue to live in the house, but if your employment ends, so does your stay in that home.

There are two models of tied accommodation, firstly you could have a separate lease (tenancy) with the landlord for the duration of your employment, or secondly you may have a 'service occupancy' where the employer directly provides the home.

There are many good examples of tied accommodation, and it is an important tool for a mobile labour force, however, there are some challenges with it too. Living in tied accommodation means your employer is also your landlord, this puts them in a powerful position and their tenant in a more vulnerable one. The Scottish Government, on introduction of the New Housing Standards, will hold tied accommodation to the same condition standards as all other tenures.

The '[Shelter Scotland](#)' website provides information for people considering tied accommodation. We would recommend anyone considering this type of housing to review the guidance on that site first.

Crofting

Crofting is a system of landholding that is unique to Scotland. The landholder or 'crofter' is usually a tenant who pays rent and is protected by specific legislation, though some land is owned by its crofter. A crofter can build a house on their croft or live elsewhere, so long as it is within 32km of that croft.

In 2010, Arran, Greater Cumbrae and Little Cumbrae were all designated as crofting areas. However, none of our islands has a history of crofting, and in 2019/20, there was only one privately owned croft in North Ayrshire (on Arran) – a situation which has remained unchanged since at least 2013.

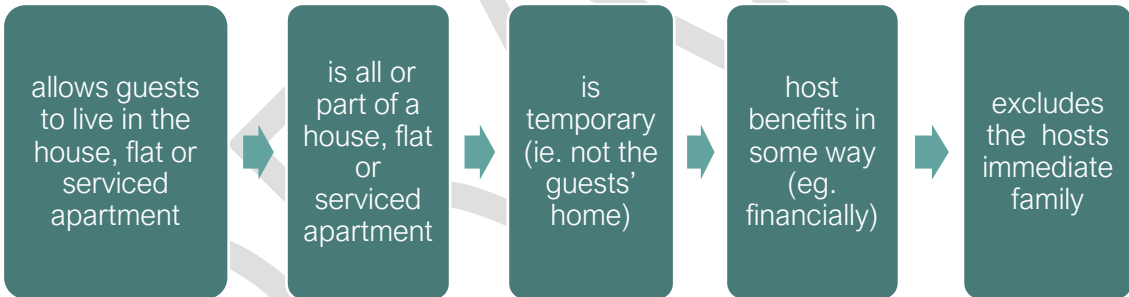
The Scottish Government see crofting as having “a vital role in maintaining the population in rural...areas, including the retention of young people and families,” as well as “helping to address individual’s’ housing needs in areas where housing development is limited and complex,” and have committed to identifying how planning policies can help to sustain and grow crofting communities.

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
help grow and sustain crofting communities	across our area	NPF4 policy on crofting	2024	guidance supporting crofting has been published

Short-Term Lets

Short term lets do not include ‘unconventional’ homes such as caravans, pods and canal boats, the term also excludes hotels. Short-term lets have a role to play in tourism driven economies, in our area this tends to be the islands.

FIGURE 13: WHAT IS A SHORT TERM LET?



Platforms such as ‘Airbnb’ and ‘booking.com’ make it easier for homeowners to enter the tourism rental market, but these same owners may have previously opted to become a private landlord. Effectively, the tourism market is eroding the number of homes available for private rent, which results in a lack of supply and inflating private rental charges.



Arran has the second largest number of self-catering properties in Scotland after Edinburgh – and given the size of the housing markets in each area, Arran's situation is proportionately the severest in the country.

Planned legislation intends to direct how we can balance 1) island housing need, 2) the concerns of residents and 3) tourism industry requirements, all of which are crucial to support our island communities.

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
Consider limiting short term lets in pressurised housing markets	North Ayrshire	Scottish Government Legislation introduced	2023	a research report is produced with findings

Intermediate Housing

Intermediate housing (sometimes called 'mid-market' housing) is a type of rented accommodation that costs more than social rented homes, but less than private rented homes. In our area however, the cost of housing is similar, regardless of whether it is social or private, and this means that there is no 'middle' in which to locate a mid-market model.

However, this type of housing does have other benefits. It supports the regeneration of an area by promoting mixed communities who have access to a range of good quality new housing. It can also offer a solution to under 35-year-olds, who form half of the private rented sector, and whom research suggests are excluded from both home ownership (due to difficulties securing a deposit) and social rented homes (due to a lack of assessed need).

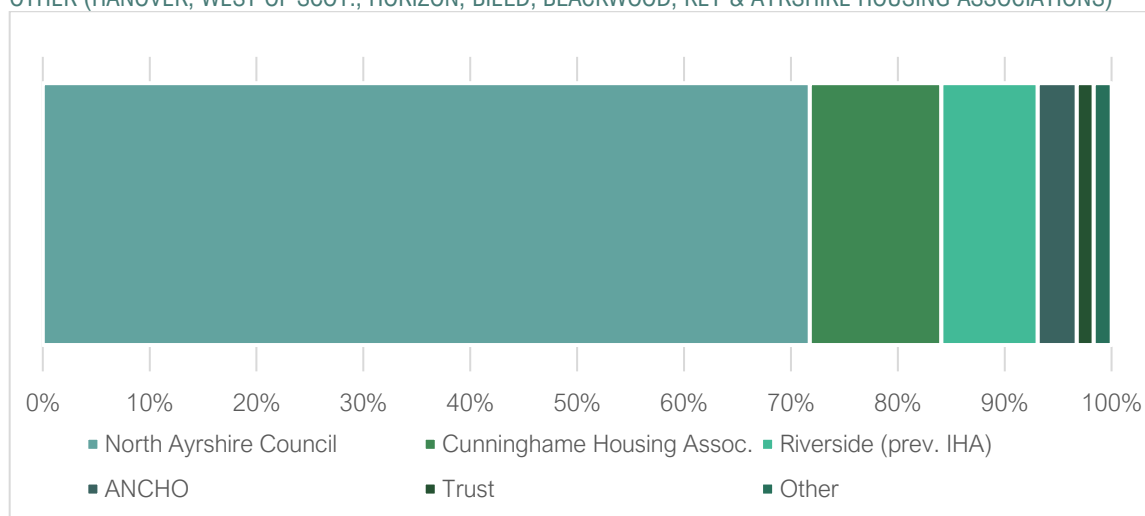
We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
consider introducing new and innovative housing models for people who are excluded from both buying a home and accessing social housing	across our area	-	2025	the publication of the review and any associated action plan

Social Housing

There are approximately 18,000 homes in the North Ayrshire social rented sector, and while collectively managed by the Council and eleven social landlords, it is the Council along with Cunninghame Housing Association, Riverside Housing and ANCHO who own and let most of the housing in the area (97%).

Eighty six percent of social housing in our area is classified as 'general needs,' and the remaining 14% are designed for people with specialist needs.

FIGURE 17: SOCIAL HOUSING STOCK BY LANDLORD, 2019 (SOURCE: SCOTTISH HOUSING REGULATOR) NB: OTHER (HANOVER, WEST OF SCOT., HORIZON, BIELD, BLACKWOOD, KEY & AYRSHIRE HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS)



The 'Social Housing Charter' sets out the standards and outcomes that all social landlords are responsible for meeting. It does not replace any of the legal duties that apply to social landlords but is intended "to improve the quality and value of the services that social landlords provide...[supporting] the long-term aim of...a safer and stronger Scotland" by:

- stating clearly what tenants and other customers can expect from social landlords, and helping them to hold landlords to account
- focusing the efforts of social landlords on achieving outcomes that matter to their customers

The [Scottish Housing Regulator](#) assesses and reports on how well social landlords are performing and publishes information on performance on their website.

We will	Where	By building on	By	and we know we are successful if/when
publish annual performance updates and issue to our tenants by email, social media and on our website	across our area	existing policy & procedure	October each year	our annual performance information has been published
update the North Ayrshire Network on our performance against the Charter twice yearly	across the area	existing policy & procedure	May & October each year	the North Ayrshire Network has received its six-monthly update
implement a SMS text tenant-messaging service	across our area	-	2023	the introduction of a SMS service

We will	Where	By building on	By	and we know we are successful if/when
mobilise our Welfare Reform Advice Team	across our area	existing policy & procedure	2024	100% of staff working in the Council's Welfare Reform Team are fully mobile
ensure all our new homes comply with the Scottish Government's 'Greener Standard' or equivalent.	across our area	existing policy & procedure	2023	100% of all new build homes meet the greener standard (or equivalent)
build 1,625 new homes by 2028 (this target includes properties earmarked for delivery during the LHS 2018-2022, which were delayed as a result of COVID-19)	across our area	continuing, and building on, the work that started in 2018	2028	1,625 new social rented homes are built

Mutual Exchange

All social housing tenants in the area can apply to swap their home with another social housing tenant, or even a number of tenants, so long as their landlord agrees. This is known as 'mutual exchange' and is a useful tool both for maximising the effectiveness of available social housing stock and for empowering our people to find their own housing solution. Our mutual exchange procedures were reviewed by our Tenant Scrutiny Panel in 2021 and recommendations were agreed and implemented to improve the process for tenants.

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
research barriers to mutual exchange in order to increase its use as a rehousing solution	across our area	-	2023	There is a significant increase in the number of mutual exchanges.

Allocations

The 'North Ayrshire Housing Register' is a partnership between the four main social landlords in North Ayrshire as noted above, and is based on a common allocation policy which gives our people access to 97% of all social housing in the area, just by completing a single form.

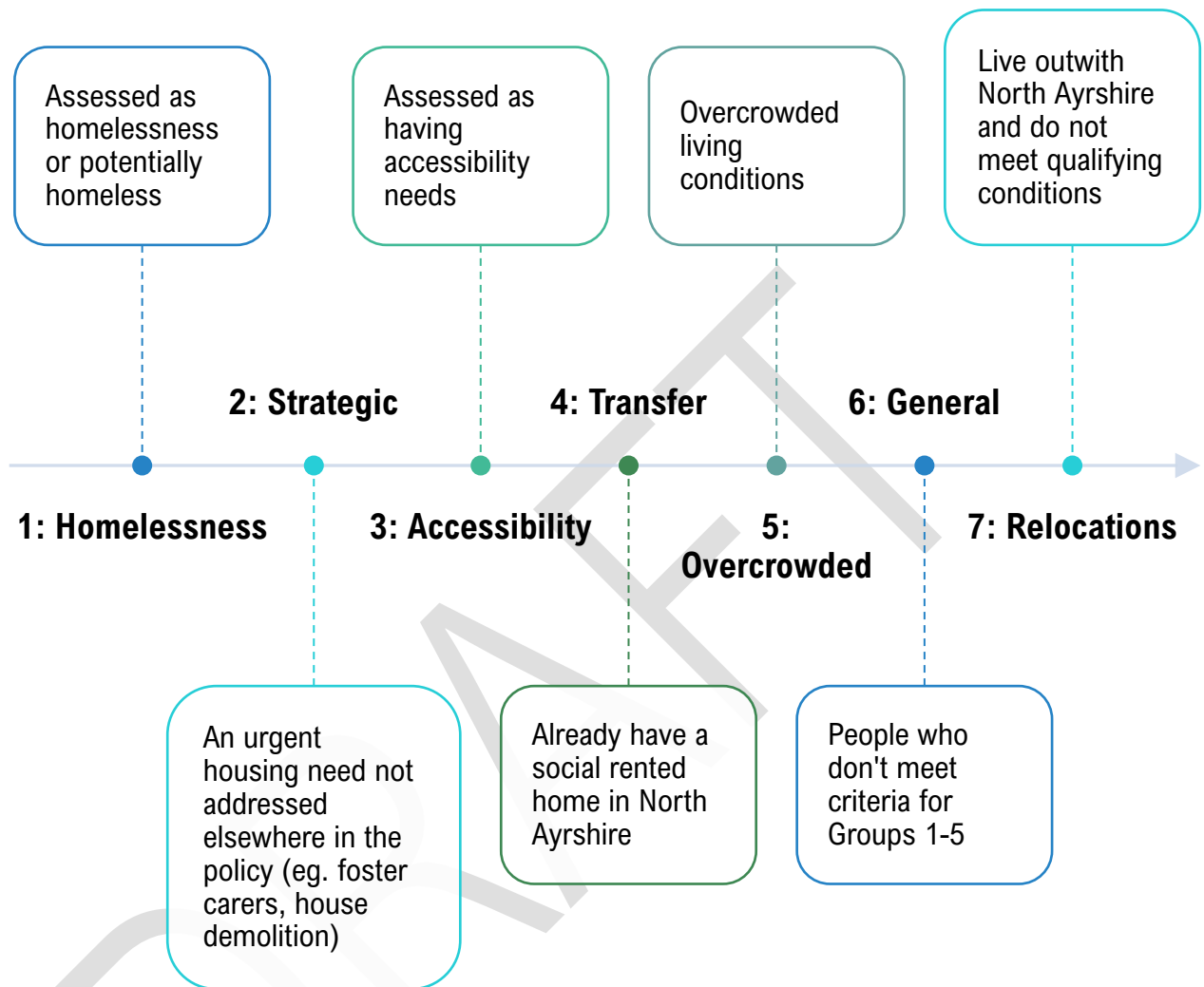
Households who apply to the register are assessed and allocated points and a 'group' based on their housing needs. The greater the need for a new or different home, the more points a household is given. Targets are set for the number of allocations to each group, and homes are allocated to those who have most points.

We review our allocation policy every three years to ensure it remains as effective as possible. All allocations are now based on a comprehensive assessment of an applicant's need, as well as considering their housing preferences. This means that our applicants receive more suitable offers, which allows them to settle in an area, in turn supporting tenancy sustainment, lower turnover, and community stability.

Where a community has specific housing pressures, we can make localised adjustments to our allocation policy, to meet the needs of those communities. On Arran, people were telling us that it was difficult to get an affordable home. Young people were leaving the island to find affordable housing, and employers were telling us that they were struggling to attract employees, again due to the lack of affordable housing. For these reasons, we introduced a 'Local Lettings Initiative' on Arran. Island applicants are considered in line with the guidelines of our common allocation policy, then also awarded additional points if they live and/or work on the island.

We will	Where	By building on	By	and we know we are successful if/when
work with our partners to review the North Ayrshire allocation policy on a three-yearly rolling cycle	across our area	previous housing allocation policy	2023 & 2026	there is a reduction of demand for housing, particularly within island communities of Arran and Cumbrae

FIGURE 18: NORTH AYRSHIRE HOUSING REGISTER: ALLOCATION GROUPS, 2020



The Housing Market & Home Ownership

The Housing to 2040 strategy prioritises “homes for living in, not for accumulating wealth,” and the Government has committed to take action to ensure the housing market operates fairly across Scotland, providing housing options that are affordable and choices in all communities.

We are piloting a Home Ownership Made Easy project in Largs titled HOME. HOME allows a person to own part of a property with the Council owning the rest. For a one-off, upfront payment of either £5,000 or £40,000 depending on what model the person qualifies for, and a monthly occupancy fee thereafter, they will have a brand new, modern and energy efficient home, from a trusted seller.

By paying a monthly occupancy fee there is no need to rely on tradesman as they will have access to a dedicated repairs helpline and can arrange for repairs to be carried out in the knowledge that the cost of that repair is already covered.

They won't need to worry about ongoing maintenance or renewing items such as boilers, roof, windows and external doors. All this is also covered by the monthly fee.

Before moving into their home, they will sign an occupancy agreement. This agreement sets out the conditions of the residency and provides them with the security of knowing that by adhering to the terms of the agreement, they can live in the home for as long as they want to.

These 26 new homes are forecast to be completed during the lifetime of this strategy.

Self-Provided

The Scottish Government define self-provided housing as either "self-build (where a person builds their own house or appoints their own builder), custom-build (where a person tasks a house builder to tailor a home to their preferences before it is built) and collective build (where a group of people design and build several homes together)."

The Government sees self-provided homes as a way of tailoring houses to people's long-term needs, helping deliver affordable and energy efficient homes that support diversity and innovation, supporting young people in rural areas, and introducing more choice and flexibility into the private sector. Increasing the opportunities and number of self-provided homes is a national priority.

We are piloting a self-build project in Largs titled BUILD, where people can purchase one of six fully serviced plots on which they can build their own home. The first of these new homes are forecast to be completed during the lifetime of this strategy.

People in North Ayrshire, who are interested in self-provided housing can record their interest, by completing an [online form](#), noting their preferred area, plot size and budget etc. They will also be able to remove themselves from the register if their requirements change. At the time of writing (June 2022), there were 174 interested self-builders on our register.

Our annually reviewed [Housing Land Audit](#) will consider demand from the register and respond as needed.



We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
set up a dedicated 'self-provided' housing webpage	across our area	-	2024	publication of web page that includes details of opportunities, information, grants if available, signposting and access to the register of interest.
provide a 'design guide' to help navigate the planning process for self-provided home builders	across our area	the 'plot passport' document prepared for the pilot project (Largs)	2024	publication of the design guide
maintain a database of people interested in self-provided homes and review demand annually to gauge where/how much land needs to be released to meet demand	across our area	Forthcoming Scottish Government guidance (due 2022) / Our own evaluation of the 'self-build' pilot project in Largs / Annual housing land audit	2023	a register of interest for self-provided homes is in place
evaluate the self-build-pilot-project in Largs, and factor findings into our strategy for full-scale implementation (if demand dictates)	across our area	work already carried out to launch the self-build pilot project	2023	publication of evaluation report

Empty Homes

Empty homes can have a negative effect on our neighbourhoods. They are much more likely to fall into disrepair and are often the target of antisocial behaviour. At any given time, there will be a number of empty homes in the area. This is normal and there are often very good reasons why, such as the owner being in hospital and their family being reluctant to sell, or the owners have bought a new property and have not sold their old one yet. These empty homes tend not to cause major problems for communities. Generally, they are looked after by the owners or their families and sell when they are marketed.

However, there are 500 properties in our area which are classed as 'long-term' empty (empty for more than 1 year). It is these properties which we target our resources at. Bringing these empty properties back into use can help us with our regeneration and economic development ambitions.

Our 'Private Sector Housing Team' work with owners of these 'long-term' empty homes, trying to bring the properties back into use. On average, the team help owners bring 80% of these empty homes back into use. The team can also consider using Compulsory Purchase powers to buy empty properties that are in poor condition and where the owner is unable, or unwilling, to address the disrepair. Empty homes that we purchase are brought up to standard and allocated in the normal way.

We apply a Council Tax 'levy' to homes which are empty for an extended period (e.g., homes which are empty for 12+ months are charged double Council tax). The money raised, is then used to support the development projects which are set out in the Strategic Housing Investment Plan.

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
buy back and bring empty homes back into use	across our area	scheme of Assistance and Empty Homes Buy Back approach	2023	a minimum of 2 empty homes are purchased and brought back into use each year

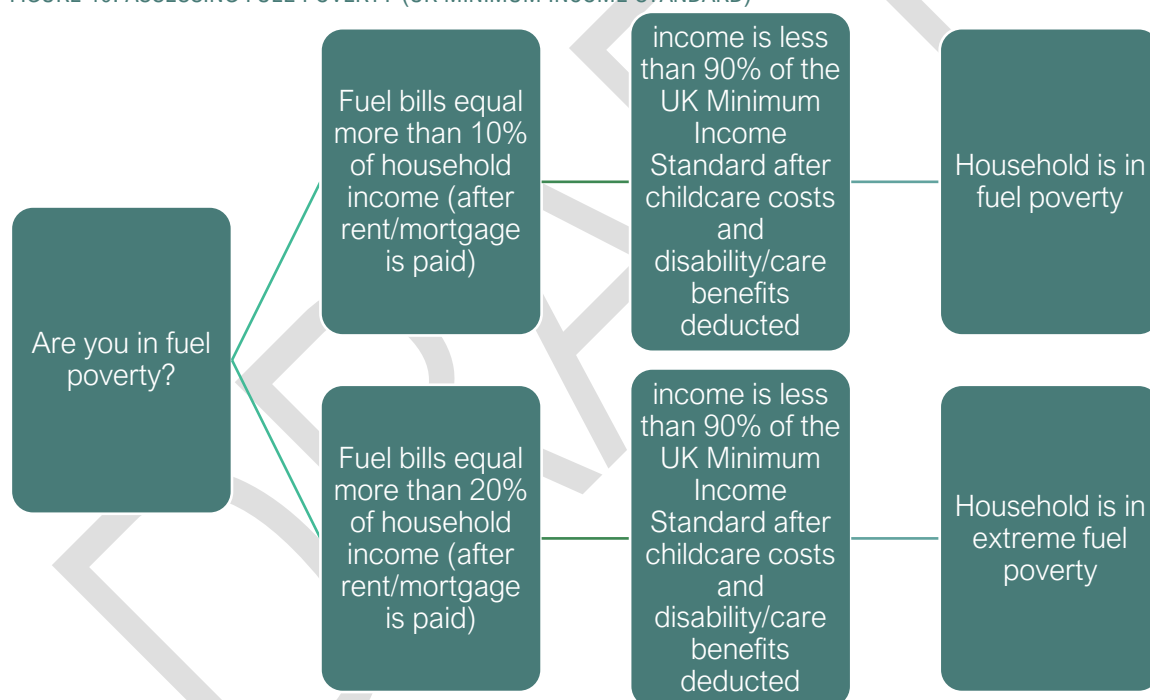


Affordable Warmth & Zero Emissions

Our homes are energy efficient and release less emissions

Fuel Poverty

FIGURE 19: ASSESSING FUEL POVERTY (UK MINIMUM INCOME STANDARD)



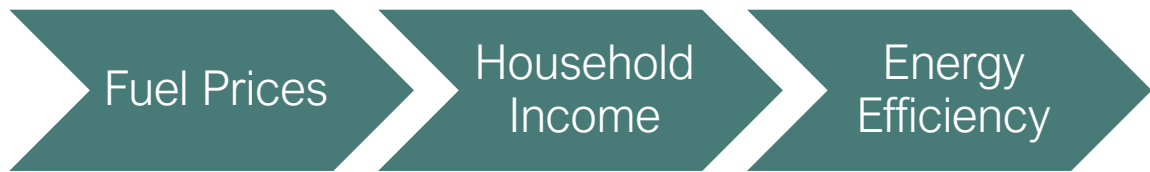
Fuel poverty tends to affect the most vulnerable people in our communities and has a detrimental impact on health and well-being, for example, older people and those with disabilities are more likely to be affected, because of lower incomes, as well as needing extra warmth in their home through the day.

The Scottish Government has set statutory targets - by 2040 no more than 5% of households should be in fuel poverty and no more than 1% of households should be in extreme fuel poverty.



Three elements contribute to fuel poverty: fuel prices, low household income and the energy efficiency of the home.

FIGURE 20: THE THREE FACTORS WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO FUEL POVERTY



According to the Scottish Government’s [Scottish House Condition Survey](#), between 2016-19, 28% of households in North Ayrshire were in fuel poverty (Scottish Government, 2019). Moreover, the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation data shows 74 of our 186 data zones in the top 20% most deprived in Scotland. Given that fuel poverty features as one of the determining factors in the SIMD it is likely that fuel poverty features highly across such areas. People without mains gas are also more at risk of fuel poverty. Census 2011 reported a lack of central heating in rural North Ayrshire (where there is no mains gas), with significant spikes on the islands. Unfortunately, Census 2021 was postponed due to the pandemic, therefore the 2022 findings will not be available until after this strategy is published.

The current cost of living crisis places a significant burden on household income by increasing the cost of food, transport and in particular, energy.

The Office of Gas and Electric Markets (OFGEM) established an energy price cap for default tariffs in January 2019 to prevent overcharging by energy suppliers. However, record increases in global gas costs over the last six months (with wholesale prices quadrupling in the last year) led to OFGEM raising the energy price cap by 54% on 1 April 2022. Those on default tariffs paying by direct debit will see an increase of £693 from £1,277 to £1,971 per year, with those on prepayment meters seeing an increase of £708 from £1,309 to £2,017 per year. A further increase to the energy price cap is expected in October 2022.

Our objective is to support residents of North Ayrshire through the cost of living crisis by reducing fuel poverty and increasing affordable warmth, whilst reducing carbon emissions. We continue to investigate all models of support for residents, including implementation of actions within our [Environmental Sustainability & Climate Change Strategy 2021- 2023](#) (ESCCS 3), Affordable Warmth Workstream, supporting energy efficiency for hard to treat private sector properties through the Energy Efficient Scotland: Area Based Scheme, and utilise data from our recent Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy work to better target support.

FIGURE 21: ENERGY EFFICIENT SCOTLAND: AREA BASED SCHEMES – NORTH AYRSHIRE BUDGET ALLOCATIONS AND SPEND, 2019-2022 (SOURCE: SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT)

2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
£1.438 million	£1.613 million	£1.975 million

We have also taken part in phase 3 of the Scottish Government's 'Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy' pilot scheme. The strategy is due to become mandatory and as we move forward, it will inform how we approach the challenges of climate change, better energy efficiency, and fuel poverty, while we work towards a net zero (carbon emission) North Ayrshire, by 2030.

Most social rented homes in North Ayrshire have now met the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (or 'EESHS') and we are now preparing a delivery plan for 'EESHS2 to be delivered by 2032'. Our commitment to continue offering welfare reform advice and information services to social rented tenants will also help overcome one of the main factors involved in fuel poverty – low household income.

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
continue our programme of fitting solar panels on all Council properties where this is viable	across our area	existing policy & procedure	2023	500 Council homes per annum are retrofitted with solar panels
provide advice and information to local people on how best to improve the energy efficiency of their home	across our area	existing policy & procedure	2023	information and advice are produced and published
promote the benefits of regularly moving fuel suppliers to access the best deals	across our area	existing policy & procedure	2023	information and advice are produced and published
assist private home owners to reduce the amount of energy required in the home by taking a 'fabric first' approach (through EES:ABS)	across our area	Energy Efficiency & Climate Change Strategy	2023	1,000 homeowners assisted annually
provide financial information on income maximisation to Council tenants, and encourage our partners to do the same	across our area	existing policy & procedure	2023	publication of information relating to income maximisation
employ two Fuel Poverty Housing Support Workers as part of a 12-month pilot project aimed at assisting Council tenants who find it	across our area	-	2023	the findings of the pilot have been assessed

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
difficult to manage fuel bills, helping with income maximisation, welfare benefits advice and assistance, fuel and utilities advice				and published

Emissions

On 11th June 2019, we declared a 'Climate Emergency'.

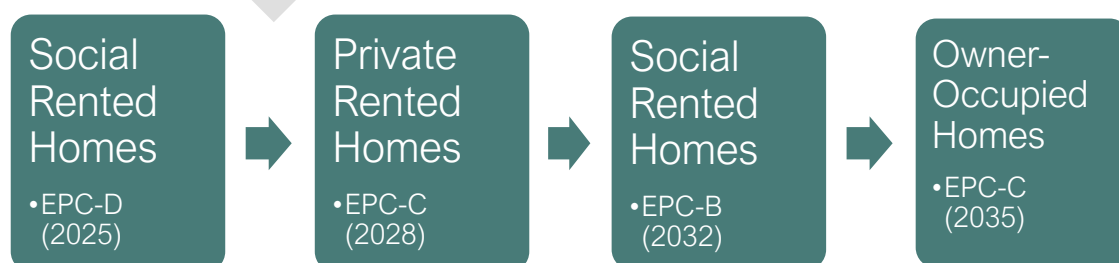
Summers are forecast to become increasingly warmer, introducing the risk of higher air pollution, water shortages and even heat related deaths. Wetter winters could herald flooding, and rising sea levels will be of particular concern to our residents whose homes are at sea level.

Our Climate Change Strategy 2021-2023 sets out the range of measures we already have in place to reduce emissions, but our ambition is for North Ayrshire to be 'carbon-neutral' by 2030.

Nationally our homes account for 15% of greenhouse gas emission, contributing to the very climate change that poses significant challenges for our people, our properties, and our places.

Reducing emissions from our homes and buildings, and making our communities more resilient, are the most important things we can do to help reduce Scotland's contribution to climate change. [HEEPS](#) is a national framework for improving the energy performance of Scotland's buildings, and is based around an ambition for warmer, greener and more energy efficient construction. Delivery of this vision is organised around regulating energy performance standards across Scotland's homes.

FIGURE 22: ENERGY EFFICIENCY STANDARDS FOR SCOTLAND'S HOMES, TARGET, AND DEADLINE



Decarbonisation will present an additional challenge for low-income households, a challenge we recognise, and we will ensure we only take forward actions where they will have no detrimental impact on fuel poverty rate. We can reduce emissions from our homes by moving towards electric central heating systems. However, these are more expensive

to run, so we also need to identify ways of offsetting the higher cost. Firstly, we can make the cost of electricity cheaper by fitting solar panels on our properties and allowing our tenants to benefit from this free source of electricity, and secondly, we can reduce the amount of electricity that is needed to heat the home by insulating roof spaces and walls. Works have commenced to address this by installing solar panels and external wall insulation to our homes as part of our roofing and rendering capital investment programme, either by way of a new installation or retrofitting.

Other ways of reducing emissions and minimising the impact on our climate include using renewable sources of fuel - we are exploring opportunities for air and ground source heat pumps and community 'district' heating systems - increasing insulation in homes (to keep heat in during winter, and out during summer) or exploring opportunities for 'passive solar gain.' Many of these solutions reduce the amount of fuel needed to heat or cool the home, and in turn, helps us alleviate fuel poverty.

We must also build 'climate' resilience into our housing. The wetter, warmer climate will have an impact on the fabric of our buildings, and how much maintenance they will require. As a Council, we are taking action to prevent flooding, and have adopted an approach of tree planting to absorb water and promote biodiversity.

Scotland's fourth National Planning Framework (or 'NPF4') has been published in draft by the Scottish Government. The draft Framework strengthens a number of key planning themes in support of meeting Scotland's climate change targets, including prioritising the use of 'brownfield' sites for new housing provision, supporting local and town centre living and considering transport in land-use planning. However, bringing brownfield land into use can be challenging because of contamination and remediation costs. Private developers often see brownfield developments as risky. The Council's Regeneration Delivery Plan has a focus on these issues and the role which the public sector has in resolving such challenges in a way that delivers public value.

The Scottish Government have also set out an agenda for modernising house building particularly through offsite construction - an important tool in achieving good quality homes that meet net zero targets. There is also a focus on economic benefits, digitisation, speedier development, community wins and improved health and safety.

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
measure the performance of the two 'sustainable' pilot homes, and implement the most valuable components in our development programme	across our area	the completion of the sustainable exemplar units	2024	the production of our findings and recommendations for future development
aim to include community car charging points as part of our estate-based regeneration programme	across our area	-	2023	charging points for electric vehicles are considered for 100% of Estate Based Regeneration Projects

include the infrastructure for future car charging points as part of our rewiring programme

across our area -

2023

100% of rewired homes will have capacity built in to allow car charging points to be installed in future

DRAFT

Improving the quality of our homes

Our homes are in good condition and people can access any support services they need

DRAFT



Statement of Assistance

Homeowners, whether they live in their home, or rent it to a tenant, have a duty to look after it. By doing so, they avoid disrepair, preserve the home as an asset and maintain its value, whilst ensuring it remains available to future generations.

We have a duty to make sure that all social housing in North Ayrshire meets the minimum standard. However, the responsibility for looking after privately owned homes – and for repair, maintenance, improvement, energy efficiency, or compliance with legislation - lies with the home's owner. It is also the responsibility of the owner to highlight the need for adaptations to their home.

We support and promote responsible homeownership, and our assistance will take the form of advice and information, and where appropriate by signposting people to other services. We will not supply funding to support the improvement of homes in the private housing sector. We also want to ensure that people who live in private housing can get any adaptations they may need to ensure their wellbeing and to allow them to live independently, and we provide financial assistance to cover some (or all) of eligible adaptations to private properties, subject to assessment.

Closing and Demolition Orders

We can serve closing or demolition orders if a house's state of disrepair is likely to deteriorate rapidly or is a danger to the occupants; or if the building fails to meet the [Tolerable Standard](#) and the cost of bringing the property up to that standard would be greater than the cost of rebuilding the property.

- Closing orders prevent a property being inhabited. Such orders can also be made of flats, where other properties within a block are habitable.
- Demolition orders are typically served on single dwelling houses, which can be demolished without impacting on neighbouring properties. Normally, when a demolition order is served, the property owner must organise and pay for demolition themselves. However, we have the right to demolish a building served with a demolition order and to do so without purchasing it.

We also have the right to purchase a property issued with a demolition or closing order. We identify if this is necessary by considering the condition of the property and the demand for housing in its location.

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
review Census 2022 data to identify any lack of central heating in rural and island locations, and, if necessary, prepare an action plan to resolve any issues	across our area	-	2024	1 review detailing the findings and recommendations re: lack of central heating in parts of North Ayrshire (based on Census 2022 data) is published
promote and provide a 'pre-tenancy support service' for landlords (on tenancy agreements and property standards)	across our area	-	2023	1 x publicity campaign promoting the pre-tenancy support service to private landlords
adopt a brownfield-first approach for all housing land supply	across our area	the recommendations of the Housing to 2040 & NPF4	2025	LDP3 is adopted by North Ayrshire Council
consider any negative impacts climate change could have on our Council housing stock (e.g., wetter, and warmer weather) and develop an action plan of preventative measures	across our area	NAC Housing Asset Management Plan	2027	1 x strategic plan setting out how risk of climate change will be mitigated in Council housings is published
revise our Housing Asset Management Plan to reflect the new universal condition standard	across our area	work already carried out re: SHQS and EESSH	2027	100% of our Council housing stock attain the new universal standard per annum

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
ensure our housing stock reaches the EESSH2 standard	across our area	work already carried out re: SHQS and EESSH	2032	100% of Council housing stock meets, or can be treated as meeting the standards set out in EESSH2
provide a limited number of 'missing shares' payments to owners of properties with common areas, where it is clear individual owners would be unable to fund the work themselves	across our area	existing policy & procedure / systems & services	2023	10 (max) missing shares paid per annum
support Empty Home owners bring their properties back into use	across our area	Scheme of Assistance	2023	200 (min) empty homes are brought back into use each year
update our Scheme of Assistance following the publication of the new housing standard	across our area	Scottish Government introduction of the new housing standard	2027	adoption of reviewed Scheme of Assistance
review of the closing and demolition orders process with a view to addressing any properties in disrepair	across our area	existing policy & procedure / systems & services	2023	adoption of Closing and Demolition Order Process

New Housing Standard

The Scottish Government started consultation on the 'New Housing Standard' in 2021, with the aim to publish the draft standard in 2023, enact it in law and introduce it between 2025 to 2030.

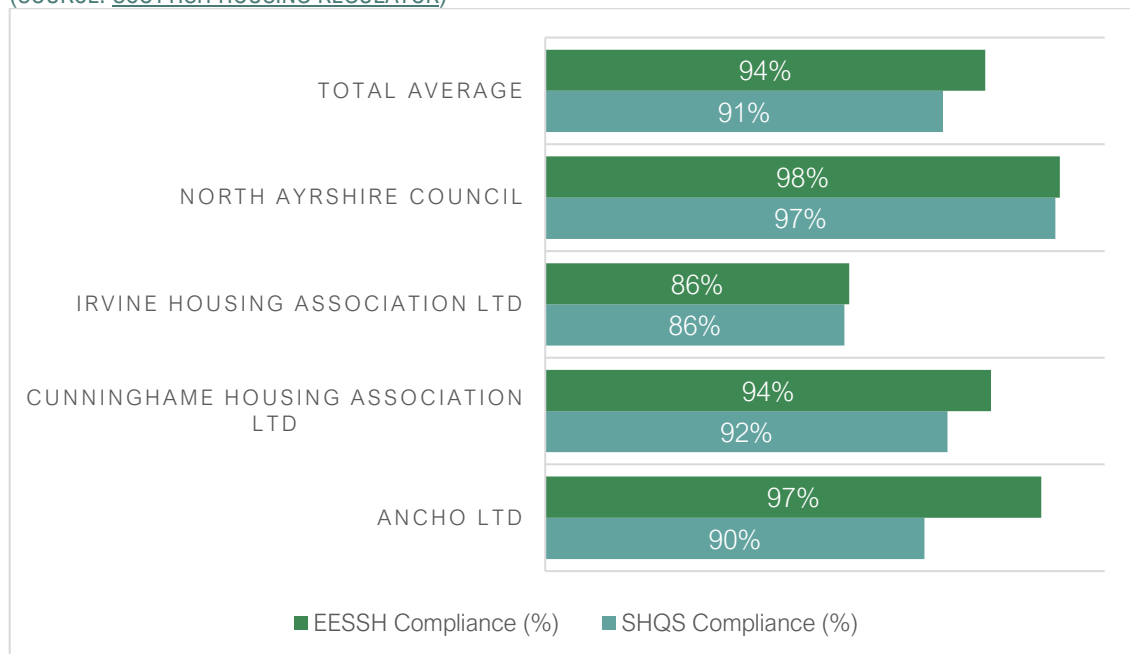
The new standard will mean that all homes (private and social) will have a legal duty to meet the same minimum condition standard. There will be no margins of tolerance, no exemptions and no 'acceptable levels' of sub-standard homes. Our 'pre-tenancy support service' for landlords, provides property inspections and tenancy agreement advice, and helps act as a preventative approach to future property condition issues.

We know the condition of our owner-occupied homes tends to be the same as, or better than, Scottish norms. This puts us in a strong local position for the introduction of the 'New Housing Standard.' However, when it comes to the condition of private rented homes there is little information. We await guidance from the Scottish Government on how private sector property condition information will be gathered as part of the 'New Housing Standard' launch. Until the New Housing Standard is introduced, homes in the private sector must continue to meet the 'Tolerable Standard.' Properties that do not are referred to as 'BTS' (or Below Tolerable Standard).

Our 'Private Sector Housing Team' ensures that owners of 'BTS' properties are supported to bring their homes up to the required standard by providing advice, assistance, and signposting. If the homeowner is also a private landlord, and fails to take corrective action, we refer them to our Licencing team and ask that they are 'de-registered' (i.e., can no longer operate as a landlord).

All social landlords have a strategic plan on how they will manage their assets, ours is called the 'Housing Asset Management Plan' and it has been agreed with our tenant representatives. It describes how we will invest in our stock, including any retrofitting that may be required to ensure continued compliance with the Scottish Housing Quality Standard and the latest Energy Efficiency Standards for Social Housing. The plan also sets out how we will identify any assets which are coming to the end of their life. The Asset Management Plan will be updated when the Scottish Government publish guidance on the 'New Housing Standard.'

FIGURE 2314: PERCENTAGE OF NORTH AYRSHIRE SOCIAL HOUSING MEETING THE SCOTTISH HOUSING QUALITY STANDARD & ENERGY EFFICIENCY STANDARDS FOR SOCIAL HOUSING BY SOCIAL HOUSING PROVIDER, 2020/21 (SOURCE: SCOTTISH HOUSING REGULATOR)



Digital Connectivity

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of having access to the internet. Digital connectivity allowed many of us to work from home; it also kept us in touch with our friends and loved ones during lockdown and allowed our children a way of accessing education.

Digital connectivity is also useful from an economic point of view, allowing people to access employment opportunities, access services, complete benefit forms and so on. It supports independent living, by allowing people to secure technology-enabled care.

The Scottish Government have rooted Digital Connectivity into their national housing strategy, and we will work with them to achieve their goal. Meanwhile, we have taken early action to bring digital connectivity to our new supply social housing, driving forward work to phase in the national requirement from 2021/22 that all new build social rented homes will be digitally enabled.

Alongside the Health and Social Care Partnership, Housing have developed a new supported accommodation housing model for implementation at various sites across North Ayrshire.

The focus is on maximising independence for adults within a homely setting, who require a higher level of support, and who are living with learning disabilities, or mental ill-health issues (all ages), or who are under 65 years and have physical disabilities. The new supported accommodation model can:

- Prevent demand for additional services
- Support a more independent lifestyle for service users

- Integrate residents into community life
- Use technological advances to support care
- Provide care and support in a homely setting
- Provide a base for effective care provision
- Realise financial savings for the HSCP

The SHIP will support the Health and Social Care Partnership to meet specialist housing need through dedicated supported accommodation projects, and as part of a wider site mix on other developments. The SHIP has delivered 42 supported accommodation housing units at three different locations to date and a further 15 homes are currently under construction at Caley Court, Stevenston.

Housing Contribution Statement

The Housing Contribution Statement ([link to be added](#)) sets out our shared ambition with the Health and Social Care Partnership - that everyone living in our area can have healthy and thriving lives. We work with the Partnership, participating on their strategic groups and providing a strategic framework that supports the provision of safe and comfortable homes, good places, and regeneration, allow people to flourish and maintain a healthy life. On an operational level we work together to support households with more complex needs, whether that be identifying bespoke housing or support solutions or prioritising repairs for vulnerable households.

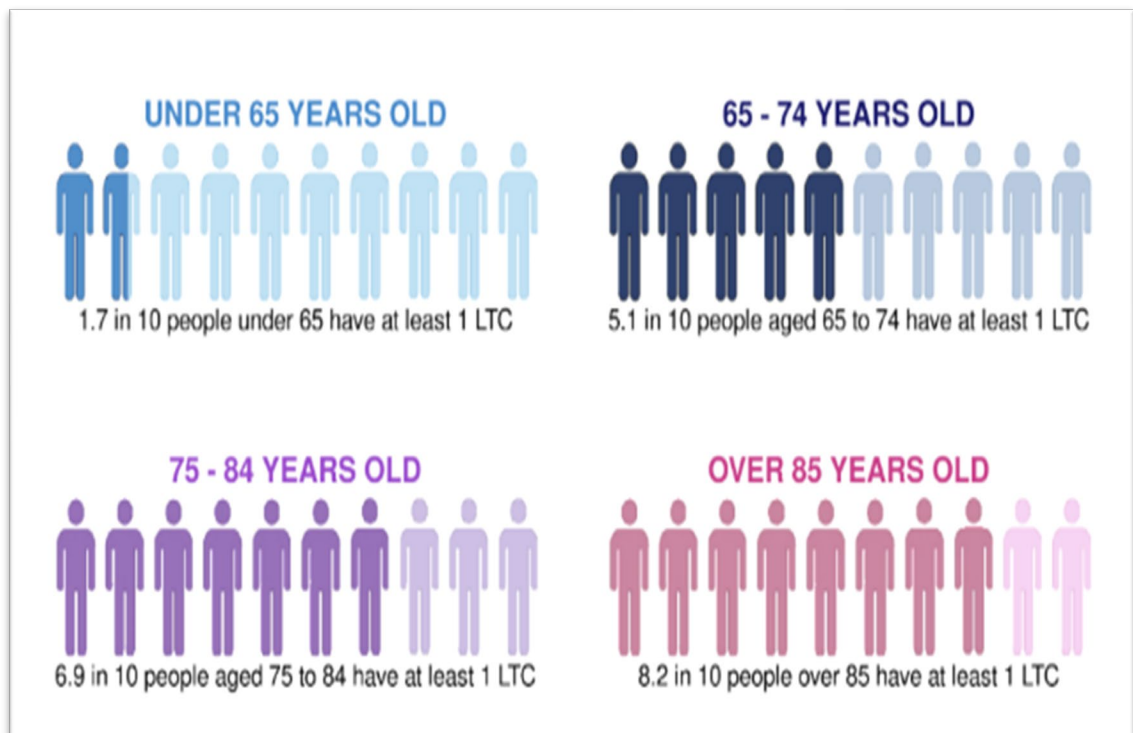
FIGURE 24 3: SHARED PRIORITIES BETWEEN THE LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY (LEFT HAND COLUMN) AND THE HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP (REMAINING COLUMNS)

Priorities	Tackle Inequalities	Enable Communities	Improving Mental & Physical Health and Wellbeing	Provide early and effective support	Develop and Support our Workforce
Our places support thriving and inclusive communities	✓	✓	✓		✓
Our people have affordable homes in the place they choose to live	✓	✓	✓		✓
Our homes are energy efficient and release less emissions	✓			✓	✓
Our homes are in good condition and people can access any support services they need	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Independent Living

Life expectancy has been increasing in North Ayrshire over the last few decades. Our females are expected to live to around 80 years of age, our males to around 76 years. However, not all our people's lives will be lived in good health. Our males are expected to live for 17 years beyond their healthy life expectancy, and our females for 24 years.

FIGURE 25 15: LONG TERM HEALTH CONDITIONS (LTC) FOR NORTH AYRSHIRE, BY AGE GROUP, 2018/19
(SOURCE: NORTH AYRSHIRE HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP)



Just over a quarter of people living in North Ayrshire have at least one physical long-term condition – the risk of which increases significantly with age. We also estimate that around 2,300 wheelchair users live in our area - 800 of whom will have an unmet housing need by 2024.

We want our housing to offer enough flexibility to our citizens, so that they will be able to remain living at home, independently, for as long as they wish, regardless of their stage in life. This means homes which are either built to be accessible to everyone, or which can be retrofitted with adaptations where needed.



Specialist Housing

Across North Ayrshire there are c.2,500 social rented homes which have been adapted to meet 'particular' housing needs. This includes housing for wheelchair users, those with limited mobility, sheltered and very sheltered housing, homes with community alarm systems and adapted homes. It is harder to quantify how many homes in the private sector are adapted, as many homeowners will carry out adaptations as and when they need them.

Recognising that the number of specialist homes is unlikely to match the number of people with specialist needs, the Government has committed to a new 'Scottish Accessible Homes Standard' which will be part of national building standards by 2025/26. The accessible standard will see accessibility designed and built into all new homes, increasing the housing choices for people with disabilities and reducing the need for expensive retrofitting as people age or their needs change. The alignment of housing support and social care services is also planned, to ensure a person-centred approach and achieve the best housing outcomes for people.

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
ensure new Council housing meets the needs of wheelchair users	across our area	current progress within the Affordable Housing Supply Programme	2027	10% of homes built are suitable for wheelchair users

Adaptations

Research tells us that most older and disabled people want to continue to live in their home for as long as possible. However, often their home is no longer suitable for their needs. Adaptations can be an effective way of altering the home to allow these households to continue to stay there.

Adaptations can be low cost and minor (e.g., handrails or banisters) or much more expensive and major (e.g., ramps, specialist toilets or wet rooms). There are grants available to help some homeowners and private sector tenants pay the cost of their adaptation; social housing tenants do not pay for this work.

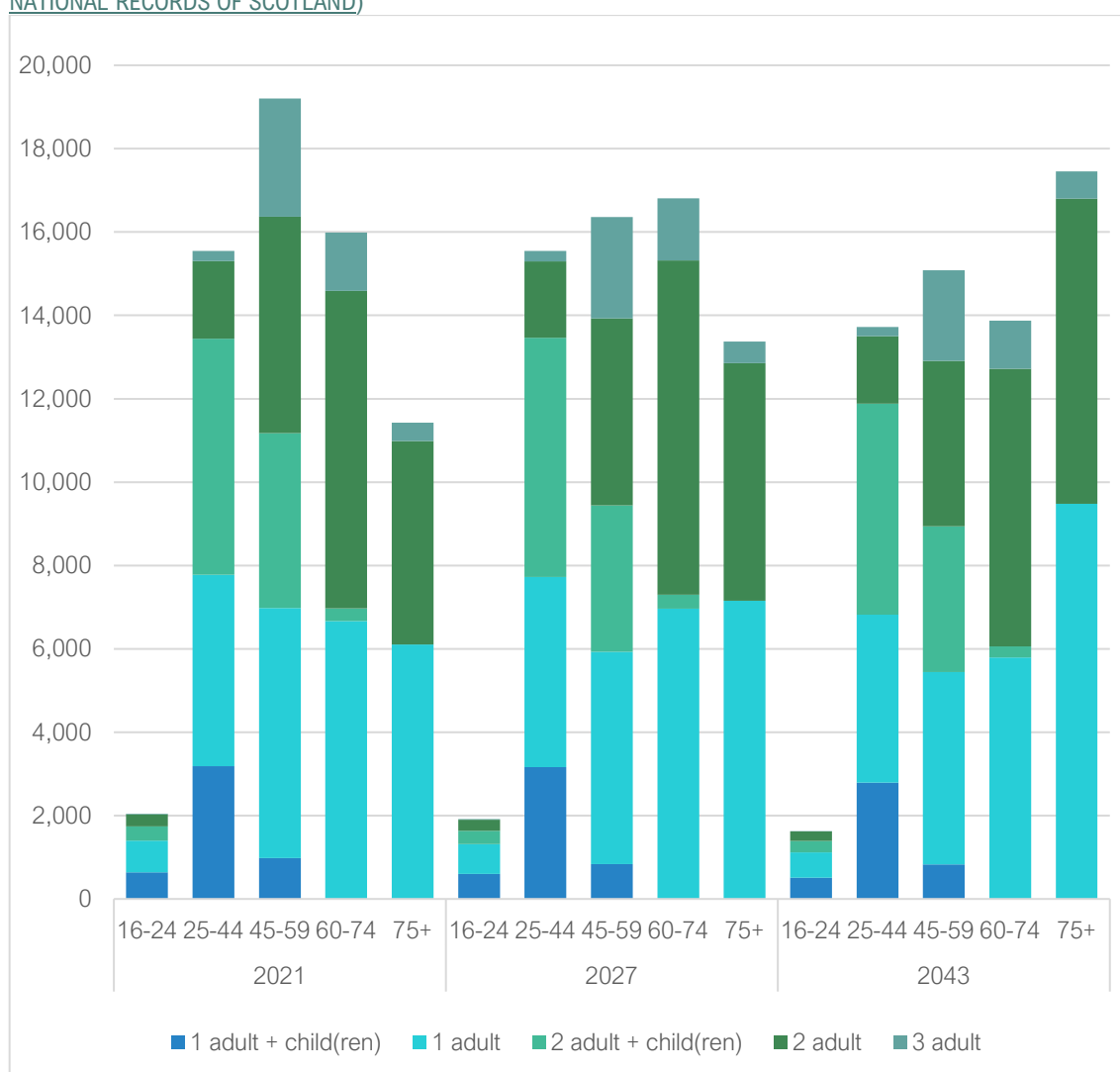
In 2021, we piloted an 'assisted living exemplar' housing model which promoted independent living through assistive technology. The model recognised that while an individual's care must be tailored to their specific needs, there are technologies which can offer benefits to most people who need extra support. Our pilot explored super-fast broadband and a range of smart technologies. These included smart heating, lighting, and door entry. The added benefit was that residents were also able to video call their family on the device. A particularly useful option during the COVID-19 pandemic, and a real step forward in minimising social isolation.

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
provide funding to the Health and Social Care Partnership, to cover the costs of adaptations for Council tenants	across our area	the work of the Adaptations Working Group to streamline the adaptations service	2023	annual funding provided for adaptations to Council homes in line with annual budgets
provide a housing support service to help people keep their North Ayrshire tenancies	across our area	existing policy & procedure	2023	100% of households who receive tenancy support, sustain their tenancies
fit handrails to all external access steps as a pre-emptive measure that will help avoid crisis situations	across our area	-	2027	100% of suitable homes have a handrail fitted
train our front-line staff to recognise the need for adaptations and support before a crisis point is reached	Council's Housing Service	existing policy & procedure	2024	100% of our staff are trained

Older People

Already, the proportion of older people is higher in North Ayrshire than across Scotland, at 23% compared to 19%. However, by 2043, the age group '75 years+' will be the largest in the area and will account for 28% of local people - most of whom will live alone. This is a striking change to the population profile in 2021 (Figure 2616). This challenge is even more acute on our islands, where already a third of the Arran and Cumbrae populations are aged 65 years or above (33% and 35% respectively).

FIGURE 2616: SMALL AREA POPULATION ESTIMATES, MID 2019, BY AGE AND HOUSEHOLD TYPE (SOURCE: NATIONAL RECORDS OF SCOTLAND)



Not only does the likelihood of long-term health conditions increase with age increasing the need for accessible housing in turn, so does the risk of dementia. Scotland's [National Dementia Strategy](#) recognises that most people with dementia want to keep living at home, and 64% of sufferers can do so. However, to avoid crises, a familiar home environment and preventative support are vital to 'normalising' life for dementia sufferers.

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
ensure that our sheltered housing complexes are dementia-friendly	across our area	existing policy & procedure	2027	100% of new and refurbished sheltered housing complexes are dementia friendly
complete our Sheltered Housing Reprovisioning Programme by investing in 11 sheltered housing complexes over the lifetime of this strategy	across our area	existing policy & procedure	2027	11 sheltered housing complexes are refurbished

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
build new homes that are suitable for older people	across our area	existing policy & procedure	2023	30% of new social housing meets the ambulant disabled standard
employ two Sheltered Housing Well-being Officers, as part of a pilot project to monitor the general welfare of residents across our 28 sheltered housing complexes, providing housing support, income maximisation and welfare benefit advice and assistance, fuel, and utilities advice	Across Council sheltered housing units	-	2023	the outcome of the pilot has been assessed and published
explore opportunities to increase the number of our existing homes that are suitable for older people (in our existing stock)	across our area		2023	the publication of findings and recommendations

Neurodiversity

People with learning disabilities and autistic people tell us that they want to be treated with dignity and respect by services that can identify and be responsive to their needs. Good-quality and timely housing advice and support services are as important as a suitable home in supporting them to live independently in their communities.

The Health & Social Care Partnership have told us that the number of neurodiverse people is rising, including an increasing number of children who have very complex needs now surviving into adulthood. This in turn can result in an increase in the number of neurodiverse people who rely on an elderly carer, who may now also be experiencing a change in their own housing needs.

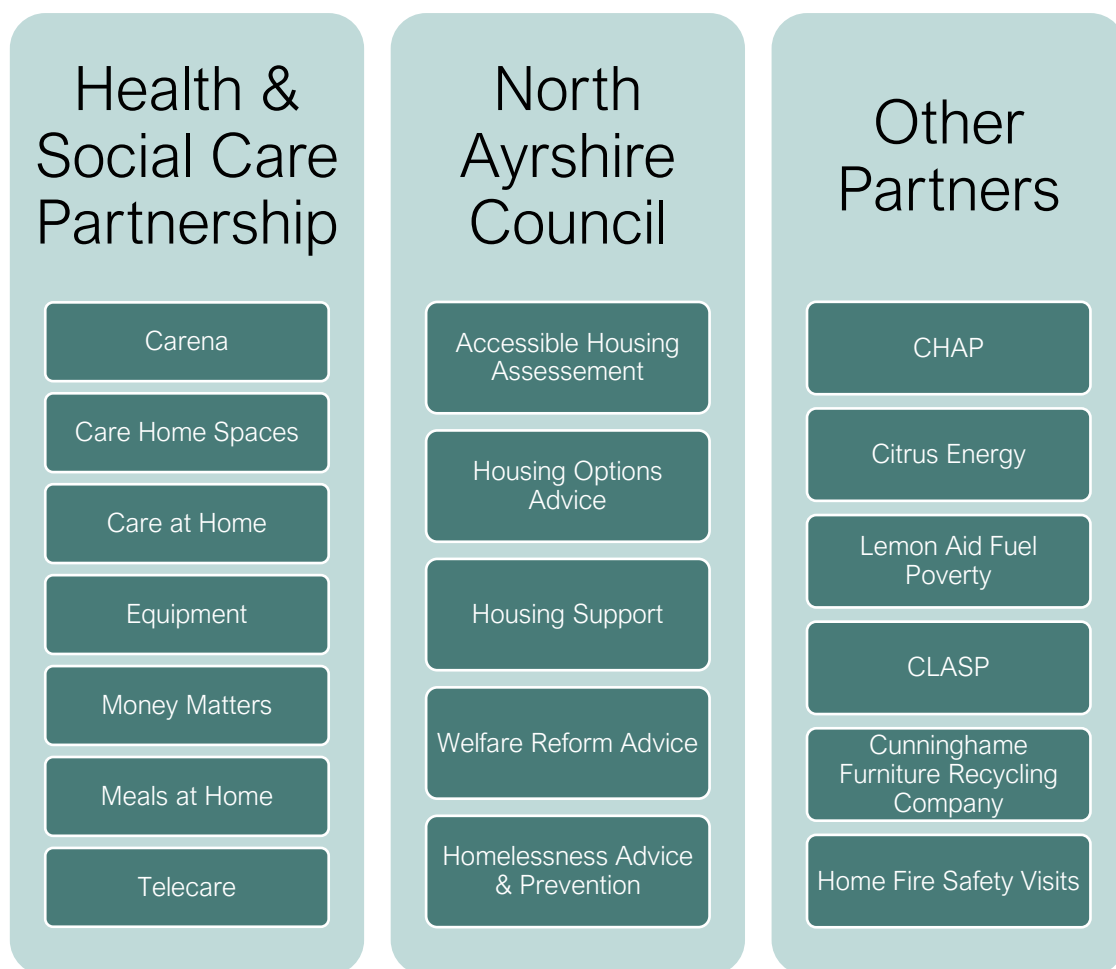
[The Scottish Strategy for Autism](#) sets out the joined-up approach needed to ensure housing and places can support wellbeing outcomes, and that moving forward, housing supply is able to accommodate an increase in neurodiverse people.

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
ensure our literature is available in a format that is suitable for people with literacy and/or sensory/communication issues	across our area	-	2026	the production of our housing literature in a format suitable for people with literacy and/or sensory/communication issues.

We will	Where	By building on	by	and know we are successful if/when
train our staff to be aware of the issues and challenges facing people with neurodiverse issues	Council's Housing Service	existing policy & procedure	2023	100% of our staff are trained
contribute to the Autism Working Group to achieve best outcomes for autistic and neurodiverse people, and their carers	across our area	existing policy & procedure	2023	100% of annual meetings are attended
promote positive outcomes for people living with autism in the private housing sector	across our area	-	2025	the publication of information, sign posting into advice services and the planned refresh of the Scheme of Assistance
provide an 'easy read' guide explaining our tenancy agreement	across our area	Standard tenancy agreement	2023	the publication of an easy-read guide

Care & Support

A number of organisations provide housing related care and support services across our area and given the forecast increase to the number of older people and the proportion of our lives we live in poor health, these services will become increasingly important if we want to deliver our outcome to support people to “live at home, independently, safely and with dignity, for as long as they wish.”



However, care and support services are not just about allowing older people to remain at home, they are also about empowering people to find their own solutions, providing the right type of assistance at the right time, supporting people through difficult times and ensuring that individual needs are recognised.

Accessible Housing Assessment

The Accessible Housing Assessment is available to people on the North Ayrshire Housing Register. It looks at how the health of the applicant affects how they manage at home and is carried out by an Occupational Therapist. Applicants who are assessed as having an accessible housing need receive additional points.

Care at Home

The Care at Home service is available every day of the year and can help with daily tasks such as getting up, dressed, and washed, taking medicine, as well as more intensive support (e.g. recovering from an accident or coming home from hospital).

Care Home Spaces

In 2021, there were around 1,000 care homes spaces in North Ayrshire, most are independently owned but the Council has a unit on Arran with capacity for 18 people. However, given the continuing decrease of public sector budgets, the current way of

organising care home spaces is not viable, and therefore services which allow people to remain living at home will become more central to meeting care needs.

Carena

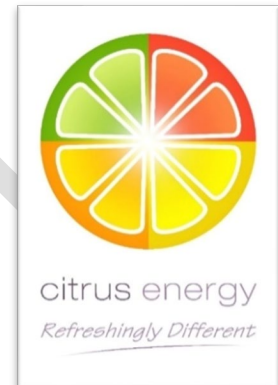
The Carena website connects people in North Ayrshire with service providers. The site lists information and contact details for services, activities, and support across our area. Carena also lists events and clubs in the area, helping people become more involved in their local community and in turn reducing social isolation.

CHAP

CHAP is a charity that offers free, confidential support to the people of North Ayrshire who may be struggling with a housing issue, homelessness, financial concern, or who need debt advice.

Citrus Energy

Citrus Energy is a subsidiary of Cunninghame Housing Association. Its goal is to help people “make genuine savings on gas and electricity costs.” Any profits made are re-distributed into the community to help reduce fuel poverty and create sustainable employment.



CLASP

CLASP (Community Led Action and Support Project) provides a range of services across North Ayrshire. As well as offering support on areas like people’s rights, access to training, education, and IT. They also support older people through a range of services and activities to reduce isolation and loneliness and improve health and wellbeing.

Cunninghame Furniture Recycling Company (CFRC)

Part of Cunninghame Housing Association, CFRC is a charity which collects unwanted furniture and white goods free of charge, for resale from their Irvine showroom, allowing people to furnish their home at an affordable price. CFRC’s approach also reduces landfill and the associated ecological costs.

Equipment

The Partnership supplies equipment on a long-term loan, free of charge, and when it is no longer needed, it should be returned. Eligibility depends on the assessed level of need and suitability of the home, and includes things like raised toilet seats, chair or bed raisers, grab rails, and bath boards or seats

Home Fire Safety Visits

The Scottish Fire & Rescue Service, as part of their commitment to building a safer Scotland, offer free home fire safety visits to everyone (on hold during COVID-19 restrictions).

Home Security

The Home Security Project helps people who are suffering from domestic abuse or serious and persistent antisocial behaviour. The project aims to make people feel safer in their home by adding extra security measures, such as: locks, peep holes, panic alarms and/or arranging support from specialist agencies.

Housing Options Advice

Housing options advice is available from all social landlords in our area and provides people with the knowledge and confidence to resolve their own housing situation. Whilst not limited to homeless people, between 2016 and 2019, it helped 40% of all those who presented as homeless resolve their own situation. Advice covers a range of housing options (e.g., adaptations, property condition).

Housing Support

Our Housing Support service helps people develop the skills they need to manage their own home. It is available to people who are at risk of being homeless (or who have been homeless in the past), are in temporary accommodation or who just need help managing their tenancy. The service supports people with form filling, budgeting, planning a weekly shop, arranging for gas or electricity suppliers, or cooking and cleaning etc.

Lemon Aid Fuel Poverty Advisory Service

Cunninghame Housing Association's Lemon Aid project helps people apply for services to which they are entitled (e.g., white goods schemes, discounts on your energy bills, benefits etc). It also offers help with pre-payment meters, energy supplier switching, and bill checking, setting your heating thermostats, and will advocate on your behalf and write to your energy supplier if necessary.

Meals at Home

Meals at Home provides a service to people who have been assessed as being unable to prepare a hot cooked meal. On the mainland, meals are delivered frozen on a fortnightly basis and on Arran, hot meals are delivered by volunteers or Care at Home staff. There is a charge for this service.

Money Matters

The Health & Social Care Partnership's 'Money Matters' service provides advice to any resident of North Ayrshire on welfare rights, assistance, or representation in relation to benefits. The service is free, impartial, and confidential.

Telecare

Telecare provides full time monitoring and support technology that sends alerts for help if someone becomes ill or if something is wrong. Options available include community, domestic abuse, and safety alarms; fall, flood, smoke, and carbon monoxide detectors; and medicine reminders and dispensers. There is a weekly charge for this service.

Welfare Reform Advice

Our dedicated team offer a welfare rights and debt advice service to Council tenants as part of a commitment to maximising people's income and living standards. In the year 2019/2020 the team collectively helped people access £1.644 million to which they were entitled, helping reduce rent arrears and the risk some tenants had faced of eviction.

DRAFT



Comments and views about any aspect of this document are welcomed. We also take the opportunity to encourage local people to become involved in the planning and delivery of housing solutions. To get in touch, please contact:

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North Ayrshire Council
Housing & Public Protection
FREEPOST SCO2742
Irvine
KA12 8BRT:

lhs@north-ayrshire.gov.uk

This document is available in other formats such as audio tape, CD, Braille, large print and other languages on request.



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath