

Local Housing Strategy 2017-22

annual report 2017-18

30th June 2018

HOUSING STRATEGY & SERVICES
PLACE



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LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

1. INTRODUCTION

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 places a Statutory Duty on all Local Authorities to produce a Local Housing Strategy, framed by statutory guidance published by the Scottish Government. The New Scottish Borders Local Housing Strategy covers the five-year period from April 2017 to March 2022.

The strategy was developed with our partners, stakeholders and the voluntary sector over an eighteen month period throughout 2016/17 and was formally approved in September 2017. The strategy comes at a really important time for housing; it addresses a number of the most significant and important challenges facing us, and clearly sets out ideas and actions to deliver our shared vision for housing in the Scottish Borders.



The Local Housing Strategy sets out the vision and priorities for the future of housing and all housing related services across the Scottish Borders

It considers all tenures and types of accommodation and Reflects both national priorities and local needs



SOME OF THE KEY OBJECTIVES OF THE LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY INCLUDE:

- To increase the housing supply across all tenures to address the varying and diverse housing need in the Borders.
- To promote and increase awareness and behavioural change of energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty through the development and implementation of an Energy Efficiency & Affordable Warmth Strategy.
- To increase the supply of new affordable housing that meets the needs of our community through the ongoing development and delivery of the next and future Strategic Housing Investment Plans.
- To tackle disrepair and below tolerable standard in the private sector stock and address landlord compliance in the private rented sector.
- To address the Housing, Support and Care needs of the growing Older People population through the implementation of an Integrated Strategic Plan for Older People's Housing, Support and Care Needs.
- To improve the health and wellbeing for people experiencing homelessness
- Fewer people are affected by homelessness.
- To have a better understanding of the housing aspirations and needs of young people in the Borders through focussed research; and to develop and deliver a strategy that helps improve the housing outcomes of young people.

This annual report provides an update on progress between 2017 through to June 2018; including any key highlights or significant achievements, as well as ongoing challenges for the future.

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2. HOUSING SUPPLY

Affordable Housing Supply

Scottish Government has set an ambitious national target to deliver 50,000 affordable homes over the lifetime of the current Scottish Parliament. Scottish Borders Council were allocated £11.5m from Scottish Government in this reporting period and Berwickshire and Eildon Housing Associations also secured £5.0m in Charitable Bond funding as an additional source of funding. This represents a record level of funding to support the delivery of new affordable homes.

The Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) is our sole document for targeting affordable housing investment in Scottish Borders. The SHIP 2018-23 was approved by Council in November 2017 and submitted to the Scottish Government in line with the guidance. The SHIP sets out proposals for up to 1,177 new affordable Borders homes and is underpinned by a total investment of up to £174.5m over the 5 year period.

Highlights:

- Record level of funding secured to allow for delivery of affordable housing targets.
- SHIP 2018-2023 submitted to Scottish Government in November 2017 which received very positive feedback.
- 145 units of affordable housing delivered throughout Scottish Borders.
- Four new homes constructed in Peebles for Bridge Homes.
- £60,000 of grant funding awarded to carry out traditional repair works to four town centre properties as part of the Jedburgh Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS).

SOME KEY STATISTICS ACHIEVED IN THIS REPORTING PERIOD INCLUDE:

- **77 new builds by RSLs:**
 - o 8 at Lintburn Street, Galashiels (Eildon Housing Association)
 - o 18 at Roxburgh Street, Kelso (Eildon Housing Association)
 - o 19 at Sergeants Park, Newtown St Boswells (Eildon Housing Association)
 - o 16 at Easter Langlee, Galashiels (Eildon Housing Association)
 - o 16 at Todlaw, Duns (Berwickshire Housing Association)
- **10 remodelling completions by RSLs:**
 - o 4 at Gowanlea, Coldstream (Berwickshire Housing Association)
 - o 6 at Block 27 Stonefield, Hawick (Scottish Borders Housing Association)
- **25 RSL (Individual House Purchase) - RSL purchase of existing housing as follows:**
 - o 21 at Chris Paterson Place, Galashiels - acquisition of existing 21 units from Tweedside LLP previously built through NHT Round 1 initiative for Mid-Market Rent.
 - o 3 in Kelso – acquisition of 3 existing units previously developed by Eildon Housing Association for shared equity ownership.
 - o 1 in Hawick – individual flat purchase via SG Mortgage to Rent scheme.
- **33 assisted purchases through Scottish Government's Open Market Shared Equity Scheme**

Completed Developments in 2017-2018



Easter Langlee Ph3, Galashiels



Lintburn Street, Galashiels



Roxburgh Street, Kelso



Sergeant's Park, Newtown St Boswells



Todlaw, Duns

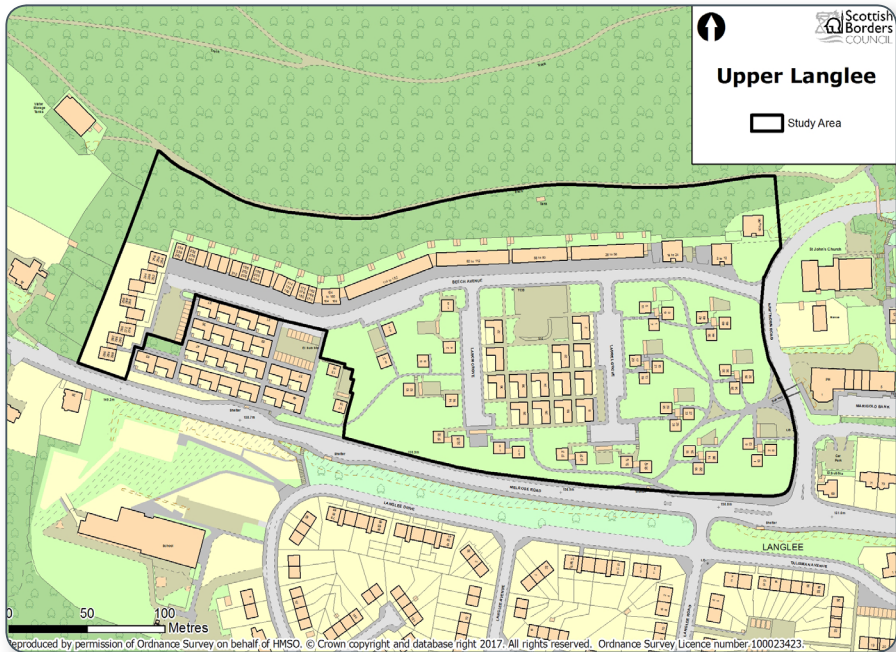


Todlaw

Masterplan for Upper Langlee Regeneration

A consultancy brief was developed in partnership between the Council's Strategic Housing and Waverley Housing to significantly regenerate and improve the homes and sense of place of part of Upper Langlee. Supported by the Council's Procurement Team; Ark Consultancy and through working in partnership with the community and other registered social landlords a

Masterplan for the area has been developed. The consultant's final report was presented to, and approved in principle by, Waverley Housing Association's Board in summer 2018. Projects have now been taken forward to be prioritised and assessed for inclusion in the next SHIP 2019-2024 submission.



Bridge Homes

Bridge Homes is a Limited Liability Partnership established by the Council and Scottish Futures Trust to provide affordable housing for mid-market rental. Bridge Homes currently owns 45 homes, with 4 under construction at Hydro Gardens in Peebles which will complete in 2018/19. It is also negotiating missives for another 5 homes in Kelso which should be purchased in 2018/19. It is envisaged that the purchase of these 9 homes will effectively end the development phase, as it is unlikely that additional completed homes will be purchased before the initiative deadline of 31 March 2019.



Housing Supply Strategy

Recognising that the supply of housing is critical for supporting sustainable communities and economic growth, work is well underway to develop a fluid and proactive strategy which is underpinned by a detailed examination as to what may help to unlock investment potential and consequently stimulate and encourage a range of housing development, particularly in the more rural parts of the Borders.

The overall aims of this piece of work will be to encourage new supply of both affordable and market housing, and to assist the delivery of additional houses to meet needs at a locality level across the Scottish Borders. This will support the Council and its partners to deliver the strategic objectives set out in its LHS in that:

- The supply of housing meets the needs of our communities
- More people live in good quality energy efficient homes
- Fewer people are affected by homelessness
- More people are supported to live independently in their own homes

Young People's Housing Study

In order to deliver on our strategic priorities, we need to understand the housing needs and changing aspirations of young people and what models of housing or accommodation will meet their future hopes or requirements and/or if house purchase is still an attractive option.

We have commissioned Indigo House to undertake an assessment of the housing needs and aspirations of young people in the Scottish Borders; and to support the development of a new action plan to help improve housing outcomes for our young people. The study will include:

- Focus groups with young people in schools from 14-18 years;



- A wide scale face to face survey of young people aged 16-34 years
- Comparative exploration of housing models across the UK and internationally considering what works and what could be applicable in the Scottish Borders;
- A programme of professional stakeholder engagement to complement that of the engagement with young people.

The first meeting with the consultants was held in May which was very successful. This has led to a lot of good work already being carried out as part of the study:

- Focus groups with young people aged 14-17 have been held at secondary schools
- Finalised a survey for young people which will start in the summer throughout the Scottish Borders
- Developed a survey for young people who have moved away from the area.

A Steering Group has been established with membership from key partners who will work with the consultants to progress the final stages of this work.

Town Centre Work - CARS

This year was the final year of the five-year Selkirk Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS); a partnership project developed with a community-based steering group, funded by Historic Environment Scotland and Scottish Borders Council.



59 High Street, Selkirk - Before CARS work and After

Selkirk CARS focused on a range of heritage and conservation-based regeneration activities within the town, the centrepiece being repairs to the Sir Walter Scott Courthouse steeple, weather vane, clock faces and high level stonework.

Almost 70 grant offers were made through the scheme, ranging from £525 to £205,000, enabling a range of traditional building repairs and improvements. During the course of the five-year scheme almost 7,500 people attended events, in addition to a range of school engagement activities. 19 technical seminars were held for property owners and local contractors, and 537 hours of education and training were delivered.

Empty Homes

Our Empty Homes Strategy sets out how we prioritise our resources in respect of identifying and bringing back empty homes into residential use. It identifies potential for new investment to help return empty homes to use, particularly as affordable rented accommodation. An Action Plan accompanies the Strategy and sets out a pathway for developing intervention options in the form of information and providing advice and support.



Working with the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership, we have achieved significant outcomes in relation to developing processes for engaging with owners and maximising opportunities to assist owners getting their properties back into use.

An example of bringing an empty property back into use is 121-123 High Street in Selkirk; following a number of development studies which did not progress, Eildon Housing Association started work to redevelop this long term empty former shop and flats to provide 10 new build flats. This project was assisted by a Scottish Government housing grant and is on programme to complete in 2018/19.



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3. GOOD QUALITY, ENERGY EFFICIENT HOMES

Home Energy Efficiency Programmes (HEEPS)

The Council was awarded £1,045,619 in grant funding from the Scottish Government in 2017/18. Our programmes also levered in an additional £363,500 in Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding - resulting in a total of £1,409,119 being invested in energy efficiency measures for homes across the region.

The funding was used to¹:

- Fill over 600 Hard to Treat Cavities across areas of the Borders where cavity wall insulation has degraded and needs removed and replaced, or where perhaps the cavity was harder to fill. This type of insulation can typically cost around £475 to install and householders were offered this for free.
- Install External Wall Insulation on 37 properties.
- Install Internal Wall Insulation on 35 properties.

Highlights:

- SBC awarded £1,045,619 grant funding from Scottish Government for 2017/18.
- Over 700 private households supported with installing energy efficiency measures on their properties.
- Change Works in Peebles opened, offering the local community face to face advice and support via a hub on Peebles High Street.
- Home Energy Forum established
- Over 5,000 registered Landlords and over £79,000 of revenue generated income.

¹ Estimates based on uptake to date. Final outcomes and numbers will be confirmed in September 2018.

- This year's funding has supported over 700 private householders to install energy efficiency measures on their properties, making them warmer, more comfortable, cheaper to heat and improving the appearance of many homes.
- The annual fuel bill savings resulting from this year's programme are estimated to be £172,618 and a reduction in CO2 emissions of around 719 tonnes per annum.

An objective of the HEEPS programme is to support sustainable local economic development and we estimated that the HEEPS:ABS 17/18 programme will have the following benefits.

- Creation of between 46 and 54 jobs (FTEs for one year);
- Employment increase worth £1,076,762 - £1,268,754 (one year);
- £22,688 increase in spending in local economy per year

Further to this the link with Home Energy Scotland we will ensure that householders get the relevant benefit checks to ensure their household income relates to their circumstances.

Energy Efficient Scotland (EES) Pilot Project

Scottish Government recently launched Energy Efficient Scotland (EES); an ambitious programme with challenging targets through to 2040. The Scottish Government made some funding available to Local Authorities to pilot different approaches to EES.



**Change Works
in Peebles**

In 2017 we commissioned Changeworks to support delivery of our new Energy Efficient Scotland Pilot project in Peebles, funded by the Scottish Government, Scottish Borders Council and Changeworks. Through this partnership our "Change Works in Peebles" project was developed. This is a locally based project working to pilot new approaches to energy efficiency within the community. This project is all about helping to reduce costs and improve warmth in local homes, schools and organisations. Peebles has been chosen for this project because data analysis shows it to be a high energy use town with fuel bills 14% higher than the national average and annual median gas use 12% higher than the Scottish Borders average.

Our Change Works in Peebles project offers the local community face to face advice and support via a hub on Peebles High Street. A varied programme of events and workshops on different topics including insulation, draught-proofing and ways to reduce energy usage and lower bills also runs from the local hub. Almost 300 people have visited the Change Works in Peebles hub since opening to the public at the end of February 2018 seeking advice and support.

Donna Marshall, Project Manager of Change Works in Peebles said:
“We have spoken to hundreds of householders in Peebles to find out what the local issues and challenges are around saving energy and costs. The range of events, workshops and advice sessions we offer is in direct response to the help requested by the community.”

A range of free or heavily subsidised insulation measures are being offered to householders with eligible homes in Peebles and with a Council Tax Band A, B or C. Scottish Borders Council and Scottish Government’s Home Energy Scotland are working together to provide this offer which is supported locally by Change Works in Peebles.

Change Works in Peebles has launched a guide to help householders in Peebles find a contractor to install energy efficiency measures in their home. People using the ‘Peebles contractor guide: Installing energy efficiency measures’ will receive a free quality assurance inspection through the project.



Home Energy Forum

We have now established a Borders Home Energy Forum, the principle mechanism to oversee a multi-agency, joined up approach to tackling domestic energy efficiency and fuel poverty issues. This Forum is building on the achievements of previous anti-fuel poverty measures, which have been implemented in the Borders. It will achieve outcomes specifically by delivering integrated solutions that help to ensure more people live in energy efficient and affordably warm homes.

The timing of this work is aligned to the work the Scottish Government is co-ordinating at a national level, surrounding the tightening of the climate change targets, new targets and definitions on fuel poverty and measures to increase the energy efficiency of the existing building stock. These measures are currently progressing through the Scottish Parliament as part of the draft Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) Bill, the Fuel Poverty (Target, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Bill and the Energy Efficient Scotland Route Map, respectively. The work of the Borders Home Energy Forum will both reflect our local experience of energy efficiency and fuel poverty issues and the emerging national policy position.

Private Landlord Registration



All private landlords and their agents are required to register with the local authority in which they let their property. Landlord registration gives local authorities the ability to control and regulate who can operate legitimately as a private landlord.

Statutory guidance published in September 2017 puts an emphasis on the importance of liaising with

private landlords and their tenants, including considering a range of actions to help landlords reach the standards required in privately letting properties, and keeping them informed of any changes in legislation.

'Local authorities have a duty to provide advice and assistance to tenants and landlords in certain circumstances.'

In response to this guidance we have taken several steps in ensuring that the Service we provide is focused on engagement and early intervention. An Engagement Plan has been drafted and is currently being progressed; this

plan has been developed with key partners and focuses on the analysis of supporting data and evidence to highlight the key issues, challenges and opportunities for the future.

The Engagement Plan proposes several key engagement activities which we hope to action in the 2018/19 period, including:

- Inviting landlords to attend a landlord forum; a Private Sector Landlord Forum is an opportunity to meet with other landlords, agents, and key council members to raise and discuss issues. The frequency of the meetings will depend on emerging issues and themes and will be coupled with other engagement practices outlined above.
- Promoting training programmes provided by various representative organisations; (Scottish Association of Landlords; Landlord Accreditation Scotland).
- Providing good practice information through a landlord checklist
- Providing updates on relevant legislative changes through electronic newsletters.
- Publicising examples of successful enforcement activity.
- Promoting landlord accreditation schemes.

Key statistics this reporting period:

- Over 5,000 Private Landlords registered within the Scottish Borders.
- Over 8,900 rental properties registered within the Scottish Borders.
- Over £79,000 of revenue generated via Landlord Registration.

Private Landlord Forum – Partnership with LAS

We have been working in partnership with Landlord Accreditation Scotland and hosted a Private Landlord Forum for all landlords and letting agents registered with the council in June this year. The forum highlighted changes in the private rented sector both locally and nationally. With the new private rented sector tenancy regime in place and the introduction of a register of letting agents due to come into force in October this year there are big changes ahead for all of those involved in letting private property so the forum came at a key time.

Speakers on the day provided presentations on a range of topics, including:

- Private residential tenancies
- Housing and Property Chamber
- Letting agent regulation
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Universal Credit Rollout in the Scottish Borders

The forum was fully booked and well received from the landlords and agents that attended.

One of the landlords who attended said:

“Well organised and a good turnout, we’re really pleased to see an event like this in the Borders. The content was current and useful and we’re looking forward to attending future Landlord days. News of the availability of LAS training events is also welcomed.”

Private Housing Condition

When the Scheme of Assistance was introduced it changed the way local authorities can help homeowners and private landlords to do repairs, maintenance and improvements.

The Scheme of Assistance is aimed at private home owners (including owner-occupiers, landlords and tenants of privately let properties) who are looking for advice and assistance in regard to property repairs and adaptation works. The Scheme of Assistance offers a range of services to help older people and people with disabilities living in the private sector to make adaptations to their homes, address any disrepair issues and support owners of empty property to bring them back into use. We do this by offering:

- information and advice for private sector housing residents on home repairs, maintenance, improvements and adaptations;
- practical assistance through services offering help relating to repair and maintenance of private sector homes;
- financial help to cover some (or all) of the costs of eligible adaptations;
- information and advice to support empty homes owners to bring them back into use.

We ensure that we provide robust information and advice and we reach private home owners who are looking for advice and assistance in regard to property repairs and maintenance, and influencing a change of attitudes towards maintaining the condition of private sector housing. This complements support provided through Landlord Registration processes to ensure a consistent approach to all private sector service users.

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4. HOMELESSNESS

Service Resdesign

Back in 2016 we took an in-depth look at how some of the Council's statutory front line services were being delivered. The primary objectives of reviewing the Homelessness, Welfare Benefits and Customer Services was to maintain current services at their existing level, meet statutory obligations and regulatory expectations, and seek to maximise efficiency and effectiveness.

Emphasis was placed on working more efficiently, streamlining the journey for the customer and strengthening partnerships in order to meet the ambition of making the Scottish Borders a better place to live and work, where people can expect high quality services that meet their needs within tight financial constraints.

The intention of the review was to look at how Homelessness, Welfare Benefits and Customer Services could be brought together to create an integrated model of service provision which would have the potential to increase efficiency, improve

Highlights:

- 856 households approached the Council's Homelessness team for advice and/or assistance.
- 158 households were prevented from becoming homeless.
- 578 households were assessed as unintentionally homeless or threatened with homelessness.
- Only 4.5% of new homelessness assessments had applied within the previous year.
- 63% of unintentionally homeless households were permanently rehoused.
- 90% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the quality of temporary accommodation.
- Establishment of Housing Options Protocol for care leavers.

strategic planning and delivery, and create long term stable platforms for the future delivery of vital front line services to vulnerable people. In addition, it would ensure that our legislative responsibilities were delivered whilst maintaining focus on the client's needs – ensuring that services are responsive and accessible from a single point of contact.

In August 2016 consultants were commissioned to carry out an organisational review to look at the merits and risks of bringing together our Homelessness Services, Welfare Benefits Services and Customer Services into a new integrated advice and support



services delivery model which would sit within one Service Directorate. The intention was that by bringing these services together it could improve service delivery through creating a responsive and an improved corporate approach to support the delivery of important front line services to vulnerable people and in doing so contribute to tackling poverty and reducing inequalities in the Borders. The new integrated Customer Advice and Support Service went live on the 1st November 2017.

During 2017/2018, 862 households approached the Council's Homelessness team for advice and/or assistance.

Of these, 403 households were advised and/or assisted to try to prevent them becoming homeless and homelessness was prevented in 158 cases.

700 were assessed under the homelessness legislation. This is the highest number of statutory homelessness applications received since the implementation and establishment of the housing options model of homelessness prevention during 2011/2012 and 2012/2013, and was 1% higher than the number of applications received during the previous year. However, the number of applications received in Scottish Borders since 2012 has remained broadly stable and the 1% increase in 2017/2018 is the same level of change as occurred nationally during that period.

The number of statutory homelessness applications received from young people aged 24 or under fell by 8% in 2017/2018 and, as a proportion of the total number of applications received, has fallen from 30% in 2015/2016 to 27% in 2016/2017 and to 24% in 2017/2018.

590 households were assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness under the homelessness legislation, of which 578 households were assessed as unintentionally homeless or threatened with homelessness. These figures are slight increases of 1.7% and 0.5% respectively in comparison with 2016/2017 and on a par with the rate of increase nationally during the year.

The level of repeat homelessness applications in Scottish Borders remains low, with only 4.5% of new applications having already made an application within the previous year in comparison with the national average of 6%.

63% of households assessed as unintentionally homeless secured settled accommodation. This was a slight decrease in comparison with the previous year and remains lower than the national average of 69% in 2017/2018.

220 households entered temporary accommodation during 2017/2018. 7% (15) of these households contained children. This compares with the national average of 10% of households in temporary accommodation containing children. 90% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the quality of temporary accommodation provided. And the use of bed and breakfast as a temporary accommodation option in Scottish Borders remains minimal with only 2 households in bed and breakfast during the year.

Working in partnership with the four locally based Registered Social Landlords we have implemented a 'Housing Options Protocol for Care Leavers in the Scottish Borders' at the start of 2017/2018. The Protocol seeks to ensure that the priority accommodation and support needs of care leavers are recognised in order that their needs for suitable housing are met in a planned and sustainable way and that they do not need to enter the homelessness system in order to access housing. During the first year of the Protocol the number of statutory homelessness applications received from care leavers fell by 28%.

We work in partnership with Registered Social Landlords and other providers to improve housing and support services for care leavers and care experienced young people. Under Scottish Borders Corporate Parenting approach issues of housing, employability and support are being developed and are a priority area in the Corporate Parenting Action Plan.

In November 2017 the 'Sustainable Housing On Release for Everyone' (SHORE) standards were launched nationally. The new standards are intended to ensure that the housing needs of individuals in prison are addressed from an early stage, in a consistent way across Scotland, regardless of where they come from, their housing status and how long they have been in prison or young offenders' institution. The standards are designed to ensure that people leaving prison can access services and accommodation in the same way as people living in the community. We worked with local authority partners in the Scottish Government's East Housing Options HUB to develop local arrangements for SHORE. This included commissioning Four Square to provide tenancy sustainment support and resettlement advice on behalf of the HUB partners, including ourselves, for people who are in custody at HMP Edinburgh on a 1 year pilot basis from early 2018/2019.

Work is underway to establish the new Homelessness and Health Strategic Partnership. Key partners have been identified and a terms of reference has been drafted. The first meeting of the strategic partnership will take place after the summer holidays.



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5. SUPPORT TO LIVE INDEPENDENTLY

Older People's Housing

The new LHS identified the need for a more strategic approach to housing and ageing, and in 2017 we commissioned Indigo House to support the development of a new Integrated Strategic Plan for Older People's Housing, Care and Support.

The Borders has one of the highest projected growth rates of older people aged over 75 in Scotland, and a change in demographics where in 20 years' time half of all households in the Scottish Borders will be aged over 65 years.

Scottish Borders partners agree that suitable housing has a crucial role to play help meet older people's health and wellbeing. As well as offering security and independence, housing provides the residential setting within which other elements of care and support services will be delivered.

Highlights:

- Integrated Strategic Plan for Older People's Housing Care and Support launched.
- 6 prioritised new build extra care housing development currently progressed by Eildon and Trust Housing Associations.
- 85 completed major adaptations at £347,171 of spend under Scheme of Assistance.
- 331 complete small adaptations/repairs at £68,570.00 of spend under Scheme of Assistance.
- Updated Housing Contribution Statement submitted.

Partners from across the public, private and third sectors are committed to developing further housing and residential care suitable for older people, accompanied by greater investment in new technologies and new approaches to service delivery aimed at ensuring people receive the care and support they need in their own homes.



The new Scottish Borders Integrated Strategic Plan for Older People's Housing, Care and Support (2018-28) was launched and sets out a vision where older people will have greater choice in terms of where and how they live, and the services they can access. The plan also

sets out how over the next 10 years the Scottish Borders Health and Social Care partners will aspire to deliver:

- 400 extra care houses (including 60 in a new retirement campus)
- 300 new build houses suitable for older people for sale and in the rented sector
- Existing housing, refurbished or remodeled - 300 houses in the social rented sector
- Housing support on site to be offered to 300 more older households across housing sectors
- Over 8,000 adaptations and small repairs to enable people to stay in their own home
- A minimum of an additional 20 specialist dementia spaces to meet the need identified in the emerging Dementia Strategy
- Investment in telecare / telehealth for over 800 households.

This new plan sets out a comprehensive commitment to meeting the needs of older people, and a reassurance that the wellbeing of older people is a central part of partner's focus moving forward.



Housing Event – Re-Thinking Older People’s Housing

In June 2018, Housing, Health and Social Care held an event to launch the Integrated Strategic Plan for Older People’s Housing Care and Support; Re-Thinking Older People’s Housing. The event brought together a wide range of expert speakers from across Scotland looking at the pressing issues, the challenges and how we consider the future beyond the horizon.

The key themes of the event included:

- Housing Supply
- Construction/Skills Challenges
- Care and Support – Service Reforms
- Tele Healthcare – Innovation
- Supporting Independent Living



The event was a huge success and stimulated a wide discussion with some of the key stakeholders in the Scottish Borders.

Care and Repair

Working in partnership with Eildon Housing Association we commission the Borders Care and Repair Service. The service started in 2005, the aim of the service is to enable older people and people with disabilities living in the private sector to have warm, well maintained and safe homes. Care and Repair achieve this by:

- Providing help and advice on housing repairs, improvements and adaptations, and to ensure the work is carried out in accordance with the Care & Repair Standards.
- Providing a Home Handyperson service to help to support community care groups (prioritising older people and people with disabilities), to continue to live at home through the provision of practical household help and support.

Care and Repair's role includes project managing adaptations, including grant application submissions for major adaptations, on behalf of private sector clients. Eligibility Criteria and budget for major adaptations is managed by SBC.

Table 1: Adaptations completed in 2017/18

| Type of Adaptation | Number Completed | Spend |
|--|------------------|--------------------|
| Level Access Shower | 36 | £165,783.04 |
| Stair Lift | 23 | £71,554.45 |
| Curved Stair lift | 4 | £17,111.00 |
| Wet floor Shower | 12 | £53,916.13 |
| Secure Front Door | 1 | £789.60 |
| Shower Room | 1 | £6,624.34 |
| Track Hoist | 1 | £2,482.00 |
| Access Ramp | 1 | £863.81 |
| Concrete Path/Ramp | 1 | £4,253.87 |
| Extension to create Bedroom & Bathroom | 1 | £6,168.06 |
| Permanent Ramp & Level Access Shower | 2 | £14,672.56 |
| Through Floor Lift & Tracking Hoist | 1 | £20,669.00 |
| Wet Floor Shower with Clo-so-mat | 1 | £9,283.41 |
| Total Spend | 85 | £374,171.27 |

*A major adaptation involves permanent changes to the structure of a person's home. These works are subject to mandatory grant provision and are prioritised for financial assistance by Scottish Borders Council.

Table 2: Small Repair & Adaptations & Handyperson

| | Number Completed | Spend |
|-----------------------------|------------------|--------------|
| Small Repairs & Adaptations | 331 | £68,570.00 |
| Handyperson Jobs | 4154 | Subscription |

In 2011 there was a significant move to the development of a 'One Stop Shop' model for all adaptations in the Borders, which was achieved through an agreement with each of the four larger Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). This provides a consistent adaptation service to all people in the Borders regardless of tenure. Through the One Stop Shop approach, Care and Repair effectively spend the funding awarded from the Scottish Government national budget, referred to as Stage 3 funding, for each of the RSLs.

Table 3: Adaptations in RSLs

| RSL | Number Completed | Spend |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Berwickshire Housing Association | 17 | £75,789 |
| Eildon Housing Association | 34 | £107,834 |
| Scottish Borders Housing Association | 59 | £192,126 |
| Waverley Housing Association | 13 | £47,703 |
| Total | 123 | £423,452 |



Health and Social Care Integration

Scottish Borders Health and Social Care Partnership launched in April 2015. The partnership is responsible for planning and commissioning integrated services and overseeing their delivery. These services are all adult social care, primary and community health care services and elements of hospital care which will offer the best opportunities for service redesign. The partnership has a key relationship with acute services in relation to unplanned hospital admissions and will continue to work in partnership with Community Planning Partners.

The Housing Strategy Team have drafted the Housing Contribution Statement in response to the publication of the five Health and Social Care Locality Plans, whereby it was identified that the Scottish Borders Health and Social Care Strategic Plan would benefit from a refresh to ensure that the strategic objectives were fit for purpose and continue to reflect the priorities of the population and communities of the Scottish Borders.

The refreshed Strategic Plan sets out a high level summary of the continued case for transforming the way in which health and social care services are delivered in the Scottish Borders as well as considering the significant role Housing has to play in the delivery of our integrated health and social care services.

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6. CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

Over the past year there have been a number of changes that have had implications on the Local Housing Strategy. It is important to ensure these challenges are identified to find solutions and opportunities that will ensure the vision of the LHS is met.

Housing Supply

Ensuring an adequate supply of high quality homes is crucial to meeting the housing needs of residents in the Scottish Borders, now and in the future. For the Borders, an adequate supply of housing is important for attracting new residents to the area, supporting businesses as well as sustaining our rural communities.

Supply of new housing however, is currently far below peak levels seen in 2007 and although the levels of social sector new builds have continued to grow since 2013 there has been a marked decline in private sector housebuilding. There are a number of reasons for this, but the two most significant reasons observed include the limited appeal of the local housing market area to developers, and the lasting impact of the 2008 economic downturn.

Scottish Borders Council is committed to developing the housing supply strategy underpinned by an investigation in to what is required to unlock investment potential and stimulate housing development, particularly in the more rural parts of the Borders.

Empty Homes

Long term empty properties can impact the built environment, quality of life for neighbours, on housing need and on the sustainable use of land and resources and on the economy. The only effective way to reduce the negative impact of an empty dwelling is to occupy it. The number of long term empty properties in the Scottish Borders has remained consistent over the past six years so more needs to be done to reduce the number of empty homes in the Scottish Borders.



Bringing empty homes back into use will increase the housing supply, help meet housing need, contribute to regeneration and help sustain rural communities. This is an integral part of the new housing supply strategy that is currently being developed.

Changes and the implications for the private rented sector

There have been two consultations from Scottish Government in the past year that will impact the private rented sector:

- Energy efficiency and condition standards in private rented housing:
A Scotland's Energy Efficiency Programme Consultation
- Landlord registration and application fees

The latter will impact how the council administers the landlord registration process with the key aim to simplify the process and payment structure. In the longer term this will make the process simpler for local authorities.

Any new standards will require a level of enforcement so the Scottish Government need to ensure that local authorities have the staff and resources in place to deal with these changes.” to “Any new standards will require a level of enforcement and local authorities would seek support from the Scottish Government to help ensure we have the staff and resources in place to deal with these changes.

Fuel Poverty and Energy Efficiency

Since 2015, Scottish Ministers announced that they would take long-term action to reduce building energy demand and decarbonise the heat supply, designating energy efficiency as a National Infrastructure Priority. Following this, there have been a number of consultations over the past year from Scottish Government relating to fuel poverty and energy efficiency, these are:

- Consultation on the Scottish Energy Strategy: The future of energy in Scotland
- Scottish Government Consultation on Scotland's Energy Efficiency Programme
- Consultation on a Fuel Poverty Strategy for Scotland
- Consultation on Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies, and Regulation of District Heating



In May 2018, the Scottish Government published Energy Efficient Scotland: route map, this is a 20 year programme containing a set of actions aimed at making Scotland's existing buildings near zero carbon wherever feasible by 2050. Energy Efficient Scotland delivers across two key policy areas of Government: fuel poverty and climate change.

Two of the main objectives include:

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

Housings Contribution to Health and Social Care Integration

The Scottish Borders Health and Social Care Partnership first published its Strategic Plan in April 2016. Nine local objectives were identified which reflected the identified priorities and supported the delivery of the nine national health and well-being outcomes. Following the publication of the five Health and Social Care Locality Plans in April 2018 it was identified that the Scottish Borders Health and Social Care Strategic Plan would benefit from a refresh to ensure that the strategic objectives were fit for purpose and continue to reflect the priorities of the population and communities of the Scottish Borders.

The refreshed Strategic Plan is currently being finalised and sets out a high level summary of the continued case for transforming the way in which health and social care services are delivered in the Scottish Borders as well as considering the significant role housing has to play in delivering integrated health and social care services.

The Housing Contribution Statement will set out the role of the housing sector in achieving the Health and Social Care Integration objectives in the Scottish Borders and builds on the previous statement and strategic plan produced in 2016.

Partnership working with Economic Development – Borderlands, South Scotland Economic Partnership

A key focus of the LHS is to work closely with Economic Development, particular through priority 1 and 2 of the LHS (The supply of housing meets the needs of our communities and more people live in good quality, energy efficient homes). This comes at a key time when mechanisms such as the City Deal Partnership, Borderlands Initiative and the new South of Scotland Development Agency are being developed.

- **City Region Deal: The Edinburgh & South-East Scotland Regional Housing Partnership**

The Edinburgh & South East Scotland (ESES) Regional Housing Partnership aims to accelerate the delivery of affordable and low-cost market homes, enable the development of seven major strategic housing sites, drive efficiencies across the public sector estate and increase housing land supply.

The Scottish Borders will benefit from not only multi-million pound investment but an economically stronger wider region. The UK and Scottish governments will invest £300m each over the next 15 years with other partners committing to an additional £700m. The £1.3bn investment is anticipated to generate over £5bn worth of Gross Value Added (GVA) over the deal's lifespan.

- **South East Scotland Enterprise Agency**

In June 2017 the Scottish Government confirmed that they would create a new enterprise agency for the South of Scotland. This agency will operate in two local authority areas: the Scottish Borders, and Dumfries and Galloway. It will focus on the needs of the area, driving inclusive growth, supporting

communities and capitalising on people and resources. The Scottish Government are currently consulting with the public to find out more about what people want from this agency, and how it can best help the south of Scotland.

- **Borderlands Initiative**

The Borderlands Initiative brings together the five cross-border local authorities of Carlisle City Council, Cumbria Council, Dumfries and Galloway Council, Northumberland County Council and Scottish Borders Council to promote the economic growth and competitiveness of this area which straddles the Scotland-England border. The Borderlands Initiative is focusing on several key themes, including: digital technology; innovation; low carbon; and energy. The approach is based on existing physical and infrastructure connections, and transport and connectivity are at the heart of the partners' proposals, linking the opportunities that can be created and informing future projects.

Homelessness – Rapid Re-Housing Plans

Rapid rehousing is about taking a housing led approach for rehousing people that have experienced homelessness, making sure they reach a settled housing option as quickly as possible rather than staying in temporary accommodation for too long. The Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) is a new planning framework for local authorities and their partners to transition to a rapid rehousing approach. It is in 3 parts:

- Market Area Analysis
- Guidance on Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans
- Transition Tool

Rapid Rehousing will transform the use of temporary accommodation and will change how local authorities and its partners will work collaboratively to develop, implement and resource the plan.



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7. KEY DEVELOPMENTS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

Some of the key developments for 2018/19 and further ahead will ensure that SBC and its partners are committed to delivering the priorities of the LHS and to address the key challenges.

The year ahead will see a significant amount of work being undertaken that will help us ensure that every person in the Scottish Borders lives in a home that meets their needs. This will be through the delivery of more affordable housing; ensuring people live in good quality, energy efficient homes and ensuring people have the support they need to live independently.

Housing Supply

We are currently in the process of developing our new Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) that will continue to set a high ambition to deliver up to 1,200 affordable homes in the next five years; this will feature working with our partners to assist the housing led area based regeneration in Upper Langlee in Galashiels.

We are not only committed to the delivery of more affordable housing but all housing tenures, that is why we are currently developing a housing supply strategy. This strategy will set out our ambitions to achieve housing growth in the area over the next 10 years and beyond. We recognise that the supply of housing is critical for supporting sustainable communities and economic growth, we are committed to developing this strategy underpinned by an exploration in to what is required to unlock investment potential and stimulate housing development, particularly in the more rural parts of the Borders. It is anticipated that the strategy will be finalised by autumn this year.

Young People

As part of the Year of Young People and an understanding that young people face particular housing challenges we have spent this year carrying out a study on the housing needs and aspirations of young people. The final report will be completed by November 2018 and it will provide recommendations on how we and our partners can deliver better housing options for young people in the Scottish Borders.

The completed report will be used to develop a strategy for young people and housing over the next five years.



Private Sector Housing

The private sector is the biggest tenure in the Scottish Borders with a large percentage of the population either owning their own homes or renting privately. One of the key challenges in this sector is to ensure everyone is living good quality homes. Good quality housing makes an important contribution to many aspects of a successful Borders including supporting local economies, improving individuals' health and well-being and by making communities safer.

Over the next year we will be undertaking a significant amount of work to ensure we fully understanding the condition of private sector housing through the development of a strategy. The strategy will outline how we, with our partners, will improve private sector house conditions by tackling disrepair and below tolerable standards in private sector stock, and addressing landlord compliance in the private rented sector. The Private Sector Housing Condition Improvement Strategy will be developed throughout 2018/19 and will be finalised in June 2019.

Through a review of the Scheme of Assistance and establishing an engagement plan for private landlords that will include regular forums we will be able to provide a wide range information and advice to home owners, private landlords and tenants. We will be developing a policy framework for improving conditions and management of properties in the private rented sector that will ensure private landlords fully comply with their legal requirements; this will include providing information, assistance and advice and enforcement action.

Fuel Poverty and Energy Efficiency

Living in warm, comfortable and energy efficient home is something that everyone should have access to and this is why it is a priority in the LHS. The Scottish Government has designated energy efficiency as a National Infrastructure Priority and over the past few years has developed Energy Efficiency Scotland (previously titled SEEP, Scotland's Energy Efficiency Programme).

Everyone should be able to afford to keep their home warm in winter, that is why we are developing a Border's wide Home Energy Efficiency and Affordable Warmth Strategy that will outline how we plan to tackle fuel poverty and improve the energy efficiency of homes across the Scottish Borders.

Through this strategy, some of the key priorities will be to successfully implement and deliver the Home Energy Efficiency programme: Area Based Schemes for 2017/18 and 2018/19 and to deliver the Energy Efficient Scotland, Peebles Area Based Energy Pilot

Establish the Homelessness & Health Strategic Partnership

For the past few years an increasing body of evidence has shown the impact homelessness has on the poor health of individuals and on the NHS. Homeless people are more likely to use A&E, spend time in hospital and to be heavy users of mental health and substance misuse services.

In 2017, the Scottish Government set up the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Action Group which provide recommendations on; ways to minimise rough sleeping this winter, how to eradicate rough sleeping for good, ways to transform temporary accommodation and how to bring about an end to homelessness in Scotland. Many of these recommendations will need to be developed and implemented in 2018 and beyond.



This why it in an important time to establish the Homelessness and Health Strategic Group who will oversee, direct and develop strategic plans for preventing, alleviating and tackling homelessness in Scottish Borders and promoting health and wellbeing. The partnership will respond to Scottish Government priorities and consider local response to Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) recommendations, develop the Rapid Re-Housing Transition Plan and oversee the development of an Integrated Homelessness & Wellbeing Delivery Plan.

The first meeting of the partnership will take place after the summer holidays.

Independent Living

Older people's housing has been an important key theme of housing in the Scottish Borders this year. Through the development of the Integrated Strategic Plan for Older Peoples Housing, Support & Care needs in May and the very successful older people's housing event held in June. It is important that this great work continues. This will be done through the development of the governance arrangements and an implementation plan in order to deliver a joined up approach to delivering appropriate housing and accommodation underpinned by new technologies and with the right levels of care and support to enable our older population live independently for as long as possible.

The Scottish Borders Health and Social Care Strategic Plan is currently being refreshed, this is a great opportunity for housing to support this process through the review and updating of housings contribution to the health and social care agenda.



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