

Angus Local Housing Strategy 2004 - 2009

	page
Contents	1
Foreword	3
Introduction	5
1. Supply and Demand	7
2. Affordable Housing	13
3. Quality Housing	17
4. Homelessness	23
5. Housing for Community Care	27
6. Sustainable Communities	31
7. Conclusions	35
Glossary	36
Appendix 1 - Implementation Plan	
Appendix 2 - Resource Assessment	
Appendix 3 - Monitoring & Evaluation	
Appendix 4 - Defining the Themes and Principles	
Appendix 5 - Consultation and Involvement	

The Local Housing Strategy consists of this document and the Implementation Plan (Appendix 1). If you wish to see any other appendices please contact the ACCESSLine on 08452 777 778 or view them on-line at www.angus.gov.uk.



Acknowledgements

The efforts of partners and stakeholders in the production of the first Angus Local Housing Strategy are gratefully acknowledged. Angus primary school children were invited to submit visions of their ideal home. Special thanks are extended to the hundreds who submitted drawings, some of which are included in this document.



Brodie Hart - P6 - Birkhill Primary School

Foreword

Community Planning is about everyone (organisations and communities) working together to provide better services and improve people's quality of life. The community planning partners in Angus have a shared vision of Angus as 'a place where a first class quality of life for all can be enjoyed, in vibrant towns and pleasant villages, set in attractive and productive countryside'. This first Angus Local Housing Strategy 2004-2009 is a key element in making that vision a reality.

Angus Council's commitment to good quality housing is embedded in our Corporate Plan vision: to promote sustainable development, improve economic prosperity and lifelong learning, promote healthy, caring and safe communities, and protect our environment. As lead agency in making public services responsible to, and organised around, the needs of Angus communities we have worked to ensure that this strategy, from its inception, has been and will continue to be a shared effort between council departments, our partner agencies and the communities of Angus.

Angus Council and its partners have long recognised the need to better plan for housing need; not just for council housing but in all tenures; and not just for bricks and mortar, but for social and environmental needs as well. The Angus Local Housing Strategy 2004-2009 sets out a picture of how our housing serves us now and what we want it to be like in five years time.

We have a long and successful history in providing housing services in Angus: council housing for rent, emergency services for homeless people, environmental health services for sub-standard housing and nuisance, improvement and repair grants for the private sector, assistance with adaptations, advice about energy efficiency, and support for vulnerable households. The citizens of Angus are important to us, and this document also sets itself the task of alleviating issues that can damage lives, such as poor housing and neighbourhoods, anti-social behaviour and fuel poverty. Not only the Council, but also other agencies such as Tayside Police, NHS Tayside, Communities Scotland, the private sector and communities themselves will have an important role to play. The Local Housing Strategy brings all these strands together in a coherent attempt to raise standards, and make first class quality of life a reality for all.



By Councillor Murray, Leader of Administration & Councillor Ellis, Convener of Housing.

Angus Council, NHS Tayside, Scottish Enterprise Tayside, Communities Scotland, Angus College, Tayside Police, Tayside Fire Brigade, Angus Association of Voluntary Organisations, Angus Rural Partnership



Angus Community Planning Partnership



John Sheen - P6 - Andover Primary School.



Arianne Smith - P2 - Inverarity Primary School.

Introduction

Welcome to the first Angus Local Housing Strategy. The whole package, including appendices was created as a planning document. However, it is above all a practical tool for directing the activities of public, voluntary, and private sectors towards better housing and quality of life for all of Angus' citizens over the next five years.

1.1 Background

The Angus Local Housing Strategy 2004-2009 is a high-level or 'overarching' document that sets the scene rather than detailing everything we need to do. The accompanying appendices provide the background support and the options needed to meet the aims of the strategy. Also there are many other plans and strategies the Council and its partners have developed that will complement the more practical actions we will need to take to help deliver the LHS objectives. These plans and what they do are included in the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework in appendix three but Figure 1 highlights the key ones.

Figure 1



The Local Housing Strategy is also about meeting national priorities and Angus housing policies and objectives have a key role to play in meeting the Scottish Executive's social justice aims to tackle poverty, disadvantage and rebuild communities. To help make social justice a reality, the Scottish Executive has set out its fundamental housing priorities. These are delivering the new Scottish Social Housing Standard, tackling homelessness, removing fuel poverty in Scotland, reducing the number of households with poor energy efficiency, and reducing the number of houses below the tolerable standard.

What is in the Local Housing Strategy?

Many parts make up the Strategy: this core Strategy document draws together a thematic picture of housing in Angus and the problems to be addressed. To make it accessible, we have kept the core Strategy as short as possible.

Appendix 1: the Implementation Plan covers how we intend to deliver the strategy. Appendix 2: the Resource Assessment provides a more detailed analysis and investigation into the resourcing the strategy. Important background information and references to supporting research, has been co-ordinated into Appendix 4: Defining the Themes and Principles. We also have appendices dealing with the consultative process (Appendix 5) and the continuing monitoring and evaluation (Appendix 3) of the strategy's implementation. If you want to read any of the appendices, they are available from any ACCESS office or on-line at www.angus.gov.uk.

Themes

The housing system affects our lives in many ways but we have tried to simplify it by grouping our Strategy into themes, starting with those that have a direct impact on our experience of housing. Theme one is Supply and Demand, the simplest market relationship, and this develops further into the more specialised themes of Affordable Housing, Housing Quality, Homelessness and Housing for Community Care. Lastly, the Local Housing Strategy looks at Theme 6: Sustainable Communities, where the housing system's impact and our experience of it are more complex, and interwoven with other issues like equal opportunities, social inclusion, the economy and the environment. Each section has an overarching aim:

- Supply and demand - to ensure a balance between housing supply and demand across all areas,
- Affordability - to ensure sufficient affordable housing to support sustainable communities,
- Quality - to ensure a high standard of housing and related services across all tenures,
- Homelessness - to prevent homelessness and help reduce its impact,
- Special Needs - to ensure that suitable housing and support is available to meet individual needs,
- Sustainability - to encourage and support sustainable communities.

Objectives

For each Local Housing Strategy aim there are key objectives, developed in consultation with stakeholders through the Angus Housing Information Partnership and the Housing Forum and the findings from research like the Housing Needs Assessment. Findings and recommendations of other strategies, for example the Angus Local Plan, Supporting People Strategy and the Community Care Plan, Homelessness Strategy and the Fuel Poverty Strategy also contribute to each aim. The objectives have been revised over time to ensure consensus, and a Strategy that is as comprehensive as possible.

Equal Opportunities

There are issues that cut across the themes of the LHS, the most important being Equal Opportunities. Where relevant, each section has considered the institutional barriers, discrimination and disadvantage that may affect housing opportunities and quality of life for minority ethnic communities, people with disabilities, older and younger people and women. Our Implementation Plan has tried to address these barriers and obstacles by assessing each action for its effectiveness in meeting this broad aim.

What Happens Next?

As the first Angus Local Housing Strategy, success will depend on the support and co-operation it receives from its partners. To this end, we will be using the same inclusive approach to implementation and monitoring of progress, as we used in its development. The Council is committed to listening to the views of other agencies and, most importantly, the people who live in Angus. If you have any views on the Local Housing Strategy, please contact the Local Housing Strategy Co-ordinator, Ian Kennedy at Angus Council Housing Department, County Buildings, Market Street, Forfar DD8 3WH. Telephone: 01307 473993 or e-mail at kennedyi@angus.gov.uk.



By Ron Ashton, Director of Housing

Theme One: Supply and Demand

Achieving an effective balance, across needs, between supply and demand in the housing system is our prime objective. Theme one deals with general issues and reasons that can disturb that balance and highlights how they link to the other themes of the Local Housing Strategy.

The Angus housing system has four distinct housing market areas (HMA). The HMA in South Angus (Carnoustie, Monifieth and the Sidlaws) is also part of the Greater Dundee Housing Market Area. These markets areas, defined by Communities Scotland, are all self-contained, but within each area there can be significant differences. Figure 1 highlights each HMA.

Figure 1



1. Arbroath
2. Brechin and Montrose
3. Carnoustie, Monifieth and the Sidlaws
4. Forfar, Kirriemuir and the Glens

Angus faces a full range of market challenges: high demand, low demand, ineffective supply, and the more complex problems faced by rural communities. The HMAs display characteristics such as:

Forfar, Kirriemuir and the Angus Glens

- There is healthy unmet potential demand for owner occupation,
- There is moderate demand for social housing,
- Overall households in this area are less likely to have affordability problems.

Montrose and Brechin

- Demand for social renting in Brechin is low,
- Evidence of a significant supply of properties at the lower end of the market,
- Montrose and Brechin are different and research is needed at settlement level.

Arbroath

- The demand for owner-occupation is likely to be met from existing out-moves and new-build,
- Projections suggest a sufficient supply of social housing to meet needs over the next five years,
- Owner-occupiers pay a higher part of their incomes on mortgages.

Carnoustie, Monifieth and the Sidlaws

- Continuing high demand for owner-occupation,
- Housing need for social housing is substantially greater than the supply,
- Although affordability problems are less obvious, there is still a need for affordable housing options,
- Is influenced by in-migration from Greater Dundee Housing Market.

1.1 Demand

Demand is complex; driven by positive and negative or “push” and “pull” factors that can work in different ways for different areas. At a county or regional level, demand is led by demographic change and migration patterns, changing aspirations and expectations, prevalence of poor housing conditions, economic change and market forces. The Local Housing Strategy is concerned to ensure the demand in any one area does not skew the market or exclude some people’s needs, and that where possible aspirations are met. This is most pressing where there are high demand problems.

Some key push and pull factors at an Angus level are:

- Angus’ population is declining but household formation will increase by 6% to 2014,
- Demand for smaller house types will be highest, reflecting growth in lone parent, pensioner and single person households,
- Households comprising two adults and children are projected to decline,
- Families, who can choose, want a cottage style family house,
- For most towns and all Housing Market Areas 80%+ of moves takes place within their boundaries,
- People with a disability or limiting illness expect to live independently rather than in an institutional setting,
- There is still overcrowding. Around 2% households do not have enough space in their homes,
- 7% of properties, across all tenures, have physical features that cause problems for at least one resident,
- With low interest rates and modest house prices, owner occupation in depressed market areas like Brechin and parts of Arbroath is a new alternative to social renting,
- Over 80% of people aspire to owner-occupation.

- Rural subhousing markets are independent and self-contained, with little local migration between Angus, Aberdeenshire and Perth and Kinross,
- Predicted shift of 5% from social housing towards owner occupation over 20 years, with the private rented sector remaining constant,
- There is significant commuting to Dundee and Aberdeen from Angus HMAs.

For most housing, it is the economy and patterns of economic activity or poverty that drive demand, in tenure, prices and location. We can plan for changes caused by major events such as the closure of the airbase at Edzell, that had such an effect on Brechin. The closure contributed to an economic downturn and a decrease in demand for housing. Average weekly earnings in Angus are 12% lower than the average in Scotland and housing costs reflect this. Differences in income can make it difficult to access the housing tenure of choice, leading to polarisation in some areas and also constricts the mobility of labour. South Angus stands out as an area where the patterns of economic activity, migration and aspiration in the Greater Dundee area has created a pressured local housing market, with its own particular problems.

1.1.1 High Demand

There is a “city-regional” effect of out-migration from Dundee inflating demand in the Sidlaws, Carnoustie and Monifieth. This South Angus area is the principal area of high demand in Angus, although there are areas within the other HMA with healthy demand for housing to rent or buy. The problems faced by South Angus are the focus of theme two: Affordable Housing.

1.2 Local Factors

Locally, demand is affected by the environment, closeness to town centres and shops, reputation of an area and stigma, views of safety and crime, the reputation of schools, the price of housing, the choice available and area loyalty. Here, the Local Housing Strategy is concerned with local failure, either in the market itself or within tenure, and principally with the problems of low demand.

Low Demand

Low demand housing affects all tenures: small waiting lists and empty properties in social renting; abandonment, low values and even negative equity in the private market. Emerging demand problems in Council and housing association stock in most towns is of particular concern. Over a third of Council tenants who are likely to move within the next two years say their main reason is to move to a better or different area. The wider consideration of



low demand in the public and private sectors is one of the subjects of Theme three: Housing Quality. Community safety initiatives, education and regeneration can address some of an area’s image problems but changing people’s opinions can take years. Where the fault lies with house design, tenure, environment or facilities, if investment is available, the solution is more tangible and quicker.

1.3 Supply

The effective supply of housing in Angus depends on new and existing stock. New build needs suitable land, with no development constraints, the existence of a buoyant market or public investment. Registered Social Landlords and other providers of affordable housing access to land and investment. Existing housing needs to be in the right place, be in good repair, with modern amenities and adapted or adaptable to particular needs as appropriate. Theme three: Housing Quality and theme five: Housing for Community Care cover the last two points in more detail.

Table 1.1: Tenure in the Four Housing Market Areas and Overall

	Outright owner	Mortgagee	Council Tenant	RSL Tenant	Private Tenant	Other
Forfar, Kirriemuir & Angus Glens	33%	27%	23%	1%	12%	4%
Montrose and Brechin	23%	41%	26%	6%	3%	1%
Arbroath	25%	38%	17%	9%	8%	3%
Carnoustie, Monifieth & Sidlaws	49%	42%	4%		4%	1%
Angus	32%	37%	18%	4%	7%	2%

Source: Angus Household Survey 2002.

Owner Occupation

Table 1.1 illustrates the split between tenures and HMAs. The majority tenure; owner occupation consists of around 35,000 households. Although there are variations in the strength of local markets across Angus, the adopted Angus Local Plan has identified enough housing land for the period to 2006 and beyond. Work is progressing on the Angus Local Plan review, which will identify land to meet the housing land requirements to 2011, established by the approved Dundee and Angus Structure Plan. The Angus Local Plan provides a housing land supply that is both effective and targeted. However, there are problems in the South Angus area, where land values and the buoyant market restricts providing affordable housing (see theme two: Affordable Housing).

Beyond new build, there is a minor problem with effective supply in the existing private sector stock. The number of Below Tolerable Standard (BTS) housing in Angus is restricted to the private sector and accounts for around 1.5% of the total stock. Although it is recognised that housing market forces may ensure that necessary repairs are carried out to BTS properties as they are bought and sold, it is accepted that this might be ineffective in low value areas.

Public Sector

Although there is a crude sufficiency of affordable rented housing through the Council and the voluntary sector, there are problems with effective supply. What is available may not match demand or aspiration or emerging household size. The public preference is for houses, but flatted accommodation and family maisonettes, which account for over half of all Council stock and 60% of RSL housing dominates the social sector. Flats are often seen as a temporary housing solution resulting in high turnover. Similarly, as older people want more spacious accommodation, nearer to town centres, peripheral sheltered housing schemes with bedsits have become an ineffective supply. The mismatch in family housing has been made worse by the Right to Buy as most of the 5,131 properties sold have been houses. However, even in these areas of low demand there is a need to develop new housing, because the community is worth preserving and needs rehoused, as parts of the existing stock that no longer meet needs or aspirations is demolished.

Since 1996 there has been a decrease in Communities Scotland's investment programme to fund new-build projects in Angus. The resources available from the development budgets of Communities Scotland in 2004-2005 are around £2.2m. These resources are discussed more fully in the resources framework. Around £11m in Housing Association Grant (HAG) is available, if this funding level is maintained, over the Strategy period. However, the investment needed to build enough new homes for affordable rent and sale, to replace obsolete house types and address shortfalls in both mainstream and special needs housing far exceeds this. The transfer of managing development

funding to the Council may improve targeting the development funding programme but this is no substitute for having enough resources.

Private Rented Sector

The private rented sector represents a puzzle in that most of the properties are flats, which are perceived as unpopular, but the rented market is reasonably stable. There is general lack of information about the sector and little communication with those involved: estates, factors, letting agents and larger landlords. Key issues, in the sector, centre on the condition of housing stock (See theme three: Housing Quality).

Over a third of tenants in the sector claim housing benefit. However there is evidence suggesting that some landlords in the private sector choose not to rent to people who claim housing benefit because of the delays - sometimes of up to 3-4 months - associated with claiming it, resulting in cash-flow problems. This further restricts access to housing for those in poverty.

1.4 Rural Settlements

Nearly 35,000, that is one in three, people live in rural areas. But, rural demand is hard to measure with settlements often having little affordable housing and no incentive to join the waiting list. Demand is also linked to the availability of services like housing support, health, employment and education and without these many older people, or people with disabilities, or families could not sustain themselves. With a low wage economy and house prices higher in rural areas, access to the owner-occupied sector is often not an option.

Social housing is not readily available in rural areas either. Lack of investment and loss through the Right to Buy means social housing only accounts for 7% of rural stock. Plugging the gap in many communities is the Private Rented Sector (PRS) and tied housing, providing 12% of houses across Angus. However this can be as much as 50% of rented accommodation in some rural areas and up to 90% of lets in the Angus Glens. Although the accommodation is often tied to employment, lacking in security of tenure and sometimes in poor condition, it is an important resource especially for those who work in the community and who cannot afford to buy. However increasing the supply is difficult as landowners may be reluctant to invest in preserving or increasing supply without help. The Scottish Landowners Federation have highlighted that landowners are willing to develop affordable housing for rent, but there are no grant mechanisms, such as GRO-grant for rent, available to contribute to the costs.

Around 500 homes in Angus may be second homes or holiday homes and although the holiday homes market can create income and employment, the relatively wealthy owners can fuel house price inflation. Fewer opportunities for local people to access housing may force them to move to find affordable accommodation. The 1999 Empty Homes research highlighted the existence of 400 empty houses in rural areas in various states of disrepair; 3% of rural stock. As a significant asset in areas where there is little housing, the return of these properties is potentially of great value in an area where demand is considered high.

When considering providing new affordable housing in rural settlements, there may be significant impediments to development. These include lack of support services and facilities, higher unit building costs associated with small sites, the availability and cost of suitable sites and drainage infrastructure.

Constraints affecting public drainage systems in the rural area continue to affect several villages across Angus and can influence site selection and the timing of the release of land for development. Angus Council will continue to encourage Scottish Water to assign resources to remove development constraints. Where appropriate private drainage systems can be vital in bringing forward sites for development in locations outwith areas served by the public sewer network.

1.5 Our Vision

Across Angus we want stable housing markets, showing gentle growth and meeting people's aspirations across all tenures. Supporting all these aspirations, we will develop a better understanding of supply and demand in communities, settlements and each Angus housing market.

A range of measures will stimulate the market in low demand areas. Where this removes obsolete housing stock we want to see replacement by family housing to support communities and ensure improvements in housing tenure and design mix. We conservatively estimate the need for 150 new houses to be built to achieve this.

Where mainstream supply is not meeting demand, housing providers, planners and public utilities will work together to ensure suitable development in both public and private sectors. If there is a need to stimulate private rented sector supply in rural areas where there is little or no social housing, it will be targeted using research at a submarket level. Table 1.2 highlight the potential investment needs and shortfall required to balance supply and demand

Table 1.2: Investment Needs and Shortfall of Resources to Balance Supply and Demand

Investment required	Cost
Housing for Rent	£38.4 M
Shared Ownership	£3.6 M
Housing for Sale	£3.6 M
Total Required	£45.6M

Type of investment available	Financial resources available
Public (HAG)	£6.82 M
Private from capitalised rent	£5.53 M
Other grants	£0.52M
Private from Sales	£1.56M
Total available	£14.43 M
Shortfall in Funding	£31.17M

Supply and demand is in balance in most of Angus. Where it is out of kilter, in low demand estates or in the settlements of South Angus, the Strategy will aim to bring it back to equilibrium through the following objectives:

- Stimulate demand in areas that are less popular or have investment needs,
- To ensure the release of appropriate land and existing buildings to meet demand for housing,
- Develop an understanding of each Housing Market Area and Burgh by 2009,
- Rectify the mismatch between housing type or tenure and housing need or demand,
- Reduce the number of empty homes by 10% over the period of the strategy.

Theme Two: Affordable Housing

Affordable housing has been described as “housing of an adequate standard available at below normal market price or rent, whether in the form of social rented housing, subsidised Low Cost Home Ownership, or other equivalent arrangement”. A home is not considered affordable if a household pays more than 25% of their disposable income on rent or 30% in owner occupation, to allow for maintenance of the property. The Housing Needs Assessment suggests that up to 4.4% of households have difficulty affording their current housing and a further 2.5% believe they have affordability problems.

2.1 Incomes, Rents and Mortgages

The Angus economy is heavily dependent on low wage industries, with average weekly earnings in April 2001 at £356.40, some 12% lower than the Scottish average. This average hides huge variations within Angus. Table 2.1 highlights the median incomes across each housing market area and compares the income spent on housing costs.

Table 2.1: Comparing Median Monthly Income and Median Monthly Housing Costs (Rent/Mortgage Payers)

	Median income (A)	Median rent mortgage (B)	Ratio (A/B)
Area			
Forfar, Kirriemuir, Angus Glens	£1,370	£180	7.6
Montrose and Brechin	£1,130	£182	6.2
Arbroath	£1,278	£185	6.9
Carnoustie, Monifieth and Sidlaws	£1,947	£210	9.3
Angus	£1,350	£192	7.03

Source: Household Survey 2002

Base: 350 (All rent/mortgage payers where income/rent information available)

2.2 Ability to Pay and Access to Housing

High average incomes can be inflationary, as house prices follow the majority's ability to pay, contributing to affordability problems for low earners in the same area. Unaffordable housing stops people moving to appropriate accommodation to meet a primary housing need, for instance if they are overcrowded or have a concealed household, are sharing amenities or if they have a disability. 14% of households, including 1,770 owners and 25% of concealed households, cannot move to meet a need because they cannot afford to. In the worst cases, affordability problems may lead to households being unable to sustain their current housing, leading to possible repossession or eviction.

Unaffordable housing may also limit the extent to which households can meet secondary housing needs through housing repairs, improvements or adaptations. An owner-occupier's inability to maintain or improve their property can contribute to their problems with the overall affordability of it. Both the Housing Needs Assessment and the Scottish House Condition Survey show a direct link between disrepair and incomes.

However, there are some complications in assessing affordability in Angus that raise concerns. Despite an oversupply of social rented properties in some areas, less than 10% of households with affordability problems are on a waiting list for social housing.

Private renters tend to pay more for accommodation than owners and social renters. The sector has problems with adequate heating and poor physical condition, which may contribute to overall costs. Renters in rural areas are more likely to rent privately because that is what is available. The affordability of rural private sector rents is an issue, as incomes tend to be low for those working in traditional rural industries such as agriculture and forestry.

Table 2.1 shows that Montrose and Brechin, and Arbroath may be more prone to affordability problems. However, the depressed house prices in Brechin and most of Arbroath and the oversupply of social housing in both towns suggest there is not a serious affordability problem. Further research is required, locally, to match income profiles with housing market sectors to identify where affordability problems lie and with what household types, for example, emerging or concealed households.

2.3 Pressured Areas

The Local Housing Needs Assessment identifies South Angus, consisting of Carnoustie, Monifieth and the Sidlaws, as the most pressured housing market in Angus. Accessing affordable housing of any tenure is difficult. This is made worse by the lack of social housing. Demand is inflated by pressure from the wider Dundee Housing Market Area. Given high average incomes and retirement households with no mortgage, there may be no affordability problem for most people already resident in this area. However, 2% of households are perceived as having affordability problems.

With slight social housing provision, there is particular pressure in the social rented sector in Carnoustie and Monifieth areas, with disproportionately high percentages of active applicants compared with stock and lets. There is a waiting list of near 600 households waiting for a house in the South Angus area but only 86 relets were available in 2003. High demand can skew waiting list figures by discouraging some people from applying as they feel there is limited chance of being offered accommodation in their preferred area. This is true of settlements in the Sidlaws, which have little or no affordable housing. The effect is higher levels of hidden need, less turnover and choice and the potential for unbalanced communities. Based on the Housing Needs Assessment there is a need for 330 units of affordable housing for rent and a further 90 units of affordable units for owner occupation over the period of the Strategy.

Access to the owner-occupied sector in these areas is also a concern as house prices are 20% higher in this area compared with the rest of Angus. This limits choice and undermines communities as local people move to more affordable areas. There is an estimated backlog of about 75 concealed households each year. Many are unlikely to be able to afford an entry-level mortgage over £38,000, suggesting demand for Low Cost Home Ownership (LCHO) or houses at affordable rent in this area. The Housing Market Area Profile conservatively predicts the need for 90 LCHO or other affordable housing options over the next 5 years in South Angus. The positive side of high demand is limited choice brings investment and interest to less desirable areas across tenures and empty or run-down homes in the private sector. Table 2.2 highlights the difference between supply and demand of social housing and the requirement for affordable housing in Angus.

Table 2.2: Affordable Housing Need in Angus 2004 - 2009 (5 years)

	A	B	C	D	E	F
Planning Area	Backlog Need for Social Rented	Newly Arising Need for Social Rented	Social Rented Lets	Additional Need for Social Rented (A+B-C)	Need for LCHO	Total Affordable Housing Need (D+E)
Arbroath	220	990	2015	0 (-805)	95*	0+95=95
Brechin/Montrose	250	850	1545	0 (-445)	95*	0+95=95
Forfar/Kirriemuir & Angus Glens	170	905	1470	0 (-395)	100*	0+100=100
South Angus	130	540	340	330	90	330+90=420
Total	770	3285	5370	330	380	330+380=710

Source: NFO Social Research and Pidea Consulting/Angus Council

* In each of the Arbroath, Brechin/Montrose and Forfar/Kirriemuir and Glens HMA's conducted by NFO Social Research and Pidea Consulting suggests that the supply of lower value properties available may be adequate to satisfy the calculated need for LCHO option housing.

The Council can apply for pressured area status, limiting the sale of Council housing to sitting tenants in the areas applied for. However given the low turnover of council housing in the area it may not have the wanted impact. Given this, the Council has not yet decided to apply for pressured area status for those communities.

The point of building affordable homes whether for rent or sale is to meet the needs of the local community and consideration must be given to this at all stages of the development process. There requires to be a balance between local needs and the aspirations of the wider area. Failure to heed this may result in local communities losing out in sustaining their communities and economies.

2.4 Planning Context

Scottish Planning Policy 3 - Planning for Housing (SPP3) provides a statement of Government policy on planning and housing and includes reference to affordable housing. The document recognises housing as a fundamental need and reflects a commitment to ensuring that a decent home should be within the reach of all households. A particular need demonstrated in a Housing Needs Assessment (HNA), within the LHS, is a material consideration in planning processes to be addressed as the opportunity arises through reviews of Structure and Local Plans. Policy H16: Affordable Housing from the adopted Angus Local Plan provides general support for proposals to develop affordable housing where there is a clearly demonstrated local need. Although indicating that affordable housing is best accommodated on sites identified for housing in settlements, the Policy would also support development of appropriate windfall and opportunity sites. Some LCHO and housing for rent has been provided as part of new housing sites, largely as the result of partnership working. It is recognised that Policy H16 of the Angus Local Plan should be reviewed, taking account of the findings of the Angus Local Housing Needs Assessment. Further detailed research will be required within the Housing Market Areas to identify unmet need for affordable housing at a local or settlement level.

2.5 Our Vision

We want to tackle the difficulty some people have in accessing appropriate housing in the area they need to live in because of work or family ties. This is true in South Angus and in rural areas where house prices are higher than average and social housing is scarce. We want to develop a policy that ensures building affordable houses for rent and for sale in area like South Angus and in rural locations.

There will be local or niche shortfalls in affordable housing for rent and low cost home ownership in most parts of Angus but in South Angus there is an acute and demonstrable under supply. During this Strategy we want 330 affordable homes for rent and 90 houses for low-cost home ownership build in South Angus. Identifying where other local shortfalls are will depend on submarket research. Any public sector investment for affordable housing in Angus will have to be flexible enough to pick up the housing needs of smaller settlements and communities in other areas.

- Develop and implement an affordable housing policy over the strategy period,
- To promote different tenure options for households with particular or changing housing needs,
- Develop mechanisms to improve choice of and access to affordable housing by 2006,
- Work with rural communities to address issues with local access to affordable housing.



Liam Kemp- P5 - Inverarity Primary School

Theme Three: Quality Housing

Housing quality combines three elements: (1) managing housing and its supply, across all tenures, (2) the physical standard of housing, and (3) overall environmental quality. All are important to quality of life, the operation of the market and ultimately to the sustainability of communities.

Quality is at the heart of the Scottish Executive's housing policy and Angus Community Planning objectives, for example, in eliminating BTS housing, modernising Scotland's social housing, fighting fuel poverty and progressing local agenda 21 on sustainability. Quality is also an equalities issue. The Housing Improvement Task Force has stated that minority ethnic communities, older people, younger households and those with disabilities in particular, are more likely to face problems with the condition of their homes or live in houses that do not meet their particular needs. They also face added barriers in resolving these problems and accessing housing.

Is Housing Well Managed?

Managing housing involves: the ease of accessing a home either for rent or sale, how tenancies and mortgages are regulated and problems or disputes dealt with, and managing repairs and investment, for all tenures.

3.1 Getting a House

Access to housing can be a problem for some client groups; for reasons of language, understanding and resources. Problems can also occur because of the quality of the system for accessing housing and how it serves vulnerable people.

Accessing housing for rent in the social sector involves waiting lists and points systems for measuring housing need, with consumers given priority according to that need. The allocation policies of Angus Council and housing associations are good at matching housing with need. However, this approach has been criticised for giving customers little choice, being too bureaucratic, inefficient in low demand situations and not designed for changing markets or obliging new customers. A further complication is the increase of social landlords over the past 30 years leading to applicants facing a confusing array of different policies and forms. Although social landlords do co-operate in allocations and nominations, this has not worked consistently. The absence of a common point of contact for the social housing sector; a one-stop shop for people looking for affordable housing, is not making best use of this otherwise valuable diversity of landlords.

The challenge is to develop new systems that will work well in both high and low demand areas. Systems that will tap into new markets and new clients, make access as fast and effective as possible while protecting the needs of excluded or vulnerable groups, meeting statutory responsibilities, and being transparently fair. Some regional and national housing associations operating in Angus and Angus Council itself have started to develop or investigate access to social housing through choice based letting.

Historically, council housing developed as a targeted high demand product with a captive market, but it now has a welfare image. Alternatives like affordable home ownership and modern housing association stock have left demand for what the Council is offering at an all time low in many areas. Over half of accommodation offers are refused, vacancy rates are rising and there are dangerously short waiting lists in many areas. Problems with image and low demand are also affecting RSL mainstream and sheltered housing projects, for instance in Brechin and Arbroath.

However, Angus is a place of contrasts and there is still high demand in the communities of South Angus, but in those areas finding affordable housing takes an unreasonably long-time.

Access to Private Rented Sector accommodation can be more straightforward, because it is largely market based. Private lets offer various types of accommodation and location and have a reliable demand, especially in rural areas, where they are the main source of rented property. There are good and professional private landlords, but the sector has a reputation for bad practice and there are concerns about the more general barriers caused by rent deposit conditions and housing benefit delays. Unfortunately, there is just not enough information to define the problems in Angus.



Owner occupation is a massive step for a household but it is based on a system of buying and selling that has some fundamental flaws which compromise choice. The reports of the Housing Improvement Task Force detail problems with: unnecessary repeat valuations, limited survey information, lack of understanding of responsibilities for common and individual repairs, a lack of information about running costs, energy efficiency or adaptations, and incomplete deeds of conditions. Hoped for legislation and initiatives in 2004 may allow some of the Task Force's ideas such

as the seller's property information pack to be promoted in Angus. One such idea, the single seller's survey, is being piloted from April 2004 in the Greater Dundee Housing Market Area, which includes South Angus.

3.2 Tenancy and Estate Management

Compared with other authorities, Angus Council is good in many landlord functions, for instance rent collection, arrears management and repairs. Despite this, Council housing is predicted to shrink over the next 20 years if it does not respond to changes in aspirations, demographics and in the housing market. To create a housing service for the 21st century with the necessary attention paid to customer wants and needs, there needs to be a broader review of organisational culture and services.

While council housing has found its role changing and shrinking, the voluntary sector has built a good reputation and has grown significantly through new build and stock transfer in the last 30 years. It has been successful in addressing special and regeneration housing needs, often with the advantage of being community based or specialist providers. The recent trend towards merger and acquisition, as smaller landlords have sought economies of scale, has raised concerns that local control and housing management organisation, that are such a distinctive part of the Scottish housing association movement, is in danger of being lost.

The Private Rented Sector shows extremes of good and bad tenancy management practice, but there have been no detailed surveys in the tenure to clarify the picture.

3.3 Community Safety & Dispute Resolution

The Community Plan wants people to feel secure within their environment and although antisocial behaviour can be found in any tenure, it is mainly found in rented housing, both private and social. Some social landlords spend 80% of their staff resources on their most disruptive and difficult 20% of tenants. Good tenancy behaviour is not reinforced and experience across Scotland has shown that inadequate housing management can create or perpetuate unwanted behaviour and damage the sector's image. With changing homeless legislation and the increasingly marginalized nature of its customer base, the problem for social housing is likely to get worse. There are initiatives currently being tested in Angus, which may help community safety and the sector's image, like community wardens, estate management specialisation and mediation.

The private sector presents a challenge to community safety. There are legal remedies including antisocial behaviour orders for individuals but these are little-used and agencies find it difficult to intervene with owner-occupiers or private tenants. Some private landlords fail to deal with their tenants' antisocial behaviour. This has been identified as a particular problem in regeneration areas where low property values have led to ex-tenant owners wanting to move, selling to private landlords or becoming amateur landlords themselves. A policy of zero-tolerance for antisocial behaviour may fail in these circumstances because antisocial families cannot be effectively excluded from an area because they can switch tenure.

3.4 Physically Fit for Purpose

Housing should be fit for purpose; by design, type, state of repair and degree to which it meets modern standards, especially energy efficiency and should meet the statutory "tolerable standard". Social housing standards are high in Angus, but the Council has problems with obsolete stock and low demand. In the private sector, there is a mixed picture. Most of owner-occupied housing is in better condition than the Scottish average but there is still disrepair and neglect, often associated with poverty, old age and private lets. However, we have no details about the state of private housing, potential problems and their causes.

There is no definitive figure for the number of Below the Tolerable Standard (BTS) properties in Angus but at worst an estimated 600 homes failed the standard in 2001. The Scottish Executive is reviewing the definition of BTS and it is expected to issue guidance sometime during 2004. If the new definition introduces significant changes such as the inclusion of an energy efficiency measure where failure is triggered by a National Home Energy Rating (NHER) rating of 2 or less, the number of BTS properties would rise, to 8,000 or more. The extent and nature of the problem requires further research within the LHS plan period to identify properties and potential costs. With the present definition, the BTS properties in Angus is not a cause for concern and there should be sufficient investment through the private market and the grants system to rectify most. If, as the 1999 Angus Empty Homes research indicated, some BTS properties form a long-term problem, interventionist measures will be needed.

The "Scottish Housing Quality Standard", primarily for social housing, has been announced by the Scottish Executive, (see Appendix 4) with elements broadly in line with Angus Council's own housing standard developed in 2000. Angus Council is developing a delivery plan to ensure that all of its stock is brought up to this standard and this will be included within the review of the Local Housing Strategy in 2005. The Council is three years into an extensive programme of modernisation, of kitchens, bathrooms, heating, insulation and double glazing. This will be completed by 2015. The Scottish Housing Quality Standard can be delivered through the current resources of the Council without the need to transfer stock.

Voluntary sector stock is usually high-quality, either relatively newly built or transferred from other landlords based on business plans that include modernisation. It is expected housing associations and other providers will meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015. Although it is not a statutory requirement for the private sector to achieve the standard, it is desirable to have a basic quality and maintenance standard in both owner occupation and the private rented sector.

Energy efficiency is a special case within the development of physical standards for housing, about 20% of housing in Angus fails the lowest standard of efficiency (scoring 0-2 NHER) and 22% of households are considered fuel poor. This is across all tenures and, through the Fuel Poverty Strategy and Angus Agenda 21 Action Plan, the Community Planning Partnership is actively pursuing a more efficient use of energy and a drastic reduction of fuel poverty.



Overall disrepair in Angus is lower than the national average, but as 37% of homes are in need of an urgent repair, there remains cause for concern. Most of the disrepair is in the private sector and unsurprisingly, is associated with older households, older buildings and low incomes. The 2002 Scottish House Condition Survey estimated costs for repairing BTS, patch repairs, (visible repairs) and improvements in Angus at £69m. If patch repairs are replaced with comprehensive repairs (visible repairs plus the cost of replacing all external and common elements that have a life of ten years or less) this rises dramatically to £129m. Repairs and maintenance are well managed in the public sector, with both Angus Council and housing associations having an excellent record in reactive and planned services, although there are problems with managing repairs and improvements where there is mixed ownership.

Since 1980 the Right to Buy has introduced complexities of estate management that council housing services were not designed to cope with. An increasing number of owners share common grounds and service and maintenance responsibilities that are not addressed adequately in title deeds.

Proposed legislative changes to help end confusion about title conditions and address common maintenance problems may provide the tools to rectify this.

Owner occupation is the majority tenure within Angus at 67% but there is little useful information about the condition of these properties. The data held at an Angus level cannot distinguish between private renting and owner occupation, or between housing market areas. Information at point of sale is often incomplete, missing details of outstanding repairs and planned maintenance.

Repairs and modernisation are the responsibility of owners. However an individual's means and knowledge about the nature of repairs, and how to organise or pay for them is often limited, which has led to sporadic investment in the tenure. Compounded by title deeds that are unclear about common or mutual repairs, a lack of factoring arrangements, and some owners being capital rich and cash poor, many ex-council tenants who have exercised the Right to Buy are not used to taking responsibility for repairs. Although the Council has powers to intervene and help, its enforcement powers are used reactively and it is too early to determine the impact of changes in the repairs and improvement grants system. Also, the use of Angus Care and Repair to aid vulnerable occupants to maintain their properties, relies on the client, or agency working with the client, accessing the service and there are still many vulnerable people with repair problems unknown to them.

Repair problems in the Private Rented Sector cannot be quantified but, from anecdotal and visual evidence in regeneration areas like Clifftown and areas like town centres, there is clear decline in the physical condition of private lets. The 1999 Empty Homes Initiative research also confirms widespread problems in the private sector, especially in rural areas and in properties above shops in towns. Private sector grants are not available to landlords.

3.5 A Better Environment

Quality housing cannot sustain communities alone; a good physical environment is also needed. Bringing quality to the physical environment includes addressing changes in car use and traffic in residential areas that were designed without the car in mind. There are also problems associated with low demand housing areas like litter, graffiti and vandalism, poor garden and ground maintenance, poor close and communal area cleaning, abandoned cars and lack of defensible space.

Newly built housing developments have improved security by designing out crime. This is often absent from older residential areas, which are often the ones that have problems with antisocial behaviour. In town centres especially, but also in areas of regeneration, empty homes and redundant buildings in disrepair can affect the overall appearance and investment. Areas that experience decline and problems with youth crime often have outdated and limited play and recreational facilities and no opportunities for participation, for older youths. Research has identified the quality of the environment, for example whether there is litter, graffiti or fly tipping, as the commonest cause for people wanting to move from an area. It affects a community's image and the problem can escalate if not pro-actively managed.

3.6 Our Vision

The houses in Angus form an important part of the built environment, but more importantly they satisfy our most basic need: shelter. However, we want housing to go beyond this basic function. We want Angus citizens to have quality housing, that is warm, has modern amenities, is secure and in a good state of repair, and located in a community or environment that is clean and safe. We will ensure that Angus Council meets the housing quality standard and assist RSLs to do the same. Where disrepair is an issue in the private rented sector or in owner-occupation we will encourage and assist

by providing options to enable the owners to complete the repairs themselves. Across all tenures we want housing to be energy efficient, at least to a minimum degree.

By 2009 we want to see the social and private rented sectors providing the best quality housing and property management services. For our customers, and those of housing associations we want to renew and rejuvenate affordable housing for rent, with a broader range of customers, more choice of services and a new image. We want to facilitate good practice through the voluntary regulation of the private rented sector. To ensure both quality in the 'bricks and mortar' and managing housing we have developed the following objectives:

- Ensure that all social housing meets the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015,
- Reduce the level of Below Tolerable Standard housing to less than 1% of housing stock and achieve a 10% annual increase in the number of private sector properties that meet the local standard by 2009,
- Ensure that social housing is an attractive choice for an increasing proportion of people over the strategy period,
- Achieve an average 'National Home Energy Rating' of 5 across all tenures by 2015,
- Ensure people are satisfied with the quality of their neighbourhood.



Corrie McLeod - P3 - Cortachy Primary School

Theme Four: Homelessness

Homelessness is a problem that cuts across all the themes of the Local Housing Strategy (LHS) and its reduction is a priority. The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003 place new duties on local authorities to tackle the causes and effects of homelessness and the LHS acknowledges this shift in emphasis and that homelessness is a problem that requires more than a simple housing solution. A fuller explanation of the needs of homeless households and the way we intend to alleviate their situation and prevent homelessness is contained within the Homelessness Strategy 2003-2008 but the key issues are outlined below.

This legislation will bring about a fundamental change of culture in the responding to homelessness. Previously there was a limited duty to house only the most vulnerable homeless households, with the onus being on the homeless person to prove their need. Angus Council now has to focus on preventing homelessness occurring and resettling all homeless people, and to take account of the often complex needs of homeless people and provide information, advice and assistance, support and employment, training and educational initiatives. The new homelessness legislation contains a wide range of measures, but four changes are particularly important.

Previously local authorities only had a duty to permanently house homeless people who fell within categories of "priority need", excluding a significant proportion of applicants, notably single males. The new legislation sets out a timetable for abolishing the "priority needs" test by 2012, and once phased out, the duty to provide permanent accommodation will be extended to all unintentionally homeless applicants.

A second change is the new duty to provide temporary accommodation to all homeless people while their needs are being assessed and a duty to provide a Scottish short secure tenancy (SSST) with suitable support to anyone who is intentionally homeless but in 'priority need'. If the household successfully sustain that tenancy it will be converted to permanent Scottish secure tenancy (SST). This effectively means that local authorities are now under obligation to provide permanent accommodation to all but a few households who are unable to sustain any form of tenancy, for example, because of antisocial behaviour.

Perhaps most important change of all is the new duty on local authorities to research and assess the causes and patterns of homelessness in their area, and develop a Homelessness Strategy to prevent and alleviate homelessness.



4.1 The Extent of Homelessness

Homelessness applications numbered 1,194 in 2002-2003 and this rose to 1,328 during 2003-2004. Table 4.1 highlights homeless presentations since July 2001. Several factors are contributing to the rise including changes to the Angus Council allocations policy, which gives homeless applicants more waiting list priority. It may also be better quality advice and information.

Table 4.1: Homelessness Applications 2001-2004

Jul-Sep 01	Oct-Dec 01	Jan-Mar 02	Apr-Jul 02	Jul-Sep 02	Oct-Dec 02	Jan-Mar 03	Apr-Jun 03	Jul-Sep 03	Oct-Dec 03	Jan-Mar 04	Apr-Jun 04
218	254	269	250	317	285	342	302	336	291	409	373

The most common reasons given for becoming homeless were friends, parents or relatives no longer able to accommodate, non-violent domestic dispute and the loss of a private tenancy. Around 57% of applications during 2002-2003 were from single person households and 37% were made by households that included children. There is a significant problem with youth homelessness, with 29% of all applicants under the age of 25 and 9% under 18.

Rough sleeping is a growing problem in Angus. In the first half of 2002-03, around 4% of applicants had slept rough in the previous three months but by the first half of 2003-04 this had risen to 9%. This may be due in part to better recording systems; however, the trend is concerning as a significant proportion of applicant households were families, some with young children.

4.2 Assessment of Applicants

Around 27% of all homeless presentations in 2002-03 were assessed as in priority need: mainly ones that contain dependent children, a pregnant woman or are young. Of the remainder, the Council lost contact with 36% before an assessment was made, four times the national average. Although some of these found housing themselves, there may be some not receiving the support they require during the process or the temporary accommodation they have been offered is unsuitable for their needs. A person-centred and holistic approach in assessing the needs of homeless households and a workable single shared assessment process is crucial in addressing this.

Table 4.2: Homelessness Assessments by Category as Percentage of Total Assessments

	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04 Q 1 and 2
Homeless, in Priority Need, Unintentional	17%	16%	24%	30%
Homeless, In Priority Need, Intentional	3%	2%	3%	3%
Homeless, Not in Priority Need	13%	14%	6%	6%
Potentially Homeless, In Priority Need, Unintentional	6%	12%	6%	15%
Potentially Homeless, In Priority Need, Intentional	1%	1%	1%	<1%
Potentially Homeless, Not in Priority Need	6%	4%	7%	3%
Neither Homeless nor Potentially Homeless	17%	13%	6%	5%
Lost Contact or Withdrew	37%	35%	36%	23%
Applicant resolved Homelessness Prior to Decision	0%	3%	13%	15%

4.3 Sustaining Tenancies

By its nature, homelessness makes households vulnerable, especially if this is combined with youth or additional complex needs. Tenancies fail for many reasons: because of limited resources, a lack of basic furniture and household goods, no practical support or services in place when the housing is available. Some people in their first tenancies, especially those under 25, may need additional support in developing the skills and social networks essential for independent living. Around 25% of young homeless people between the ages of 16 and 25 recently surveyed had previously held a tenancy that had failed.

The most common reasons for failure were the inability to afford rent and rent arrears, being asked to leave the accommodation and moving away from drug culture. There is a lack of practical advice for those leaving school and wishing to live independently. For the small number of households whose pattern of behaviour is disruptive and antisocial, services are needed to help them address their disruptive behaviour and prevent homelessness for the households themselves or other households affected by their actions.

4.4 Implications of New Homelessness Duties

Around 13% of applicants in 2002-03 were assessed as being either homeless or threatened with homelessness, but were not in priority need. As people become more aware of the local authority's extended duties it is likely the number of applicants will continue to rise, particularly from emerging households (especially young single people leaving home for the first time). This extension of duties and especially the phasing out of the "priority need" category will result in greater responsibility on both Angus Council and housing associations. The Homelessness Strategy estimates the number of households for whom accommodation must be secured is likely to rise to over 1,000 by 2006. Accommodation provided by local authorities must meet any particular needs of the homeless people being housed, whether in temporary or permanent accommodation. Angus Council must consider the best interests of dependent children when fulfilling obligations to homeless people.

To meet the new duty to ensure permanent accommodation is available to unintentionally homeless people in priority need, all tenures need to contribute and barriers to access overcome. There is no adequate supply of appropriate affordable housing in areas of high demand. Homeless households are more likely to have limited resources and access to the private rented sector or owner occupation requires financial aid.

4.5 Our Vision

Shelter is our most basic need, but at some point in our lives it is possible, for various reasons, to be homeless. This can include your home being damaged by fire, a disagreement with parents or a breakdown of relationships. When people approach Angus Council as homeless we recognise they do so because of other disturbances in their lives. We want to ensure that being homeless does not significantly add to already stressful situations. We will ensure the assessment procedures are seamless, that people are made aware of their choices and that all needs are met, including support needs. This is important to ensure that any tenancy is sustainable.

The Local Housing Strategy aims to prevent homelessness, reduce its impact and to complement and facilitate the objectives of the Homelessness Strategy. The options devised to help achieve this are listed in the Implementation Plan but include:

- Develop and implement good quality assessment and support mechanisms for homeless and other vulnerable households in housing need,
- Develop an understanding of homeless needs and trends in all Housing Market Areas by 2005,
- Improve access to appropriate permanent accommodation and support for homeless and other vulnerable households over the Strategy period,
- Reduce tenancy breakdown, as a cause of homelessness, by 50% by 2008.



Emma Shepherd - P3 - Andover Primary School.

Theme Five: Housing for Community Care

Housing and housing support is important to Community Care and this section is shared with the Community Care Plan 2003, planning housing and support across broad categories of need. These categories comprise older people, including those with mental health problems, people with physical disabilities including sensory impairment and acquired brain injury, people with learning disabilities, people with mental health problems and those with substance abuse problems.

Planning for people with complex and ever changing particular needs is a severe test of the Local Housing Strategy. The requirements of many of the particular needs groups are difficult to assess, come from many sources and outdate rapidly. Lack of information about needs, for planning, is a problem common to most special needs client groups. To plan for future needs, this incomplete current picture has to bolt on demographic change, changing good practice and political direction, changing individual circumstances and aspirations, advances in medicine for assessment and improved life expectancies for those with profound disabilities.

Our principle focus is providing support services and suitable housing, which will enable people to continue to live in the community rather than entering institutional care. To do this successfully will require more than bricks and mortar; there needs to be a diversity of support models, appropriate use of rehabilitation, temporary occupancy and full tenancies, and robust protocols and closer working between agencies. Angus has been successful in meeting some of the varying and complex accommodation and support service needs that each client group requires but there are still many gaps. An example of success is providing sheltered housing for less dependent older people by Angus Council and the voluntary sector. But sheltered housing aside, some Angus people with particular needs still have to find specialist housing in other parts of the UK or have to manage difficulties with their current home.

5.1 Older People and Older People with Mental Health Problems

The number of people in Angus over 85 is predicted to grow in real terms and as a proportion of the population by 60% by 2016. This will bring with it a predictable rise in dependency and disability in this age group as well as an increase in single elderly households.

Older people usually prefer to stay in their current homes rather than move into sheltered housing or care homes but for those that cannot cope, there will need to be supported housing options. There is a shortage of specialist provision like very sheltered housing for more dependent households, especially for people with dementia. Given the pattern of settlements across rural Angus, there is rarely the critical number of older people in a rural community to justify developing sheltered housing, so only four villages in Angus have a sheltered housing scheme. For the rest of rural Angus there is home care and other support available and a community alarm. Those who need supported accommodation have to move to the nearest large town, away from friends, relatives and the communities they have always been part of. As well as the rising number of dependent older people in the community, there are a few older people with mental health problems currently in Sunnyside Royal Hospital, Montrose who require rehousing over the period of the Strategy.

While provision of sheltered housing in Angus may appear extensive, not all schemes are viewed as being equally attractive by older people and a number are experiencing low demand because of changing housing aspirations, unpopular designs and locations. The need for residential and hospital

care is also being re-evaluated. Local and national policies such as Supporting People seek to minimise the use of institutional care, by providing housing alternatives and support services to enable people to continue living in the community.

Finding an adapted housing solution for people leaving hospital or other institutional care is a high priority for the Strategy. While Angus manages delayed discharge better than some areas of Scotland, nearly three-quarters of all delayed discharges affect patients over 75, and any delay can have an unfavourable impact on their rehabilitation. In addition, a key part of enabling older people to continue living in the community is adapting their own homes to meet their changing housing needs. This can include fitting a handrail or the more complicated and costly provision of a level access shower. The adaptation process can be lengthy because of the complexity of assessment, design, finding contractors and obtaining the necessary funding and permissions. For both, there is room for improvement with assessment, choice of housing and organising adaptations to people's homes.

5.2 Physical Disabilities and Sensory Impairments

For the 2,700 adults under 65 with severe physical disabilities, including those with sensory impairment and those with acquired brain injuries, there is increasingly diverse provision of housing and support. In 2003, Angus saw its first specialist project for people with multiple disabilities including sensory impairment, built in Forfar. Margaret Blackwood Housing Association has been building new houses in Forfar and Arbroath for wheelchair users. People with physical disabilities should have as much choice as those with mainstream needs, but there is still a shortage of adapted properties and specialised accommodation and services.

For some groups, like people with severe acquired brain injury, there is no specialised accommodation in Tayside. The speed of the specialist new build housing programme, and therefore choice for some groups is dictated by capital investment. Other factors that restrict choice are: the slow speed at which major adaptations can be carried out, an incomplete record of adapted properties across all tenures and a lack on information on the adaptability of the existing housing stock. Also there is no mechanism for targeting the sale or relet of adapted homes to those with particular needs in the private sector.

5.3 Learning Disabilities

Current provision for those with learning disabilities ranges from tenancies in mainstream properties with peripatetic support provision to specialised accommodation with a high ratio of staff to residents. As the age group and support required by those still in need of housing vary substantially, with some individuals requiring 24-hour support, there is a need to expand all these types of provision.

Of about 370 learning disabilities service users currently in contact with Social Work, up to 50 will require their own supported tenancies over the next five years. Besides this, there are some individuals currently in hospital care who will require rehoused in specialised supported housing over the Strategy period. Also, there is a lack of specialist sheltered housing for the older members of the learning disabilities client group and for older "children" looked after by increasingly elderly carers. There is also a lack of specialist accommodation and support provision for those with autism in Tayside.

5.4 Mental Health

The demographics of mental health and the demands it places on housing are constantly changing and it is recognised that estimating the prevalence of mental health problems is difficult in Angus, as

it is in any population. Despite this lack of details, the need for provision of housing with support is not in doubt, but for most of those with mental health problems the current range of mainstream properties available in Angus is potentially adequate. A related issue is the link between homelessness and unmet mental health issues.

Although a separate problem, people with substance abuse and dependency problems make up a group who may find mainstream properties adequate, provided they were in suitable locations and with appropriate levels of support. However, there is an admitted lack of details on current levels of alcohol and substance abuse in Angus, which makes it difficult to plan services and provision.

5.5 Gaps in Housing

We estimate there is a need to develop around 150 new houses for special needs, some with on-site support, over the next five years. Table 5.5 shows the estimated range of need identified through the Joint Commissioning and Management Group. These figures will be reviewed over the Strategy period to replace ranges of need with more accurate predictions. Although most people with a long-term limiting illness or a disability can only afford social rented housing, their aspirations for owner occupation are the same as the rest of the population. With low investment levels in specialist accommodation, the pattern of supported housing for a range of needs is concentrated on a few towns, making it difficult for some to locate near to family networks and support.

Table 5.5 Summary of Special Needs Groups and Housing Need 2004-09

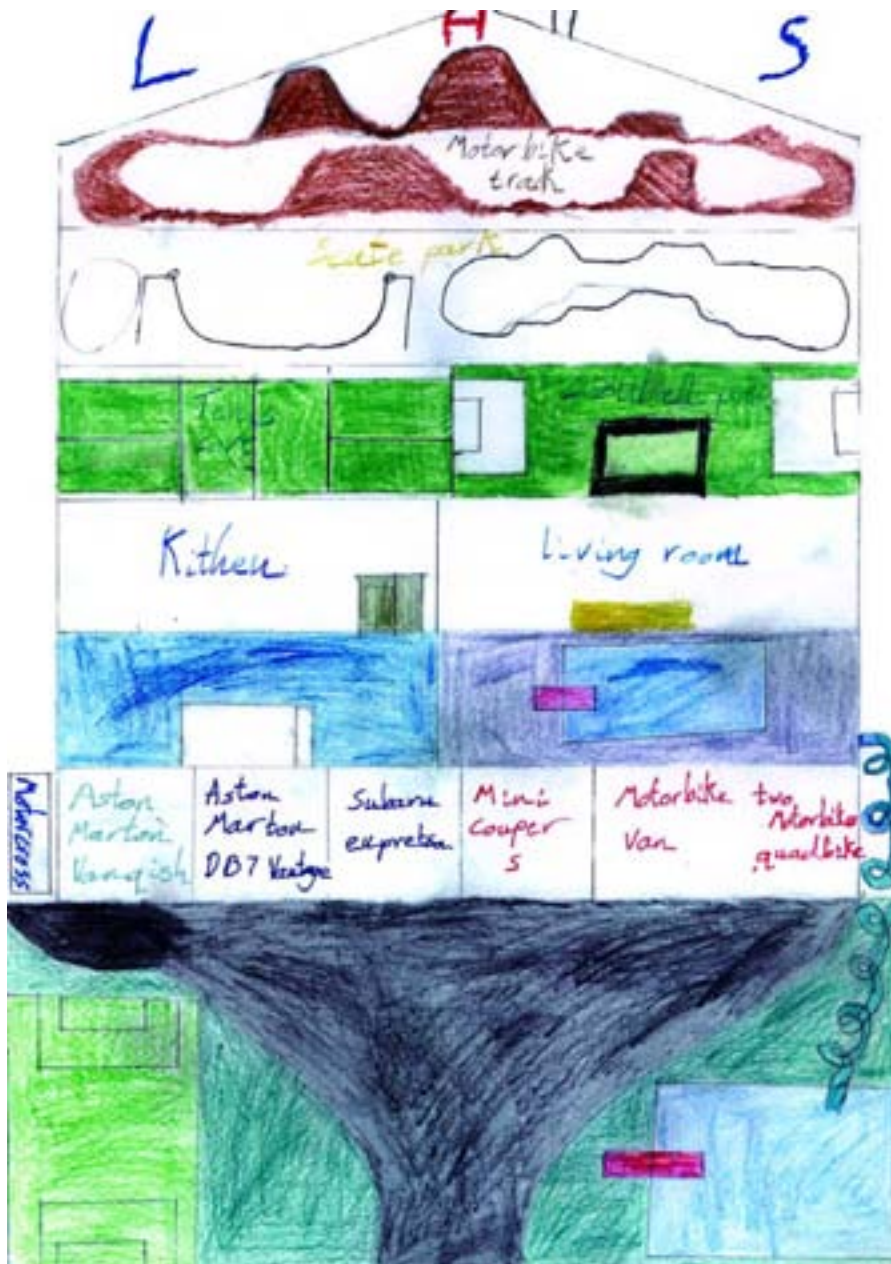
Community Care Group	Number of extra housing units needed in Angus.
Older People	Up to 250 units of Very Sheltered Housing & step-down care accommodation. Up to 1200 additional units of amenity housing for over-65.
Learning Disabilities	A variety of forms of accommodation for 46 people, with possible need to accommodate an additional 15 people. Specialist accommodation for 15 to 20 people with challenging behaviour.
Physical Disabilities	Up to 200 wheelchair standard properties required over the period to 2009.
Acquired Brain Injury	Need for provision of specialist accommodation and support services for those with severe brain injuries.
Mental Health	Short-term accommodation for up to 12 people being re-settled from long-term hospital care.

5.6 Our Vision

We want to provide a housing based solution for those coming out of hospital, institutional care or with particular needs already in the community. People in need should also have a choice of appropriate housing and support options available in Angus regardless of disability or age.

Given the potential investment required, it may take more than one strategy period to give all community care clients appropriate housing with support and ultimately, a choice in where they live. However, as a start to both quantifying and meeting the housing and support requirements of particular needs groups in Angus, the Local Housing Strategy has identified the following objectives:

- To improve understanding of current housing provision for those with particular needs,
- Ensure a 10% annual increase in the proportion of housing adapted for particular needs,
- Contribute to reducing average delayed discharge-waiting times in Angus over the Strategy period,
- Ensure that all those in need of support in their homes during the Strategy period will receive it,
- Act to reduce the proportion of people entering institutional care over the Strategy period by providing a housing-based alternative,
- To develop supported accommodation for people with specialist needs, who would otherwise have to seek it outside Angus.



Steven Watson - P6 - Inverarity Primary School

Theme Six: Sustainable Communities.

A sustainable community is one that 'meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. Those needs range from subsistence to community safety, from education to participation and identity. Taking a lead from the Angus Community Plan, the Local Housing Strategy analyses how housing fits in through three strands of sustainability: social, economic and environmental.

6.1 Social Sustainability

Drawing from the Angus Social Inclusion Strategy and Community Planning, the interaction between housing and social sustainability cuts across community safety, healthy living, active citizenship, family and social networks and trust; some relationships found across Angus and others area specific.

Challenges to social sustainability that affect all communities and involve housing include homelessness, ill health, fuel poverty, poor attainment, inequalities and economic and political exclusion. The link between housing and health inequalities recurs throughout the Local Housing Strategy but is dealt with more fully in the Angus Health and Homelessness Plan and the Angus Health Improvement Plan. Homelessness is discussed in more detail in Section 5 but as homelessness is often because of relationship breakdown, between partners or between parents and children, it has a disproportionate impact on the sustainability of communities, especially small rural ones. Lack of educational attainment in children has been strongly linked with poor housing quality and homelessness.

Fuel Poverty

Fuel Poverty strikes at the heart of all three types of sustainability. On Scotland's exposed East coast, with a high proportion of older housing, with poor heating and insulation, and a low wage economy; Angus has an estimated 11,000 fuel poor households. Being mainly people related, fuel poverty is likely to be concentrated in poorer areas as defined by the Health Deprivation and Disability Index, but more information is needed about where and how bad it is. Angus provides an energy advice service linked to a fuel poverty referral network and there is a commitment from all social landlords to improve their physical standards. However, limited resources in grants and other measures means, Angus' Fuel Poverty Strategy will struggle to improve hard to heat properties in the private sector, combat condensation and health problems, especially in rural areas.

Exclusion & Discrimination

Housing is significant in people's and community's experience of social exclusion, from youth to old age, across ethnic minorities and disabilities. Young adult's aspirations for independence and respect, expressed through a home of their own, are sometimes at odds with their lack of preparation for independent living. Lack of practical advice and standards of behaviour can lead to debt, antisocial behaviour and exclusion through rough sleeping or homelessness.

Research into the housing needs and aspirations of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Communities in Angus shows that BME communities' aspirations are broadly similar to those of the white population, that is a preference for suburban living and owner occupation. There is no strong wish to form enclaves of the same ethnic group, although fear of racial harassment is a barrier to meeting housing needs, making some areas "off-limits", particularly in social housing estates. Affordability is the most

important barrier to both private and social housing, often because of the need for larger accommodation. In addition to fear of harassment, the low uptake of social housing is due to a range of factors. These include a poor understanding of what is available, language barriers, the cultural inappropriateness of some housing provision and policy and a culture of self-reliance leading to an unwillingness to seek assistance from the local authority. However, Angus Council remains an important source of housing advice, information and assistance and this is something to build on.

Angus Council currently meets its housing obligations to Gypsy Travellers but recent research and consultation has raised the need to improve services and policies. The Council recognises that, with existing settled provision, there is a shortfall in "transit sites". Existing facilities are inadequate and the Council needs to review policies on: allocating houses for those that wish to settle, adapting caravans, and Gypsy Traveller representation.

People with a disability are found in all communities. However, beyond the main towns, although we have home care, community alarm and various peripatetic support services, few settlements have specialist accommodation. Few have the facilities to allow frail elderly residents, those with mental health problems or people with disabilities to live in their communities. This is despite the clear benefits to individuals and agencies from supportive local social networks. See section five (Housing for Community Care) for more detail.

Active Citizenship gives agencies working in housing a way of better understanding communities' needs and shaping policies and practices. In regeneration it goes further, helping a community to buy into its future and agencies engage with the socially excluded. Tenant Participation is active citizenship and it is also sound business sense, ensuring that service development is meeting aspirations and needs in an increasingly competitive and challenging environment for social housing. Although it is more than customer consultation or meeting a statutory duty. Most of the "socially excluded" are social tenants, and it is up to landlords like Angus Council and local housing associations to take tenant participation and customer consultation to the heart of their business, as a social good.

The Angus Council Tenant Participation Strategy and sister policies in the voluntary sector have been developed to provide flexible support, for activist and single issue involvement. Although Angus Council is investing in tenant and community participation, the culture of tenant involvement has been slow to develop, although in regeneration areas this has been more successful, because the problems have been sufficient to excite people's interest.

Renewal and Regeneration

Social and housing market decline is a localised problem in Angus, that now affects all tenures, not just social housing. In most towns there are areas in need of renewal and some regeneration. Some like Queen's Park in Brechin are the result of unattractive housing design coupled with a weak housing market. In such situations redevelopment is the preferred option and it estimates show that up to 850 low demand flats and maisonettes could be demolished across Angus, freeing up land for low-density family and special needs housing of mixed tenure.

Where there are complex physical and social causes, for instance: widespread poverty, too many young people without adequate supervision or good role models, transient populations and poor design, we recognise the need to develop a more holistic approach to regeneration. The problems centre around Community safety, image, and lack of trust in neighbours and in agencies. In 'Regenerate! North Arbroath', housing is a partner in a combined campaign that hopes to address community safety, training, skills, educational attainment, business development, health inequalities, housing and environmental improvements.

We recognise that, for some people, social housing has become the tenure of last resort in areas like North Arbroath and its renewal is a core Local Housing Strategy aim. Theme three (Quality Housing) deals with the problems of management and product quality in more depth but its decline also touches on community sustainability.

Although it is recognised the sustainability of social housing estates is helped by community ownership in the form of community based associations and co-operatives, Angus has no large estates with a single identity that would fit this model. However, the option to use partial stock transfer to an existing community based housing association could be considered for wider regeneration initiatives. Preliminary consideration of stock options for Angus Council suggests there is no clear benefit to tenants and the greater community in the wholesale transfer of council housing. The Angus Tenant Participation Strategy proposes to develop direct community and tenant involvement in modernising and delivering housing services, and ownership of problems and solutions, while preserving Council ownership.



There is a distinctive rural perspective to sustainability, across all three themes, where small settlement size and dependence on fragile services makes them vulnerable and highlights housing, economy, transport, services and social infrastructure are all interlinked. Opportunities exist to further develop sustainable rural communities by building on the work of Angus Rural Partnership and other partners, including the communities themselves, in implementing Angus Council's Rural Strategy. The Angus Local Plan directs rural development towards settlements to safeguard current services. But there remains interest in innovative methods of providing homes in the rural areas.

6.2 Economic Sustainability

A community's economy sustains it through jobs and supporting household incomes, developing and retaining skills, meeting the ambitions of younger people and families and building confidence. Housing touches all of these. Angus is sensitive to the cost and availability of affordable housing through the prevalence of low wage industries like tourism and agriculture. This is compounded by poor energy efficiency in a high proportion of housing, 20% of which has an unacceptably low rating (an NHER of 0-2). Providing the right mix of housing across all tenures in the market place can bring both growth and sustainability. Conversely, the lack of available local affordable housing is incompatible with local community and economic development and sustainability.

Angus has communities, for example Brechin and North Arbroath, where the housing market is not working well, because of low demand and social decline. Regeneration is clearly more than just the physical reconstruction of deprived communities. Housing investment can bring added value in grants, training and private finance as it opens opportunities for developing social business and local enterprise, in an effort to turn around communities.

One part of the economy that is of special concern is construction. The Local Housing Strategy needs to be confident that it is delivering improvements in quality and choice, but also because it is a significant employer, even in rural areas. The construction industry currently has skills shortages across most trades, because of lack of investment in apprenticeships and a tradespeople following major construction projects in the central belt. Angus Council and its many partners command construction investment that is enough to provide the continuity of work to stimulate apprenticeships locally, but the effectiveness of this approach has been hampered by national and European legislation.

6.3 Environmental Sustainability

Angus Local Agenda 21 and the Angus Rural Strategy both promote sustainable development as a means for improving quality of life 'locally', recognising that sustaining healthy local communities and vibrant economies also requires environmental safeguards.

When considering housing; waste, recycling, efficient energy use, transport, and future generations are part of the package. Developing and designing housing in Angus needs to consider sustainable sources for materials, sustainable production, reduction in distances travelled for labour and materials, and consideration of energy efficiency; both power supply and insulation standards. Communities Scotland's Sustainable Design Guide sets a standard for these that minimises the impact of construction on the environment but the cost of implementation can conflict with a grant regime based on tender costs. Sustainability is mainly about the whole life cost of a building including the cost of production, repair and disposal.

6.4 Our Vision

Housing will contribute to building and sustaining healthy, safe and caring communities, and to making them more sustainable socially, economically and environmentally, through the following objectives:

- Maximise the contribution that housing investment makes to the local economy,
- Enhance how secure people feel in their neighbourhoods,
- Promote safety and healthy living in the home,
- Reduce housing turnover to the Angus average in low demand areas across all tenures by 2009,
- Increase community involvement in housing and in improving their housing environment,
- Reduce fuel poverty by 50% across all tenures during the strategy period.



Jazmin Whyte - P7 - Birkhill Primary School

Conclusions

What are our conclusions from the Strategy? Firstly, that housing and its relationship with other concerns within Community Planning is a complex area and developing a comprehensive Local Housing Strategy may take a second term to do it justice.

However, in planning for housing in Angus by looking at how it impacts on people's lives, the economy and communities, the Local Housing Strategy has brought together agencies and people with a new perspective and raised issues that previous plans had not considered.

What we can be confident about at this stage is the Local Housing Strategy will contribute significantly towards taking forward all three principles of the Angus Community Plan. Sustainability in all its forms is at the core of both documents. The Strategy will address sustainability in Angus by tackling problems of energy inefficient housing and fuel poverty, which hit the poorest citizens hardest. Problems of low demand for housing in certain areas of Angus will also be addressed.

Social inclusion is a major concern in areas of South Angus where those on low incomes are effectively excluded from home ownership and disadvantaged by a lack of social rented housing provision. The Local Housing Strategy's commitment to develop an affordable housing policy will do much to make Angus a more inclusive society.

Active citizenship has been central to developing the Local Housing Strategy, and this will continue when implementing the Strategy by means of the Angus Tenant Participation Strategy and developing community-centred regeneration projects.

But the Local Housing Strategy alone cannot successfully tackle all these problems. To achieve all we want to achieve will take the combined and co-ordinated actions of agencies and partner organisations. This will be made much easier as many of the Strategy's aims and objectives are shared with other Strategies and Plans, including the Angus Local Plan and the Joint Community Care Plan 2003 - 2006.

The Local Housing Strategy is a broad statement of conditions and objectives but the question is obviously: "What are we going to do about it?" The partnership of departments, agencies and other stakeholders that took part in our Housing Forum on Options for the Local Housing Strategy started the process of how to deliver objectives by developing options.

The document is 'doing document' in that it sets out a list of goals achievable over a five-year period. This will ensure the people of Angus will enjoy access to first-class accommodation and housing related services regardless of tenure. Details of how the Strategy will be taken forward are contained in the Implementation Plan in appendix one. Resource issues related to advancing the Strategy are addressed in the Resource Assessment contained in appendix two.

Glossary

Accreditation Scheme of Private Landlords: scheme where accredited properties and landlords must adhere to a set of standards relating to management and property condition. The scheme is voluntary and incentives of membership can include information and advice and advertising of accredited properties.

Active Citizenship: the active involvement of citizens in community activities.

Affordable housing: housing that is available to people whose housing needs are not met through the normal operation of the housing market for cost reasons. It can include housing for sale or rent, built by the public or private sector.

Adaptations Database: a database that holds information relating to properties from any tenure that have been adapted for people with particular housing needs.

Anti-Social Behaviour Policy: a policy developed to reduce the incidence of anti-social behaviour with the aim of creating safer, sustainable communities.

Below Tolerable Standard (BTS) Housing: a dwelling that does not meet the Tolerable Standard as defined in Section 86(1) of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 and updated in Section 6 (102) of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.

Common Housing Register (CHR): where a group of landlords devise a single application form by which anyone seeking housing in their area can register their need and specify their housing preferences. Participating landlords will then prioritise and select applicants from a single pool of applicants according to their own allocations policy.

Community Care: the provision of services and support for people who are affected by problems of ageing, dementia, mental illness, learning disability, physical or sensory disability, progressive illnesses, or problems arising from misuse of drugs or alcohol, to enable them to live as independently as possible in their own homes, or in domestic settings in the community.

Consultation: listening to people and involving them in the decision-making process.

Development Funding: funding provided by Communities Scotland for the building of houses and environmental improvements, targeted at housing associations and private developers.

Fuel Poverty: a household is in fuel poverty if, in order to maintain a satisfactory heating regime, it would be required to spend more than 10% of its (net) income (including Housing Benefit or Income Support for Mortgage Interest) on all household fuel use (i.e. not just that for heating and hot water).

Housing Association: a society, body of trustees or company which does not trade for profit and whose purpose or objective is to provide, construct or manage housing accommodation.

Housing Improvement Task Force: a group set up by Communities Scotland consisting of 16 people drawn from a wide range of organisations with an interest in private sector housing. Their purpose is to consider a wide range of policy issues relating to housing quality and investment in the private sector and the process of buying and selling houses.

Housing Market Context Statement: a document produced by the Scottish Executive to assist local authorities in the development of their Local Housing Strategy. It provides an overview of the broader strategic and environmental context in which the functioning housing market operates.

Housing Needs Assessment: a detailed assessment of the housing need in the area, taking into consideration all tenures. This is an integral part of the Local Housing Strategy process and the evidence base for policy decisions.

Housing Support Services: a service which provides support, assistance, advice or counselling to an individual with particular needs with a view to enabling that individual to occupy, or to continue to occupy, as the person's sole or main residence, residential accommodation.

Low cost home ownership (LCHO): Affordable housing for people who want to buy, but cannot afford market prices. There are various kinds of LCHO scheme - for example, shared ownership, grants, equity loans.

Monitoring and Evaluation Framework: the vehicle through which the progress of a Local Housing Strategy is measured at different points over time, and periodic evaluations made of the level of success in meeting the LHS objectives.

National Home Energy Rating (NHER): the UK's largest energy rating scheme regarding energy efficiency.

Option Appraisal: the process through which the set of options for achieving each LHS objective are examined and the preferred options are chosen.

Private Landlord: an owner of property for rent in the independent sector.

Private Sector Housing Grant (PSHG): a grant provided for local authorities to administer which helps private owners improve house condition.

Public Sector: any facility controlled by a government department or local authority or by any other statutory authority.

Registered Social Landlord (RSL): a landlord registered with Communities Scotland - for example a housing association.

Rent Deposit Scheme: a scheme that aims to help those in housing need access and maintain accommodation in the private rented sector by providing a financial guarantee to landlords to cover the deposit and/or rent in advance subject to meeting the scheme's criteria.

Right to Buy (RTB): The 1980 Housing Act gave council tenants the right to buy their home, with a discount depending on the length of their tenancy. The 2001 Housing (Scotland) Act 'modernised' the RTB, extending it to housing association tenants and changing the levels of discount for new tenants. Existing council tenants retain the RTB on pre-2001 terms.

Scottish House Condition Survey: a national survey carried out by Communities Scotland that examines the physical condition of houses in Scotland as well as the opinions and experiences of those living in them (social survey).

Scottish Housing Quality Standard: a cross-tenure housing standard that can be used to inform the setting of policy objectives and targets.

Social Housing: housing provided by a local authority, housing association or registered social landlord.

Social Inclusion: social exclusion refers to the multiple and changing factors resulting in people being excluded from normal exchanges, practices and rights of modern society. Social inclusion means ensuring such exclusions do not continue.

Social Planning Policy for Housing (SPP3): Scottish Planning Policies provide statements of Scottish Executive policy on nationally important land use and other planning matters, supported where appropriate by a locational framework. SPP3 deals specifically with housing.

Stakeholder: an individual or organisation with a legitimate interest in a project.

Sustainability: meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Tenants and Residents Association: an organisation of tenants and residents, usually with a written constitution and charitable status, whose aim is to improve the housing conditions, amenities, community life, and contractual positions of its members.

Tenements (Scotland) Bill: the Tenements (Scotland) Bill seeks to clarify the common law in Scotland applying to tenement properties (both residential and commercial) and will put in place a consistent system of management.

Windfall Site: sites which come forward for housing development which are not identified in the Local Plan. Government guidance in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 states that Local Plans should make clear what is the anticipated likely contribution to total housing supply resulting from development not identified in the Plan and from conversions and changes of use, i.e. windfall development.