

## 8 POPULATION & HOUSING

### 8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 A key aim of the Structure Plan is to assess the housing demand and to project the number of new houses that will be required to 2020. The Structure Plan allocates the housing broadly across the settlements in the Council area, providing sufficient land for new housing. This chapter provides the background for the Draft Written Statement.

8.1.2 This chapter presents the national policy on housing and provides background information on existing trends both for population and housing. The chapter then outlines the population and household projections and other expected trends.

### 8.2 National Planning Policy

8.2.1 There are a number of NPPGs and PANs relating to housing. These are summarised below.

#### NPPG 3 “LAND FOR HOUSING”

8.2.2 This NPPG was revised in November 1998. It defines the factors that the Secretary of State will have in mind when considering housing policies in development plans. PAN 38 accompanies this guidance. Generally, the three principles underpinning the Government’s housing policy in Scotland are:

- \* *to give people a wider choice of housing;*
- \* *to improve the supply and quality of that housing; and*
- \* *to encourage greater individual responsibility for, and control over, the conditions in which people live.*

8.2.3 The NPPG states that the planning system has a key role in assisting the achievement of the Government’s policies for housing while protecting and enhancing environmental quality.

8.2.4 Traditionally, local authorities have been guided by centrally derived information on population and household projections from the General Registrar for Scotland (GRO(S)) and the Scottish Office. However, this NPPG gives greater weight to the importance of local considerations, balanced with national policy and other matters, when deciding how and where to provide additional land for housing. Overall, Structure Plans should make provision to meet demand for housing land in full, whenever this is practicable and reasonable.

8.2.5 The NPPG also indicates the considerations which planning authorities should take into account when preparing Structure Plans. They should indicate how much housing land provision is required and its general location. Where housing demand is modified by national or local considerations, the Structure Plan should indicate how the balance has been arrived at and how the conflicts are to be managed and resolved.

8.2.6 As with the previous NPPG on housing, policy guidelines are provided on locational issues for housing development, for example, within existing settlements; infill developments; extensions to existing settlements; new settlements and housing in the countryside. Guidance is also given on design and environmental quality, open space and energy conservation. Other issues that planning authorities need to take account of include affordable housing and housing for special needs.

8.2.7 Specifically, Structure Plans should indicate how much housing provision is required and its general location. The starting point for this assessment is that full demand should be met, taking into account other factors.

8.2.8 Planning authorities should prepare a longer term strategy for the development and growth of the area. Structure Plan policies should:

- \* *provide for a minimum 5 year supply of land which is effective or capable of becoming effective to meet the Plan requirement;*
- \* *continue to give priority to the re-use of brownfield land for housing;*
- \* *review land allocations for non-housing uses to identify new opportunities for residential development;*
- \* *identify priority areas for urban regeneration;*
- \* *identify suitable greenfield locations;*
- \* *identify any shortfall in the provision of affordable housing;*
- \* *identify those areas of the countryside where exceptionally new housing would be allowed;*
- \* *prevent the coalescence of settlements and ribbon development;*
- \* *protect Green Belts;*
- \* *minimise loss of prime quality agricultural land; and*
- \* *protect the natural and built heritage of national importance.*

#### **NPPG 15 “RURAL DEVELOPMENT”**

8.2.9 In February 1999 NPPG 15 “Rural Development” was produced. It sets out how the statutory land use planning system can assist the rural areas of Scotland to achieve sustainable development. The NPPG addresses particular subject areas where planning can contribute to a more integrated and strategic approach to rural policy, for example in meeting both the demand for new housing and the need for affordable housing.

8.2.10 NPPG 15 categorises Scotland’s rural areas into three types: commuter; intermediate and remote. The Falkirk Council area is best described as the “commuter” type for the purpose of the NPPG.

8.2.11 The policy guides Councils to consider the following factors in their approach to rural development:

- \* *the scope for development within existing settlements;*
- \* *the scope for the re-use and conversion of existing buildings;*
- \* *the extent to which new development should be allowed in the countryside; and*
- \* *the natural and built heritage.*

8.2.12 Development plans must draw on the needs and aspirations of local communities and identify development opportunities which meet those needs in a way that does not diminish environmental quality.

#### **NPPG 17 “TRANSPORT AND PLANNING”**

8.2.13 NPPG 17 reflects the Scottish Office’s White Paper “Travel Choices for Scotland” and the UK White Paper “A New Deal for Transport”. NPPG 17 is accompanied by PAN 57 “Transport and Planning”. The Government’s transport policies seek to achieve better integration:

- \* *within and between different modes of transport;*
- \* *with environmental aims and policies; and*
- \* *with land use planning.*

8.2.14 In relation to housing, the NPPG states that Councils should ensure that their settlement strategy is consistent with the aim of reducing travel demand and puts greater reliance on means of transport other than the private car. It is recognised that the relationship of homes to other uses has a large potential to influence travel demand.

The expansion of existing settlements should give greater weight to locations able to be well integrated into effective networks for walking, cycling and public transport.

**PAN 38 “STRUCTURE PLANS - HOUSING LAND REQUIREMENTS”**

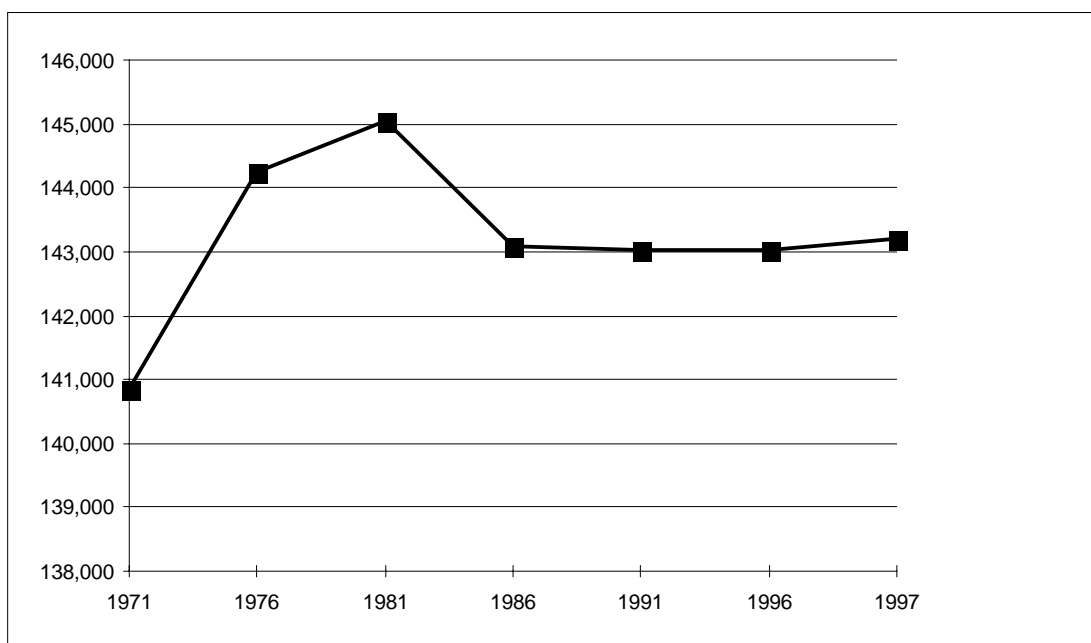
- 8.2.15 The context within which housing land in Structure Plans is handled is now set out in NPPG 3 (revised 1996) “Land for Housing”, issued simultaneously with this PAN. This revised PAN has been produced to reflect the new guidance and contains advice on how authorities can give effect to the new policy.
- 8.2.16 The new advice states that household projections are to be taken as just one consideration in the strategic assessment of the level of additional housing land required to satisfy local need and demand. A new emphasis is placed on the importance of local considerations in deciding the scale and location of housing growth. Each authority is to have increased discretion and flexibility to determine strategies for residential development, provided that the strategy is reasonable and justified, and takes cognisance of the wishes of the local community.
- 8.2.17 As mentioned in PAN 37 “Structure Planning”, Structure Plans must assess the housing land requirement for at least ten years from the expected date of approval, and possibly for fifteen years. In assessing housing land requirements the PAN discusses the range of factors that Structure Plan authorities should take into account. These include:
- \* *demographic needs;*
  - \* *demand;*
  - \* *housing market areas; and*
  - \* *other factors e.g. available infrastructure and sustainability of new development.*

## 8.3 Population & Housing Trends

### PAST POPULATION TRENDS

8.3.1 Every year the General Registrar Office for Scotland (GRO(S)) publishes estimates of the population for each Local Authority in Scotland. Figure 8.1 - Past Population Levels shows the historic population levels for the Falkirk Council area. Historically, the population of the area has been stable, experiencing an increase between 1971 and 1981 and a slight decline between 1981 and 1991. The population of the Falkirk Council area is currently 143,210 (at 1997). Recent trends show a small increase in the population.

**Figure 8.1 - Past Population Levels**

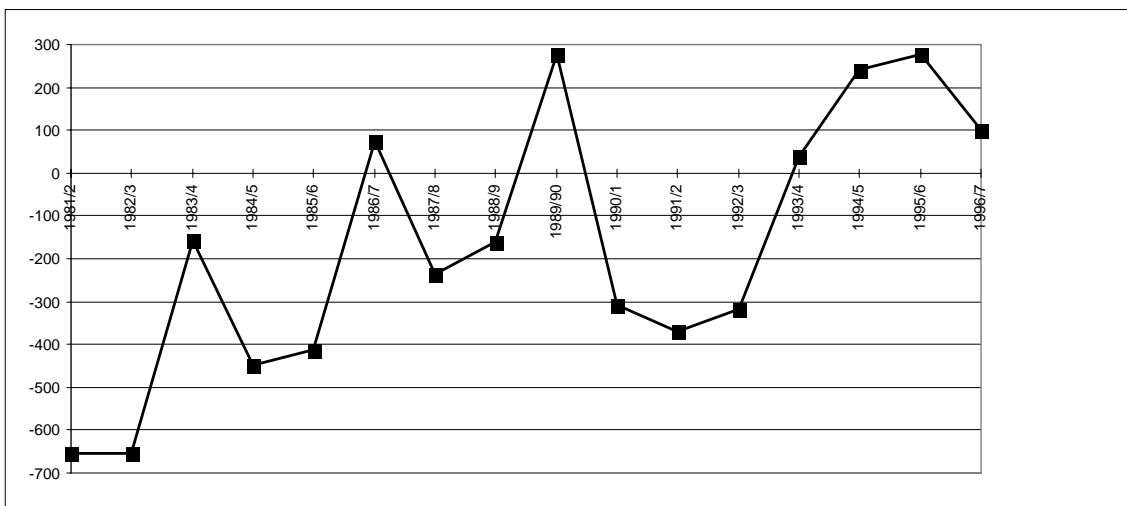


*Source : Falkirk Council, Research & Information Unit (1998)*

8.3.2 The reason for changes in population levels are partly due to natural changes (i.e. births and deaths) and partly the result of in and out migration. The Falkirk Council area is generally average compared to the natural changes at the Scottish level and most years have had a positive natural change.

8.3.3 Trends in migration have been very difficult to detect in the Falkirk Council area because rates fluctuated between -654 in the early 1980s to +276 in 1995/6 (see Figure 8.2 - Migration Trends). Whilst there has been a natural increase in the population of the Falkirk Council area, there was out migration in the 1990s, relating to economic performance.

Figure 8.2 - Historic Migration Rates



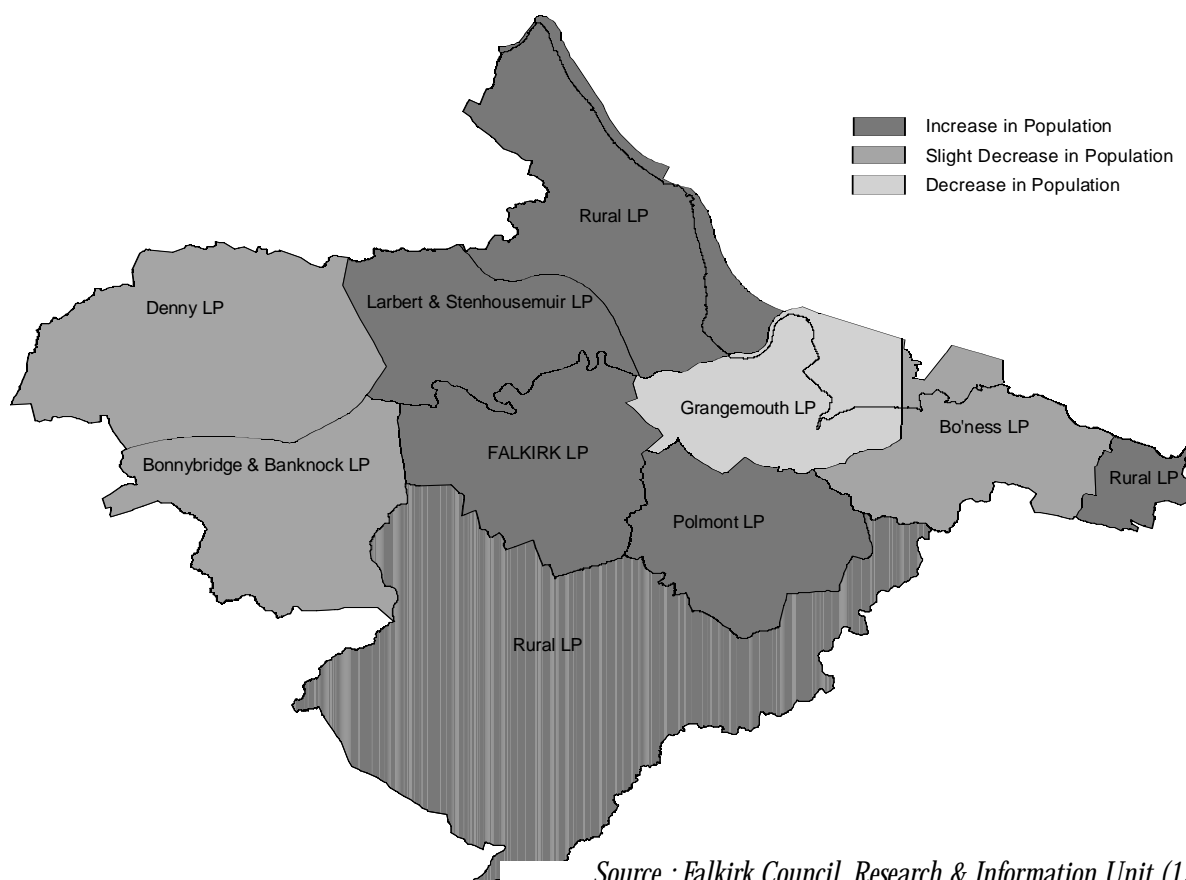
Source : Falkirk Council, Research & Information Unit (1998)

### Changes in Distribution of Population

8.3.4 In terms of changes in population within the different settlements, the Falkirk, Larbert and Polmont areas have increased in population from 1981 to 1997 (see Map 8.1 - Population Change). Grangemouth experienced the largest population decline of 14% within the same years. These trends are consistent with Central 2000: The Structure Plan for the Former Central Region. In Central 2000 the Falkirk, Polmont and Larbert areas had significant new housing allocations whereas areas such as Grangemouth were identified as areas of restraint for various reasons.

8.3.5 The rural villages have experienced little change in population with the exception of Shieldhill, which was allocated for growth in Central 2000. As would be expected, population growth has occurred where new housing development has taken place.

## Map 8.1 Comparison of 1981 and 1997 Population Levels by Local Plan Area



### Changes in Population Structure

8.3.6 There is a clear indication of an ageing population structure, not only in the Falkirk Council area but in Scotland as a whole. In the Falkirk Council area in 1971 the number of people aged 70+ was 9,050 and by 1997 this had increased to 14,353. This is a substantial increase of 56%.

8.3.7 The economically active age group (ages 16 to 64) has increased by 1% in the last fifteen years, despite an overall population drop of -1.4% in the same period. It is considered an economic advantage to have an increase in the number of the economically active population, where the overall population is in decline.

## Housing Trends

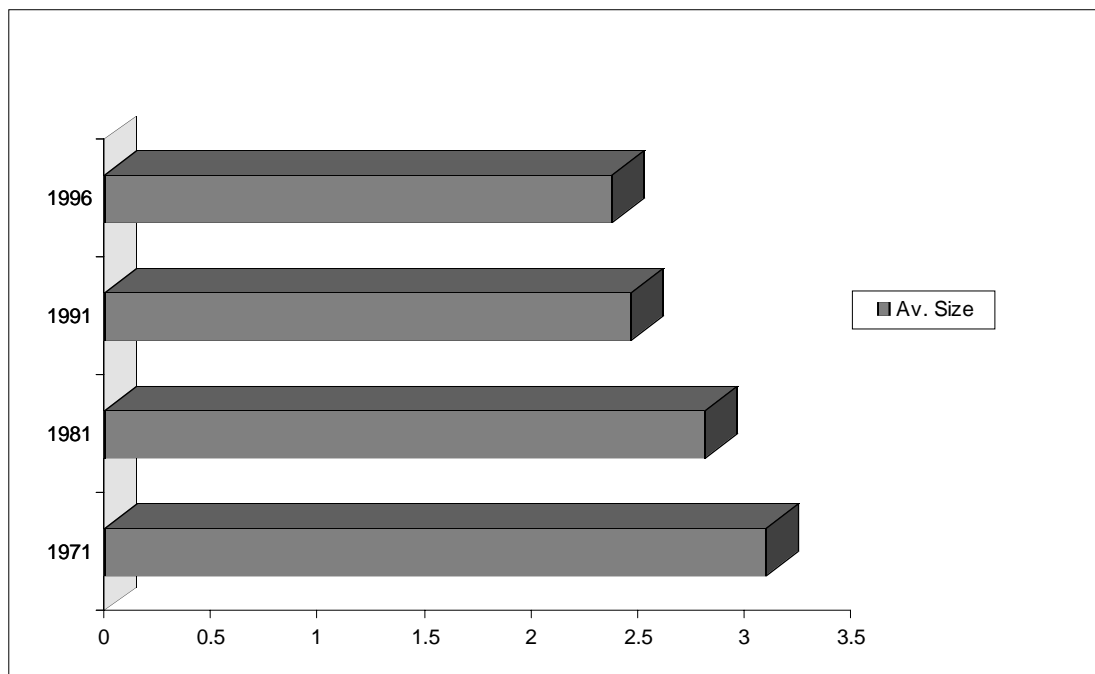
### Previous Household Estimates

8.3.8 The estimated total number of households in the Falkirk Council area is 60,100 (1997). This is an increase of 8,380 (16%) since 1981. Between 1971 and 1997 the total number of households increased by 35%. There has clearly been a steady increase in the number of households in the Falkirk Council area, in line with the Scottish trend. The main reason for the increase in the number of households, at a faster rate than the population is changes in households and household size.

### Household Size

8.3.9 Figure 8.3 - Average Household Size, illustrates that there has been a steady decline in household size over the period 1971 to 1996. Overall, the average household size (number of adults and children) has decreased from 3.10 in 1971 to 2.47 in 1991 which is a decrease of 20%.

Figure 8.3 - Average Household Size



Source : Falkirk Council, Research & Information Unit (1998)

8.3.10 The main reasons for this decrease are:

- \* young people leaving home earlier;
- \* high divorce rate/separation rate;
- \* increase in the number of elderly people living alone;
- \* more single parents;
- \* women having children later in life; and
- \* increased affluence.

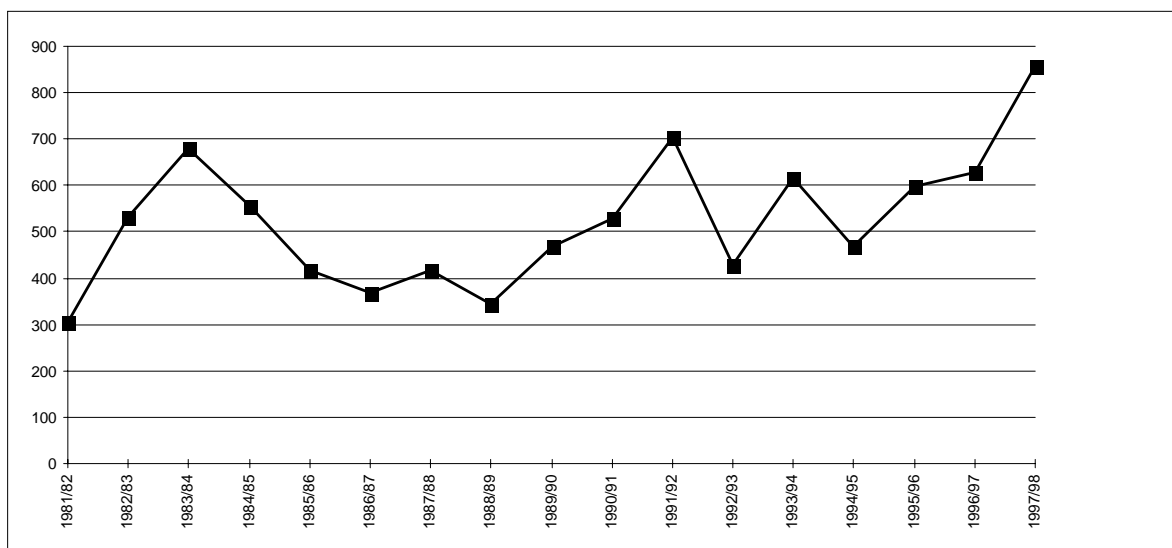
8.3.11 Despite these changes in household size, the actual size of new houses is not decreasing at the same rate (see paragraph 8.3.31 below). This is possibly due to smaller households not necessarily wanting smaller houses and elderly people living longer in larger houses.

8.3.12 While the total number of households is increasing, there are significant differences in the types of households. The proportion of single person households has seen an increase of 15% from 1971 to 1981 and the proportion of households with children has decreased by 15% for the same period.

### Completion Rates

8.3.13 The average number of new housing units (referred to as houses) has been 500 houses per annum since the early 1980s. This is for privately built and Housing Association houses. This rate has increased to an average of 600 houses per annum in recent years (see Figure 8.4 - Total Housing Completions in Falkirk Council area).

**Figure 8.4 - Total Housing Completions in the Falkirk Council Area**



Source : Falkirk Council, Strategic Services (1998)

8.3.14 There have been fluctuations in the housing completion rate with 304 the lowest rate in 1981/82 and the highest of 857 in 1997/98. These fluctuations are due to market trends and economic activity at the Scottish level. Another reason is major Local Plan allocations of housing land, for example The Castings and New Carron Village, Falkirk in 1991/92. The housing land allocation has always been high in the Falkirk Council area to encourage housing

development. The high build rate in recent years is an indication of continued developer interest in the area.

- 8.3.15 Figure 8.4 - Total Housing Completions, illustrates completions for both private and Housing Association building. Detailed figures of the breakdown between these two types were not available. However, it is estimated that a maximum of 10% of the total completions are built by Housing Associations.
- 8.3.16 Over and above the private and Housing Association building are completions by the former Falkirk District Council and the former Scottish Special Housing Association. Between 1980 and 1990, Falkirk District Council constructed 363 houses. This has now ceased due to changes in Government funding. The Scottish Special Housing Association constructed 531 houses between 1979 and 1984. Again, the Scottish Special Housing Association no longer exists and there have been no new build.

### Distribution of Housing Completions

- 8.3.17 The distribution of new housing development has been uneven across the Falkirk Council area, although broadly in line with the housing allocations in Central 2000. The areas which have experienced growth in new housing are the Falkirk, Larbert and Polmont Local Plan areas (see Figure 8.5 - Distribution of Past Completions). These three areas accommodated 69% of the total housing growth in the last fifteen years. Construction rates average over one hundred houses per annum in these areas.

### Figure 8.5 - Distribution of Past Completions

#### Average Annual Building Rate between 1979/1980 and 1996/1997

Denny	44	9%
Bonnybridge	24	5%
Larbert	113	22%
Falkirk	137	27%
Polmont & Shieldhill	104	21%
Grangemouth	33	7%
Bo'ness	35	7%
Rural	13	3%
	<b>501</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source : Falkirk Council, Strategic Services (1998)

8.3.18 The Local Plan areas which have experienced low construction rates are Denny, Grangemouth, Bonnybridge and Bo'ness. As expected the rural area has a low past construction rate, with the exception of Shieldhill. The rural area has taken only 3% of the total housing completions.

8.3.19 In terms of growth relative to the size of the existing settlement, the proportions are illustrated in Figure 8.6 - Distribution of Allocations within the Falkirk Council Area (Central 2000).

**Figure 8.6 - Distribution of Allocations within the Falkirk Council Area (Central 2000)**

Local Plan Area	Allocation (1993-2006)	%
Banknock/Bonnybridge	630	9%
Bo'ness	600	8%
Denny	660	9%
Grangemouth	290	4%
Falkirk	1530	22%
Larbert/Stenhousemuir	930	13%
Polmont	1970	28%
Rural	490	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7100</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Brownfield/Greenfield Sites**

8.3.20 Within the Falkirk Council area, significant amounts of brownfield land were released for housing through Local Plans, implementing the Central 2000 policy. These areas include New Carron in Falkirk and Carron/Carronshore in Larbert.

8.3.21 Between 1989 and 1997 approximately 1,850 new houses were constructed on greenfield land and 2,180 on brownfield sites (54% brownfield). The proportion that this represents for each year is illustrated in Figure 8.7 - Percentage of Housing on Brownfield Land.

**Figure 8.7 - Percentage of Housing on Brownfield Land (1989-1997)**

	1989/90	1990/91	1991/92	1992/93	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	Total
Greenfield	60%	59%	46%	46%	35%	41%	42%	48%	45.80%
Brownfield	40%	41%	54%	64%	65%	59%	58%	52%	54.20%

Source : Falkirk Council, Strategic Services (1998)

8.3.22 Between 1989/90 and 1993/94 the percentage of housing developed on brownfield land increased gradually from 38% to 64%. The reasons for this increase is partly due to the Local Plans implementing Central 2000 and partly due to the sites becoming available for development. Recently this increase in brownfield development has slowed down.

8.3.23 There are wide variations of this rate between the settlements. Areas such as Carron, Carronshore, Falkirk, Grangemouth and Redding have seen a high percentage of brownfield development. By contrast Bo'ness, Polmont, Maddiston and Shieldhill had a high proportion of greenfield development. The rate of brownfield development clearly depends on the number of sites available. As brownfield sites are developed, more pressure will be put on greenfield sites e.g. edge of settlement.

8.3.24 It is difficult to apply a percentage rate of brownfield and greenfield and compare this with other Councils and the Scottish average. This has been attempted in England where the Department of Environment suggests that 60% of new housing development should be on brownfield sites. Applying such a percentage is problematic as smaller towns will find it difficult to find sites whereas post-industrial cities could achieve a higher rate. Areas with a historically high rate of brownfield development may struggle to find more brownfield sites. In addition, the

ability to allocate brownfield sites depends on where the area is, in terms of progress from industrial to post-industrial. NPPG 3 indicates that in Scotland, over one third of all new housing is now built in redeveloped brownfield sites. As can be seen from Figure 8.7 - Percentage of Housing on Brownfield Land, the Falkirk Council area has achieved a rate higher than this.

### Windfall Sites

8.3.25 As will be discussed in section 8.4.32 below, there is a need to make a calculation of the number of windfall sites and small sites to avoid the over allocation of housing land. Windfall sites are those sites which come on stream during the life of a Structure Plan and have therefore not been taken into account by the plan. For example, a current industrial use of a site may cease five years into the plan and the site will become available for housing. These windfall sites come about through the actions of pro-active developers rather than through the development plan process.

8.3.26 In order to assess the scale and impact of these sites, a study was carried out of the 1997 Housing Land Audit. The origins of all established housing sites were traced to determine whether they were the result of a Local Plan allocation or an approved planning application. Looking back over the last 10 years or so gives an indication of what might happen over the next 23 years. The results of the study are summarised in Figure 8.8 - Percentage Housing on Windfall Sites.

**Figure 8.8 - Percentage Housing on Windfall Sites**

Local Plan Area	Houses on sites		Windfall
	not in Local Plan	in Local Plan	
Denny and District	43	472	8.5%
Bonnybridge and Banknock	294	476	38.0%
Larbert and Stenhousemuir	217	430	33.5%
Falkirk	482	830	36.7%
Polmont and District	571	825	40.9%
Grangemouth	75	0	100.0%
Bo'ness	52	452	10.0%
Rural	505	79	13.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2239</b>	<b>3564</b>	<b>38.5%</b>

*Source : Falkirk Council, Strategic Services (1998)*

8.3.27 The overall percentage of windfall sites (as opposed to Local Plan sites) is 38.5%. However, there are wide variations between the Local Plan areas e.g. for Denny the figure is 8.5% whereas for Polmont and District it is 40%. There are some problems with this analysis e.g. the Polmont Local Plan was out-of-date for many years and the figure for Grangemouth is 100% as there is no new housing being allocated.

### **Housing Conditions**

8.3.28 In 1996 the estimated number of Dwellings Below Tolerable Standard (DBTS) was 219. The total housing stock for the same year was 61,296 giving a very low percentage of DBTS (under 1%). In terms of the tenure of these properties only 6 are local authority owned with the remainder being private sector (owned or rented).

8.3.29 The largest concentration of DBTS housing is in the town of Falkirk. A large number of houses have been improved through improvement/repair grant schemes provided by Falkirk Council under the Housing Acts and the District Council's Housing Action Area Programme.

8.3.30 In Scotland, there are 84,048 Dwellings Below Tolerable Standard. As a percentage of the total housing stock, this represents 3.8% for Scotland, with Falkirk at approximately 0.5%. The majority of DBTS are in Glasgow City and the City of Edinburgh. The Falkirk Council level is therefore well below the Scottish average.

## Housing Type And Size

8.3.31 As was discussed previously in this chapter, the size of households is decreasing, mainly due to the increasing number of single person households. This section concerns the type and size of houses i.e. the number of rooms as distinct from household size which is the number of people in a house.

**Figure 8.9 - House Size by Number of Rooms (1971-1991)**

House Size No of Rooms	1971		1981		1991	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
1	175	0.4%	216	0.4%	200	0.4%
2	4,165	9.4%	3,911	7.8%	2,468	4.4%
3	13,130	29.6%	18,043	35.8%	8,4051	4.9%
4	15,125	34.1%	17,559	34.8%	18,289	32.5%
5	8,300	18.7%	7,700	15.3%	16,832	29.9%
6	2,335	5.3%	1,999	4.0%	6,591	11.7%
7+	1,150	2.6%	1,005	2.0%	3,525	6.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>44,380</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>50,433</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>56,310</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source : Census, 1991

8.3.32 Figure 8.9 - House Size by Number of Rooms (1971-1991), illustrates the changes in house sizes, comparing 1981 to 1991. There has clearly been an increase in house sizes with a growth in the number of five and six roomed houses. Expressed as a crude average, in 1971 the average number of rooms was 3.9 compared to 4.5 in 1991. This is surprising as for corresponding years the number of single person households increased from 10.4% in 1971 to 15.2% in 1991. This shows that smaller households do not necessarily want a smaller sized house.

8.3.33 The reasons for this increase in house size could be that single people are more affluent than before, that elderly people are continuing to live in larger family homes and that standards of living are higher than in the 1970s.

8.3.34 In order to find out the up-to-date demand for housing, it is useful to look at newly constructed houses. For new constructions, the size of house fluctuated but generally remained fairly constant from 1980 to 1997. The smallest average house size was 3.33 rooms in 1983/84 and this rose gradually to 4.26 in 1991. Since 1991 this average size has decreased slightly to 3.96 in 1996/97. This is illustrated in Figure 8.10 - Size of Recently Constructed Houses by Number of Apartments.

**Figure 8.10 - Size of Recently Constructed Houses by Number of Apartments**

Year	80/1	81/2	82/3	83/4	84/5	85/6	86/7	87/8	88/9	89/90	90/1	91/2	92/3	93/4	94/5	95/6
Average Size (no. of Apartments)	3.86	3.86	3.37	3.33	3.42	3.59	3.72	3.98	4.05	4.12	4.26	4.26	4.02	3.90	4.16	3.96

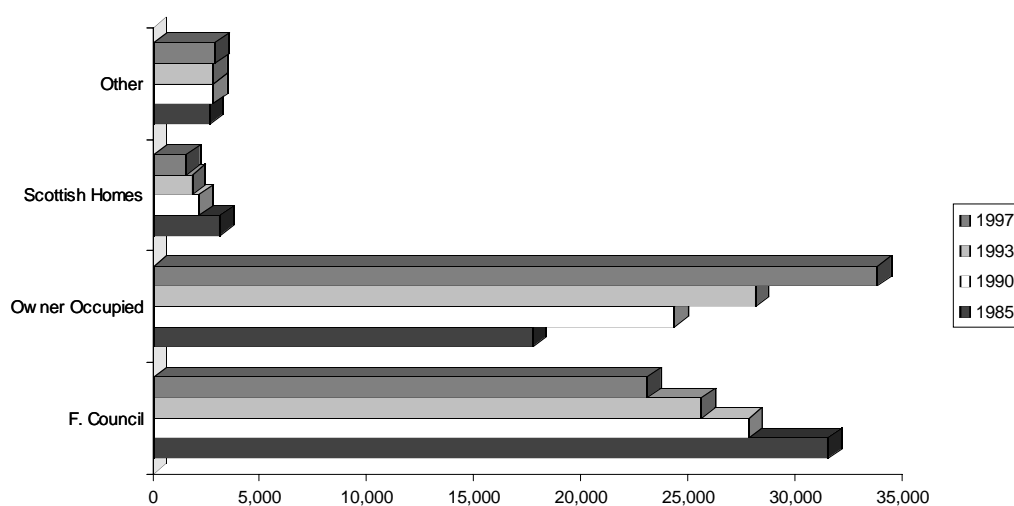
Source : Falkirk Council, Strategic Services (1998)

8.3.35 1991 figures show that Falkirk has a less than average number of 1, 2 and 3 apartment houses and an above average number of 4, 5 and 6 apartment houses.

### Tenure Changes

8.3.36 There has been a marked shift in tenure over the last 20-30 years from public housing to owner occupied housing. Figure 8.11 - Changes in Tenure of Housing Stock shows the shift. This is a long-term trend, consistent with Scotland as a whole. The trend towards owner occupation coincided with the reduction in Local Authority building and the start of the Right to Buy Scheme.

**Figure 8.11 - Changes in Tenure of Existing Stock (1980 - 1997)**



\* "Other" = housing association stock (other than Scottish Homes), private rented accommodation and other Council services' stock. These were grouped as 'owner occupied' prior to 1983.

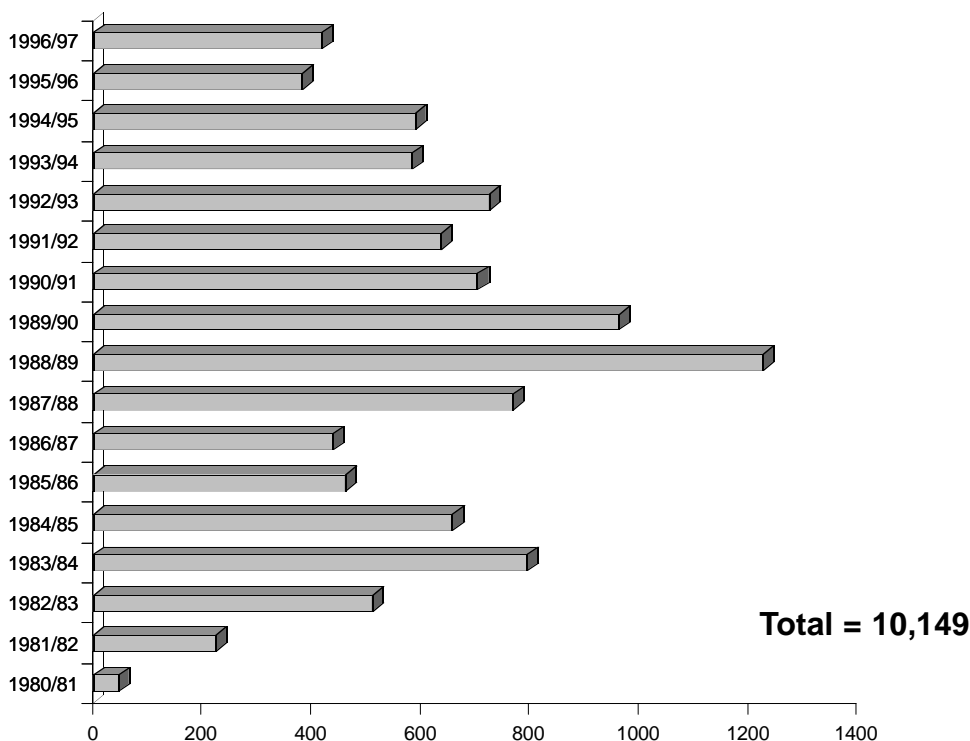
Source : Falkirk Council, Housing Services, Housing Plan (1998-2003)

8.3.37 The number of privately rented dwellings (furnished and unfurnished) has been consistently low in the area contributing less than 1% of the total housing stock. The average for Scotland is 6.8% and this has decreased slightly from 1971 to 1991. The Falkirk level is low compared to the Scottish average, possibly because of the high number of public rented homes in the area.

8.3.38 Housing Associations were introduced in the 1980s and have been gradually increasing in importance. Although they do not contribute much to the total housing stock, they are an important mechanism to providing new social housing now that the Local Authority contribution has ceased.

8.3.39 Compared to the Scottish housing tenure (at 1996), Falkirk has a relatively high percentage of Council houses. The number of Council house sales has fluctuated since the Right to Buy scheme was introduced in 1980. This is illustrated in Figure 8.12 - Falkirk Council House Sales per Year (1980/81 to 1996/97). These figures are broadly in line with the Scottish average as a percentage of total house sales. Sales have tapered off generally due to the fact that many of those who wanted or were able to buy their house did so when the scheme was first introduced. Also the majority of sales have been of more attractive properties, therefore it is the houses in less desirable areas that remain in Local Authority ownership. This is evident in the type of houses that have been sold as 92.4% of sales are of houses, bungalows and low rise blocks whereas tenement and high-rise flats represent only 7.5% of sales.

Figure 8.12 - Falkirk Council House Sales, per Year (1980/81 to 1996/97)



Source : Falkirk Council, Housing Services, Housing Stock Register (Sept. 1997)

## **Special Needs**

8.3.40 As the tenure of housing shifts from public to private, there is a mismatch between housing provision and need in terms of size, cost and type of dwellings. The private sector does not always meet these needs, creating gaps in the housing provision. An estimate of the number of houses for people with Special Needs was made in the Falkirk Council Housing Plan and this is outlined in the Future Estimates section 8.4.

8.3.41 Providing special needs housing has become more of an issue not only because of the private sector dominance but due to the increasing number of elderly people, as discussed in paragraph 8.3.6. Sheltered, very sheltered and amenity housing is required for the elderly. Other Special Needs housing may be required for those with mental health problems and learning difficulties as well as those requiring wheelchair access.

## **Homelessness And Affordable Housing**

8.3.42 There is a continuing demand for mainstream rented housing in the area and this is evident in the Council's waiting list. The waiting list for applicants is 7,614 (April 1997) and has remained fairly static for the last seven years. In addition, there is a waiting list for transfer applicants of around 3,900. It is anticipated that over the next few years, there will be little reduction in waiting list figures. Any realistic target provision for general needs housing will fail to make a significant impact on needs. Even taking account of private sector completions, it is clear that a significant housing shortfall will remain as households with a housing need will be unable or unwilling to consider owner occupation.

8.3.43 The most acute form of housing need is homelessness. During one year (1997-1998) there were 1,065 homeless presentations of which 63% are in Priority Need (from Falkirk Council Housing Plan).

8.3.44 One of the Council's goals and indeed one of the national objectives is to provide a range and choice of housing, reducing disadvantage and inequality. The Structure Plan needs to give an indication of the types of household that are being allocated and whether these are affordable to local people. Falkirk Council area has seen a high proportion of Council housing and this is now a thing of the past. A gap has been created that the Council must respond to and the Structure Plan can have a role to play in this.

8.3.45 It is very difficult to make an estimate of affordability due to the many factors involved. For example, affordability and house prices change over time and affordability depends on income. To give an indication of the prices of existing stock, Figure 8.13 illustrates the numbers of houses in each Council Tax Band. Sixty seven percent of all house are valued at less than £35,000. This is a higher than average percentage of A & B Band housing. Although house prices are low in the area compared to Scotland as a whole, these houses may not be suitable in size, quality and location for local needs.

**Figure 8.13 - Comparison of Council Tax Bands (1998)**

Tax Band	Council Valuation	Falkirk Numbers	Falkirk %	Scotland Numbers	Scotland %
A	up to £27,000	22,725	37%	605,432	27%
B	£27,001 up to £35,000	18,635	30%	574,643	26%
C	£35,001 up to £45,000	5,159	8%	347,179	15%
D	£45,001 up to £58,000	6,317	10%	256,738	11%
E	£58,001 up to £80,000	5,945	10%	253,525	11%
F	£80,001 up to £106,000	2,137	3%	122,097	5%
G	£106,001 up to £212,000	917	1%	82,412	4%
H	over £212,000	35	0%	9,776	0%
		<b>61,870</b>		<b>2,251,802</b>	

Source : Falkirk Council, Finance Services (July 1998)

8.3.46 There may be provision in the existing stock but the Structure Plan, in allocating new housing development, can have an influence on providing affordable housing. The average price of a new house in the Central Region area is £63,197 at 1998. This is an average of all house types and sizes and is based on the arithmetic average prices of houses on which a mortgage has been granted. As this figure is for Central Region, it may be lower for the Falkirk area in accordance with past trends e.g. Council Tax Bands.

8.3.47 Scottish Homes estimated that an affordable price for a house in the Stirling area is £30-45,000. This has been calculated from the share of net household income.

### House Prices

8.3.48 It is difficult to get a feel for house prices at any detailed level due to district variations and because of continually changing house prices. Only broad figures can be used as a guide. As discussed above the existing housing stock in Falkirk is made up of a majority of houses valued at under £35,000. This compares to the Scottish average of 53%.

8.3.49 There are few properties valued over £80,000 (4.1% compared again to the Scottish average of 9%). This raises the question of whether there are a lack of executive/large houses in the area. Taking an average of all bands the average for Falkirk is £38,000 compared to £45,446 for Scotland.

8.3.50 Halifax Plc produces house price figures for various areas in Scotland. This is based on recent private sales. However, the sample is low and these are indicative only. The House Price Index indicates that the average new house price for Central Region is £63,197 at mid 1998. This refers to semi-detached dwellings only. This price is based on the arithmetic average prices of houses on which a mortgage has been granted. The Scottish average house price is £66,958. The average price of a newly built dwelling in Scotland is £84,100.

## Housing Market Areas

- 8.3.51 A technical paper produced as part of the Second Alteration to Central 2000 describes the background and methodology used to consider housing market areas within the former Central Region. As this paper was produced in May 1995 and uses 1991 Census and Register of Sasines data, it is felt unnecessary to carry out another study into Housing Market areas especially as the results for the Falkirk area were clear.
- 8.3.52 The technical paper contains the results of the analysis of the 1991 Census migration and travel to work data and Register of Sasines, which was carried out in order to consider what housing market areas could be defined within the former Central Region.
- 8.3.53 The study showed that there is widely based evidence for treating Falkirk District as a self-contained housing market area. In the 1991 Census analysis, it is 75% self-contained, the Census travel to work data shows that 72% of the population of the District lives and works within it, and the Sasines data shows that 76% of house purchases come from within the District. None of the more self-contained housing sub-markets within the District is large enough to operate as a strategic housing market. Scottish Homes concluded that the Falkirk Council area has the strongest case to be a separate housing market area in their Lanarkshire and Central District. The conclusion was therefore reached to treat the former Falkirk District as a housing market area for the purposes of the Second Alteration. As this study was relatively recent, there is no reason to believe that this situation has changed.

## Lowland Crofting And Housing

- 8.3.54 Lowland crofting is the development of very low density housing in rural areas of low quality agricultural land and degraded land. The key aims of the approach are to improve the landscape quality and to assist the regeneration of such rural areas. The schemes can lead to woodland creation, footpath development, nature conservation and new businesses.
- 8.3.55 Recent Government guidance on development in rural areas is provided in NPPG 15 "Rural Development" (produced February 1999). Paragraphs 29 and 30 of this document support the lowland crofting approach and state that the West Lothian example could be emulated in other appropriate rural areas. The NPPG states that:
- "in areas where the quality of agricultural land is low and the landscape is degraded, Councils should actively consider promoting in their development plans, innovative forms of sustainable low density, low impact housing (along the lines of the West Lothian model) and small-scale economic developments".
- 8.3.56 The NPPG refers to the review of the lowland crofting initiative commissioned by Central Scotland Countryside Trust. This study by EDAW planning consultants reported its findings in December 1998. EDAW state that Lowland Crofting has been a particularly innovative policy in West Lothian and has been successful in meeting its core objectives. The objectives of the West Lothian policy are to restore a degraded landscape, increase the proportion of tree cover and to provide opportunities for development. EDAW report that there are a number of improvements required and these are included in their

recommendations. Overall the report concludes that the West Lothian example shows lowland crofting as a success and could be appropriate for rural parts of other Council areas.

- 8.3.57 Falkirk Council already has policies in place to support such development. Policy HPO.4 (2) of Central 2000 provides for such schemes on the Slamannan Plateau. This Structure Plan policy is followed up in the Rural Local Plan (Policy Rural 1: New Development in the Countryside, paragraph 3) stating that there is a presumption against new development with exceptions. One exception is single dwellinghouses developed in conjunction with significant tree planting schemes on the Slamannan Plateau.
- 8.3.58 Since the policy was adopted in 1995, there have been 5 planning applications for such schemes, none of which have been implemented. The reasons for this slow uptake principally relate to landownership restrictions and ex-mineral workings in the area. The policy has so far not been successful in its aim of improving the visual environment and making significant contribution to the rural economy.

## 8.4 Future Estimates

### Population Projections

- 8.4.1 In previous Structure Plans which covered the Falkirk Council area, the population projections published by the General Registrar Office for Scotland (GRO(S)) and the household projections produced by the Scottish Office Housing Statistics Unit (HSU) were used.
- 8.4.2 As discussed previously, the historic pattern of population in the Falkirk Council area is for a relatively stable population. Central 2000 had a positive strategy of housing development and employment growth. When the Structure Plan was prepared it was projected by GRO(S) that the population of Falkirk District would decrease. The plan allocated enough housing in Falkirk District to allow the elimination of net out-migration. This growth strategy helped to ensure that the population would not fall as was predicted by GRO(S). The most recent prediction is for a decrease of 3% in the number of people between 1997 and 2020. This is based on the assumption that there will be zero net migration.
- 8.4.3 These projections are calculated biannually by GRO(S). Recent government guidance states that Councils, in preparing Structure Plans, should take the projections as just one of the considerations in the assessment of land requirements. Government advice suggests that other projections may also be used as long as their use is justified and reasons are given for the differences.

- 8.4.4 The 1996 based population projections could be challenged by the policies of the new Falkirk Council Structure Plan. Moreover, the latest population projections only go up to the year 2013 and the household projections to 2010, while the Structure Plan looks forward to the year 2020. It was therefore decided that Falkirk Council would carry out its own population and household projections for the first time, both to meet the new strategy objectives and to extend the timescale for the projections to 2020.
- 8.4.5 In carrying out the population and household projections as much use as possible was made of GRO(S) and HSU information. National single year mortality and fertility rates to 2013 by GRO(S), (adjusted for the local correction factors) were used for the population projections. For the household projections, HSU provided headship rates by seven types for the Falkirk Council area to 2010. In both cases, the figures were projected forward to 2020, using the same assumptions about the rates of change of mortality, fertility and headship.
- 8.4.6 The main differences in the projections used in this Plan are due to different assumptions about in-migration. The GRO(S) population projections, on which the HSU household projections are based, assume zero net migration from 1999 onwards. The Structure Plan assumes + 165 net in-migration. This is broadly in line with the last 4 years migration rate and is also calculated based on past construction rates.
- 8.4.7 More detailed information on the methods and assumptions of the population and household projections can be found in the technical report which is available on request. (see Appendix 1)
- 8.4.8 Population change is particularly important for forward planning in the Falkirk Council area. It influences the amount of land needed for development and has implications for the labour supply, the provision of schools, roads and other services. The population projections used in this plan show a slight growth in the population of 2,524 to 2020. Figure 8.14 shows the actual and projected population change from 1997.

**Figure 8.14 - Actual and Projected Population Change (1997-2020)**

Year	Population	Net annual migration	Total change
1997	143,210	+165	-
2001	143,689	+165	+479
2006	144,325	+165	+636
2011	144,930	+165	+605
2016	145,468	+165	+538
2020	145,734	+165	+266

*Source : Falkirk Council, Research & Information Unit (1998)*

8.4.9 In terms of projected changes in population structure the very elderly age group (over 85 years) are expected to show the most rapid rate of increase in the period to 2020. This has potentially important implications for the Structure Plan as suitable housing will be required.

**Household Projections**

8.4.10 As with the population projections, Falkirk Council carried out its own household projections to 2020. The results are set out in Figure 8.15 - Projected Household Change (1997 - 2020). These figures show a much greater increase in the number of households than in population. This is largely due to the changes in household size and type.

8.4.11 The previous Structure Plan allocated new housing for the full amount of the projected households which resulted in an average housebuilding rate of 500-600 houses per annum plus 825 new houses to eliminate out migration. If the Council allowed for this building rate to continue, it would result in an additional 12,650 houses (from 1997 to 2020), bringing the total in 2020 to 72,550. As can be seen from the above figures, the total in 2020 is projected to be 72,430 which is a continuation of past trends. This figure is used as a basis for the Housing Needs Assessment (see paragraph 8.4.16).

**Figure 8.15 - Projected Household Change (1997-2020)**

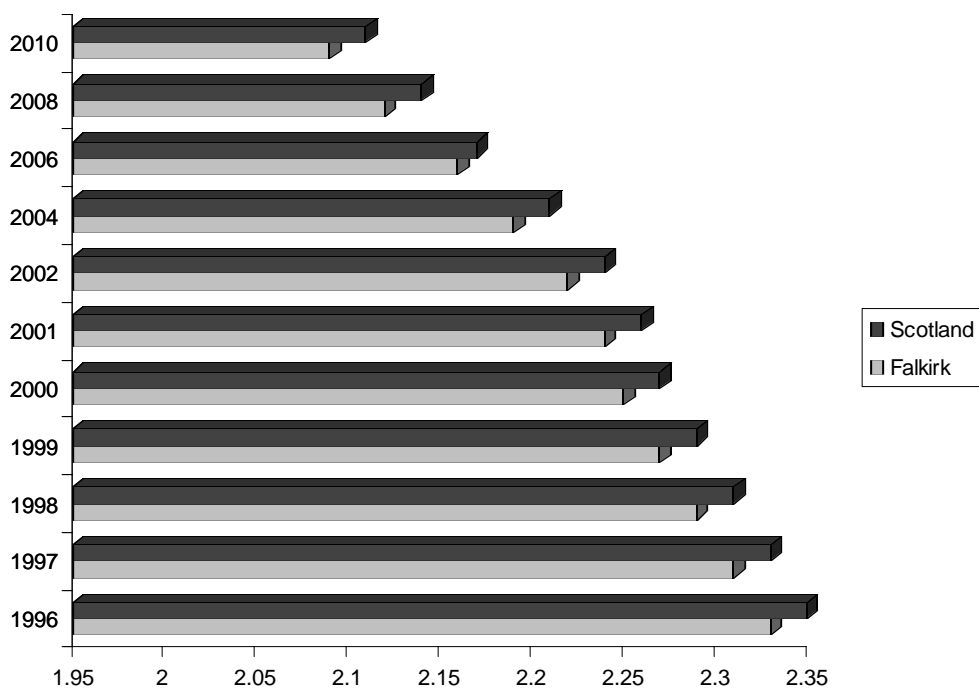
Year	Households	Increase	Total change
1997	60,422		
2001	62,446	2,024	2,024
2006	64,972	2,526	4,550
2011	67,766	2,794	7,344
2016	70,444	2,678	10,022
2020	72,400	1,956	11,978

Source : Falkirk Council, Research & Information Unit (1998)

8.4.12 In terms of household size, it is predicted that households will continue to decrease in size. The pattern is uncertain especially with a long-term estimate, however, future trends in Falkirk are similar to Scotland as a whole. Using the projected figures in Figures 8.14 and 8.15 above, the 1997 average household size is 2.37 persons per household. In 2020 this will decrease to 2 persons per household. However, caution should be taken as it is unlikely that this trend will continue to decrease at the same rate.

8.4.13 Figure 8.16 - Average Projected Household Size compares the projected average household size in the Falkirk Council area with Scotland. These figures are from the 1996 based household projections produced by GRO(S). The Falkirk Council projections are similar to these figures as the same headship rates were used.

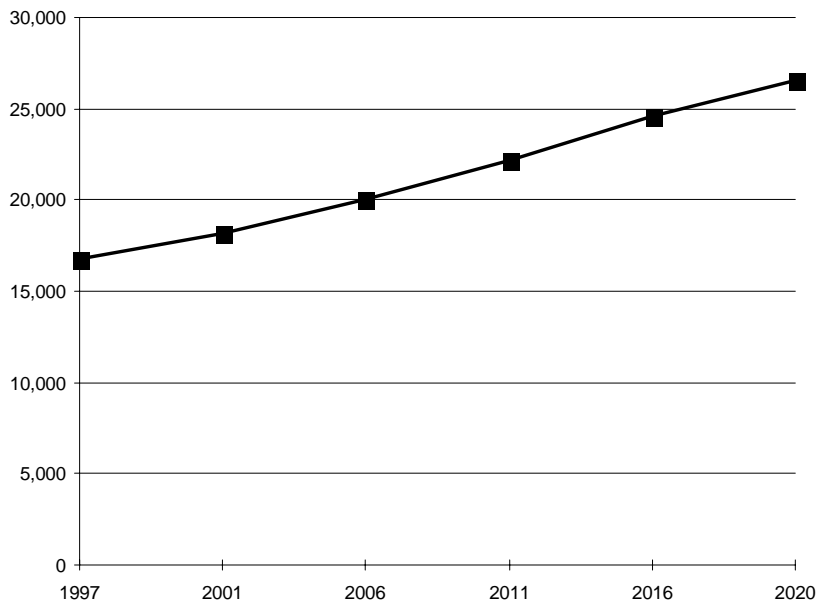
**Figure 8.16 - Average Projected Household Size**



Source : GRO (s), 1996 based household projections ( Aug.1998)

8.4.14 While the total number of households is increasing, there are significant differences in the changes in types of households. One of the fastest growing types of household is the single person household. In Falkirk, the proportion of single person households is projected to increase by 58% (see Figure 8.17 - Projected One Person Households below), this is similar to the Scottish percentage increase over the same period. There is projected to be a decrease in the number of households with children.

**Figure 8.17 - Projected One Person Households in the Falkirk Council Area (1997 - 2020)**



Source : GRO (s), 1996 based household projections ( Aug.1998)

8.4.15 Again, this illustrates that although there may be only a small increase in population levels over the next 20 years, the number of households will continue to grow at a faster rate. This has major implications for the Structure Plan as more land will be required to be released for housing to keep the population stable. To provide for an increase in population, an even larger amount of land will be required.

### Housing Needs Assessment

8.4.16 The household projections provide a key guide for the Council on how many houses should be planned for in the future. To calculate the housing need, the following calculation is made (Figure 8.18 - Housing Needs Assessment).

**Figure 8.18 - Housing Needs Assessment**

1.	Projected Households at 2020	72,400
2.	+ Allowance for non-effective stock	700
3.	+ Allowance for vacancies	2,200
4.	+ Allowance for demolitions and conversions	700
5.	+ Allowance for 2nd and holiday homes	40
6.	Housing stock at 1997	61,300
	<b>= Housing Need</b>	<b>14,740</b>

8.4.17 The base date for the assessment is 1997 and the projected need is to 2020. The projected number of households (72,400) is from Falkirk Council's own projections, as in Figure 8.15 previously.

8.4.18 There then follows a number of allowances that are made for non-effective stock, vacancies, demolitions and second and holiday homes. The allowances for non-effective stock (1%), vacancies (3%) and second homes (0.05%) assume the same rate per household as that in the 1991 Census. This obviously assumes that the 1991 rate will not change over the period to 2020. The figures are therefore rounded in recognition of the uncertainties involved. The allowance for demolitions and conversions is assumed to be 30 per year which is the same as that assumed in Central 2000. This estimate seems low and will require careful monitoring. The housing stock in 1997 is a Falkirk Council estimate used in the 1998-2003 Housing Plan.

8.4.19 This calculation shows that there is a need for 14,740 (rounded figure) additional houses to be provided in the Falkirk Council area from 1997 to 2020. From this figure it is necessary to deduct any planned housing development that is committed to take place in the same period. This will roll forward the outstanding planned housing development from Central 2000. The existing land availability is made up of sites with planning consent or sites within a finalised or adopted Local Plan.

### **Existing Land Availability**

8.4.20 Government advice is that Councils should undertake annual audits of their effective housing land supply. This monitors the Structure Plan and ensures that an adequate effective land supply is available.

8.4.21 Falkirk Council undertakes an audit of the supply every year based at 30th June. The relevant audit for the base year of 1997 is the June 1997 Housing Land Audit (HLA) (see Figure 8.19 and Map 8.2). The Scottish Housebuilders Association and Scottish Homes both agreed the figures in full at a meeting on March 4th 1998.

8.4.22 The effective housing land supply consists of sites which are free or expected to be free of constraints in the five year period under consideration - in this case to 2002 - and are therefore available for the construction of houses within the 1997 HLA. For the Falkirk Council area, there are 3,356 units that contribute to the effective land supply. These sites either have planning consent or are in an adopted Local Plan with a housebuilder owning or having an option on the site.

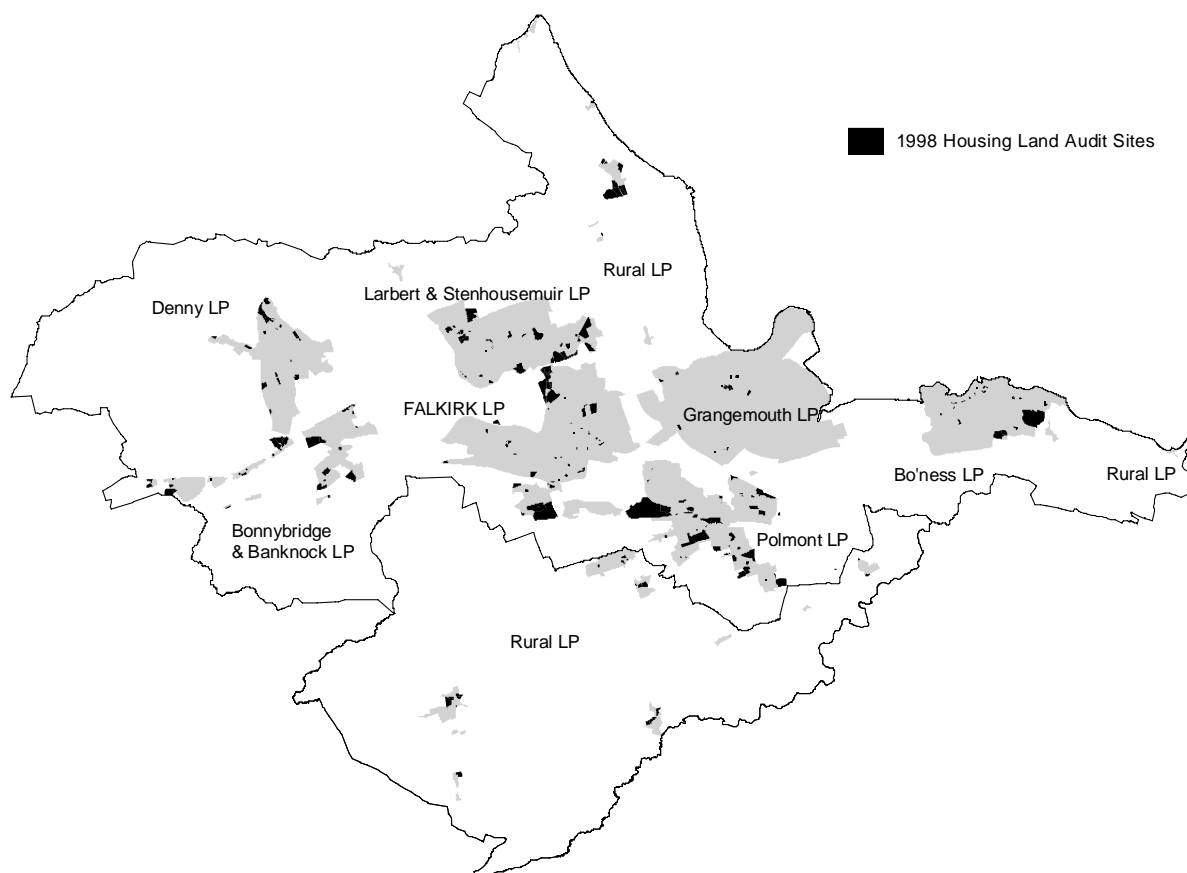
**Figure 8.19 - Housing Land Supply (June 1997)**

	Effective	Established
Denny & District	300	349
Bonnybridge & Banknock	479	291
Larbert & Stenhousemuir	553	94
Falkirk	709	603
Polmont & District	736	1,115
Grangemouth	75	0
Bo'ness	135	359
Rural	369	215
	<b>3,356</b>	<b>3,026</b>

Source : Falkirk Council, Strategic Services (1998)

- 8.4.23 The Audit is based on questionnaires issued to all relevant housebuilders and landowners and the results cannot take account of unknown delays and constraints. The Audit therefore tends to be a slightly optimistic estimation of future housebuilding rates.
- 8.4.24 Typically 500-600 dwellings are built in the Falkirk Council area every year. The total effective supply in June 1997 was 3,356 (see Figure 8.19 above). This gives an estimated annual average of 671 houses which is higher than the historic long term average rate of build.
- 8.4.25 The established land supply is the non-effective and effective housing land. This will include the remaining capacity of sites in adopted Local Plans that have no housebuilder, sites with known constraints and land with agreed potential for housing development. The houses in this category are likely to be built between 2002 and 2007 and some beyond (two sites only). The land supply for years 5-10 is a further 2,431. The remaining 595 units are unlikely to be built within the ten year period but are agreed in the established land supply. The total current commitments are therefore 6,382.
- 8.4.26 These current commitments will provide for approximately half of the Falkirk Council household projections for the area. Because the growth strategy adopted in Central 2000 allocates to 2006, it would be difficult to reverse current commitments. These are therefore fixed allocations. This figure is then used in the housing requirement calculations.
- 8.4.27 In terms of the distribution of future commitments, the pattern is similar to the past year's housebuilding. Areas such as Denny and Bonnybridge are likely to achieve higher housebuilding levels over the next five years than in past years. By contrast, Falkirk is likely to stabilise and whilst gaining 100 houses per year, might be at a less intense level of growth than previous years. For example there were nearly 300 new houses built in 1991/92.

## Map 8.2 Housing Land Supply



### Housing Capacity Study

8.4.28 A Housing Capacity Study was undertaken to identify the capacity that each Local Plan area has in terms of new housing. This exercise was to identify the strategic capacity of the area rather than identify sites. The details of the capacity study are included in a technical appendix. For each Local Plan area a maximum figure is derived showing the ability of the area to accommodate housing. This takes into account environmental designations, physical and social infrastructure and maximising brownfield development.

### Windfall Sites

8.4.29 As discussed in paragraphs 8.3.25-8.3.27, windfall sites are difficult to estimate but could potentially provide a significant number of houses over and above the housing requirement. Figure 8.19 above shows the results of the study of the 1997 Housing Land Audit sites. The overall percentage of windfall sites was 38.5% with wide variations across the Local Plan areas.

8.4.30 Due to the potential scale of development that windfall and small sites could contribute, difficulties would be created of over allocation i.e. the policy for dispersed housing development may not be achieved. This is especially so as the projections are already higher than the GRO(S) figures. There must be some allowance built into the total allocation. This is best done by an assessment of the past trends in each Local Plan area through the local planning process

### **Brownfield/Greenfield Estimates**

8.4.31 Paragraphs 8.3.20 to 8.3.24 outlined the past trends of housing development on brownfield and greenfield sites. Looking to the future, Falkirk Council has estimated the number of housing units that will be constructed over the next ten years. The calculation is based on current commitments. These commitments are from the Local Plan allocated housing sites and sites with current planning permission for housing development (see Figure 8.19). From 1997 - 2007 the proportion of brownfield/greenfield sites was estimated. The figures show that of the commitments to date 30% of sites are likely to be brownfield and 70% greenfield. This is a change from the past rate and is a significant drop which needs to be addressed.

8.4.32 However, a high percentage of brownfield sites are windfall sites which will not appear as commitments. Therefore the percentage of brownfield is likely to be higher within the time frame. The figures are estimates as it is uncertain which of the Housing Land Audit sites will be developed.

8.4.33 It is for this Structure Plan to take this forward to 2020. Because of the 6,300 units of current commitments, it is difficult for this Plan to reverse these trends. The Structure Plan aims to increase the number of brownfield sites developed for housing by 2020.

### **Tenure of Future Housing**

8.4.34 Paragraphs 8.3.36-39 indicated the past trends in housing tenure. It is likely that current trends will continue with the private sector dominating the housebuilding.

8.4.35 Housing Association sites are expected to contribute only 3-12% of the total estimated new housing (from the Housing Land Audit). This however assumes that unspecified sites are to be built by private housebuilders. This figure may also be lower than the actual expected amount of Housing Association development, as private developers tend to have landbanks for housing whereas Housing Associations may develop sites more quickly after they are made available. Again, Housing Associations sites are likely to be brownfield sites which will appear later over the 10 year period of the estimations.

8.4.36 Nevertheless, the Housing Association completion rate is low in relation to private build and if there are no Falkirk Council or Scottish Homes developments, there is likely to be a gap in social rented housing provision. In addition there are particular anticipated shortfalls in Special Needs accommodation.

## Special Needs Housing

8.4.37 Within the allocation of new housing to 2020 the following shortfalls in Special Needs Housing will need to be accommodated.

8.4.38 Figure 8.20 provides a summary of the anticipated shortfalls in accommodation for each special needs client group, by the end of 2003. Shortfall figures take account of the current planned provision which is likely to be completed by this time. Recommended provision figures are identified using appropriate demographic standards. There are no estimates of any special need beyond 2003. More information can be found in the 1998-2003 Falkirk Council Housing Plan.

**Figure 8.20 - Summary of Anticipated Shortfalls in Accommodation (1998 to 2003)**

Client Group	Recommended Provision	Existing/ Planned Provision	Anticipated Shortfall
Sheltered Housing	1023	872	151
Amenity Housing	1775	951	824
Very Sheltered Housing	445	48	397
Mental Health Problem	198	179	19
Learning Difficulties	254	138	116
Wheelchair Accessible	506	76	430
Mobility Housing	To be determined	Via care groups	
HIV Positive	Individually addressed	-	
Homelessness	Individually addressed	-	
Domestic Violence	Individually addressed	7 places	To be determined
Young People Leaving Care	50 places	Individually addressed	Individually addressed
Travelling People	Provision sufficient	15	Not applicable

*Source : Falkirk Council, Housing Services, Housing Plan (1998-2003)*

## 8.5 Summary of Main Findings

- 8.5.1 Recent national policy on housing advises that Councils should give greater weight to the importance of local considerations balanced with national policy and other matters when deciding how and when to provide additional land for housing. Falkirk Council has produced its own population and household projections to 2020, to assist in the formulation of the Plan's development strategy.
- 8.5.2 National policy also indicates a stronger link between planning and transportation. There is a specific need to reduce travel demand, especially by private car. Housing allocations have the potential to influence travel patterns.
- 8.5.3 In the past, the population of the area has remained relatively stable with only slight fluctuations since 1971. However, the population of the area is now declining. The strategy of the Structure Plan is to prevent population decline by providing sufficient housing and attracting people to live and work in the area. An average of 165 people per year would need to move in to the area to avoid population decline.
- 8.5.4 Most settlements have seen an increase in housing in recent years. The allocation of new housing seeks to continue this, avoiding population decline in any individual settlement or area.
- 8.5.5 In the past the Falkirk Council area has seen a high percentage of housing on brownfield sites. However, the current commitments are mostly on greenfield sites. There is a need to encourage any new housing on brownfield sites.
- 8.5.6 New housebuilding is largely carried out by the private sector. The Council no longer builds houses and is in fact continuing to sell off its housing stock through the Right to Buy Scheme. There is a need to meet the gaps in the housing provision, particularly for more affordable housing. This is especially so due to the increasingly ageing population.
- 8.5.7 The number of housing units completed per year is typically 500-600 and has been since 1980. There has been a recent increase in housebuilding activity and it is anticipated that this will continue.
- 8.5.8 The number of households is increasing in Scotland and Falkirk is no exception. The reason for this is that the average household size is decreasing. There is a significant increase in the number of single person households and this is expected to continue.
- 8.5.9 There is a need for 14,700 new houses in the Falkirk Council area from 1997 to 2020. Of this figure, 6,380 have been committed either through Local Plan allocations or planning approvals.

## Bibliography

- Central Regional Council (August 1984); Structure Plan for Falkirk District, Written Statement
- Central Regional Council (June 1987), Central 2000: The Structure Plan for Central Region, Technical Report 1: Outline Housing Needs Assessment
- Central Regional Council (June 1987), Central 2000: The Structure Plan for Central Region, Technical Report 2: Housing Land Availability
- Central Regional Council (July 1989), Central 2000: The Structure Plan for Central Region, Survey Report: Main Findings
- Central Regional Council (March 1990), Central 2000: The Structure Plan for Central Region, Responses to Draft Housing Development Section
- Central Regional Council (April 1995), Central 2000: The Structure Plan for Central Region - Report of Survey, Report of Survey: Main Findings
- Central Regional Council (July 1997), Central 2000: The Structure Plan for Central Region, Written Statement
- Department of Environment, Transport and Regions (July 1998); A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone. The Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport
- Forth Valley Health Board, Falkirk Council & Scottish Homes (1997); Falkirk Community Care Plan 1997-2000
- Scottish Homes (1997); Annual Statistics Report
- Scottish Homes (December 1997); Strategy and Context Reports
- Scottish Homes (April 1998); Regional Plan for Lothian, Borders and Forth Valley 1998 - 2001
- Scottish Homes (August 1998), Tackling Rural Housing, Scottish Homes Policy Statement 1998
- Scottish Office (August 1997); Statistical Bulletin, Housing Series
- Scottish Office (July 1998) Travel Choices for Scotland, White Paper
- Scottish Office (August 1998); Statistical Bulletin, Housing Series HSG/1998/5: 1996 Based Household Projections for Scotland