



Agenda Item 6

**Strategic Housing Investment Plan
2020/21- 2024/25**

Falkirk Council

Title: Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2020/21- 2024/25

Meeting: Executive

Date: 8 October 2019

Submitted by: Director of Corporate and Housing Services

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to approve the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2020/21 to 2024/25 for submission to the Scottish Government. The report also seeks agreement to progress actions to support the delivery of additional housing projects contained within the SHIP.

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that the Executive:

- 1) Agree the SHIP 2020/21 to 2024/25 (Appendix 1) for submission to the Scottish Government;**
- 2) Authorises officers to enter into negotiations to transfer the land at King Street Stenhousemuir to the Housing Revenue Account;**
- 3) Agree to discharge the title burdens on Link Housing Association developments at Lochside Crescent Redding, Lomond Drive Langlees and Hazel Road Banknock, and to replace these with identical contractual obligations;**
- 4) Notes that officers will adapt the SHIP in line with available resources in order to maximise the supply of affordable housing locally and provide updates to Members of any changes.**

3. Background

- 3.1 The core purpose of the SHIP is to set out strategic investment priorities for affordable housing over a 5 year period, to achieve the outcomes set out in the Local Housing Strategy (LHS). The LHS 2017-2022 identified an all tenure Housing Supply Target of 491 units per annum (368 private and 123

affordable). This equates to 615 affordable new build units over the 5 year life of the LHS.

- 3.2 Affordable properties can be provided through a combination of new build projects or by making better use of existing stock, e.g. through Buybacks. A total of 595 additional affordable properties were delivered from 2013/14 to 2018/19.
- 3.3 In October 2018, Executive agreed the Strategic Housing Investment Plan for 2019-2024. The plan set out proposed projects to deliver 1,371 units of affordable housing over the period 2019/20 to 2023/24. At that time, the plan was significantly above the available grant funding allocation. As such, it was noted that the SHIP would be reviewed and work would be undertaken to maximise the supply of affordable housing locally. The SHIP 2020/21 to 2024/25 updates the previously reported position.
- 3.4 The Scottish Government issued updated guidance in August 2019 which highlighted that the SHIP is required to be produced and submitted annually covering the following five financial years. Guidance advises the SHIP should set out investment priorities for new affordable housing; demonstrate how these will be delivered; identify all resources required to deliver these priorities and enable the involvement of key partners.
- 3.5 The SHIP provides the basis for the development of the Strategic Local Programme Agreement (SLPA) between Local Authorities and the Scottish Government. The SLPA sets out the programme of housing projects which will be funded over the current year and is reviewed and updated annually to ensure delivery remains on track.
- 3.6 In line with SHIP guidance, potential projects for inclusion in the SHIP must be prioritised using a scoring methodology agreed by developing landlords, including Falkirk Council and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). This methodology takes account of the following:
 - Strategic direction from the Falkirk Council LHS and assessment of housing need;
 - Project deliverability and funding required;
 - Size, tenure and house type;
 - Number of accessible units;
 - Sustainability relating to energy efficiency.
- 3.7 Scottish Government guidance highlights that the SHIP is a corporate activity requiring close working and collaboration between Council Services and partners including the IJB, RSLs, communities, developers, the Scottish Government and other stakeholders in the SHIP development process. As part of the SHIP review, the Scottish Government will comment on how stakeholders have been involved in developing and delivering the plan.

3.8 The LHS is updated and revised annually to take account of national and local changes. The LHS Update 2020 will consider regeneration. We are working with colleagues across services to ensure town centre sites are explored as part of the LHS/SHIP process.

4. Considerations

4.1 Table 1 below details resources available to deliver affordable housing, comprising Scottish Government grant, referred to as Resource Planning Assumptions (RPA) and contributions made by the Council. It is important to note that these are minimum grant assumptions and may be subject to change. For planning purposes local authorities were advised in SHIP guidance to use their 2020/21 RPA as the basis for funding for the final years of this SHIP period i.e.: 2020/21-2024/25.

Table 1: Scottish Government Grant, 2nd Homes and Developer Contributions

	RPA	SG grant (£m)	2 ND homes council tax (£m)	Developer Contributions (m)	Total
Year 1	2020-21	£12.882	£0.252	£0.280	£13.414
Year 2	2021-22	£12.882	£0.252	£0.280	£13.414
Year 3	2022-23	£12.882	£0.252	£0.280	£13.414
Year 4	2023-24	£12.882	£0.252	£0.281	£13.415
Year 5	2024-25	£12.882	£0.251	£0.281	£13.414
	Total	£64.410	£1.259	£1.402	£67.071

4.2 Details of the full list of projects, covering the 5 years of the SHIP, are provided in Appendix 1. In summary, a total of 1,806 additional affordable properties are planned to be delivered from the projects listed (1,063 Falkirk Council properties and 743 other RSLs).

4.3 The Council's planned programme within the SHIP is to deliver 613 Council new build properties and 450 buy backs. The programme includes some larger strategic sites, as well as continuing to develop some smaller infill development sites to meet specific housing needs. Targeting significantly larger sites will increase the overall supply of new council homes and provide

increased security in the delivery of council's house building programme.
Details of proposed Falkirk Council developments are outlined below:

Developer	Site	No of Units
Falkirk Council	Former Torwood School	24
Falkirk Council	Former Bainsford Adult Day Centre	19
Falkirk Council	Former Oakbank Home, Polmont	24
Falkirk Council	Woodend Farm, Falkirk	111
Falkirk Council	Main Street, Bonnybridge	22
Falkirk Council	Banknock South	99
Falkirk Council	Haugh Gardens, Falkirk	39
Falkirk Council	Seabegs Road, Bonnybridge	35
Falkirk Council	Former Denny High School (Phase 1)	139
Falkirk Council	King Street, Stenhousemuir	24
Falkirk Council	Former Denny High School (Phase 2)	77
Falkirk Council	Buybacks	450
	TOTAL	1,063

- 4.4 A total grant funding requirement of £102m is necessary to deliver all the projects detailed in the SHIP. There is therefore a funding shortfall of c£35m (34%) over the next 5 years, to deliver all the projects listed in the SHIP. Although the total available funding is not sufficient to meet the full list of potential SHIP projects, discussions are on-going with the Scottish Government regarding the potential to secure additional funding and with partners regarding timing and project deliverability. Changes to the programme or funding will be provided to Members through the annual SLPA review process.
- 4.5 The Scottish Government guidance recommends that a slippage factor is applied on an annual basis to the SHIP. Allowing slippage, there are still sufficient projects set out in the SHIP to deliver the annual supply target of 123 new build units per annum over the period of the LHS (2017-2022), as noted in para 3.1 above.
- 4.6 SHIP guidance highlights Scottish Ministers would like to see an increase in the number of accessible homes and a target set in the LHS. Our aim is to maximise the number of new builds suitable for elderly/ambulant tenants.
- 4.7 In addition to the projects outlined in the SHIP, additional project proposals are regularly identified. Officers will continue to assess and evaluate these projects and, where applicable, progress potential additional funding considerations with the Scottish Government. We will continue to work with other Council services and external partners to identify future sites that could be suitable for new council housing projects. Any changes to the SHIP will be advised to Members through update reports.

- 4.8 Link Housing Association (Link) have advised that they have completed a housing stock valuation to support an increase in their borrowing capacity to enable the delivery of their proposed development programme across Scotland. Previously Link were sold land by Falkirk Council at affordable housing use value in Lochside Crescent Redding, Lomond Drive Langlees and Hazel Road Banknock, and the Council imposed burdens on the titles to prevent any subsequent sale for an alternative use at an increased value. The proposed variation in valuation proposed by Link will require a discharge of the title burdens for these sites, to be replaced with a contractual obligation on identical terms and they have asked the Council to consider this. Link has advised that these sites are now long established Link tenancies and they have no plans to alter this and tenants will be unaffected by the proposed changes. Any proposed change would also require approval from the Scottish Housing Regulator.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 Consultation on the development of the SHIP has taken place with other Council Services including Development Services and also with the Scottish Government and Registered Social Landlords. Consideration of the SHIP will also take place with the Housing Contribution Statement Steering Group which is taking forward housing's role in health and social integration. The SHIP has also been discussed with the Resident and Tenants' Forum and Housing Asset Management Plan Tenants Group. In addition, consultation has also taken place with Scottish Water and SEPA.
- 5.2 A partnership approach also takes place through a Joint Officer Working Group which considers best use of Council assets, including the potential for affordable housing.

6. Implications

Financial

- 6.1 Negotiations are on-going with the Scottish Government on resources to deliver the affordable housing projects outlined in the SHIP. Scottish Government grant covers approximately one third of the cost of a new build property. The balance requires to be met either from the Council's Housing Investment Programme as part of the Council's annual budget setting process or funded by RSL's from their own financing arrangements.

- 6.2 The acquisition of the site at King Street Stenhousemuir will generate a capital receipt for the Council's General Services Capital Programme. The site valuation will be determined independently by the District Valuer. Acquisitions will be funded from the Council's Housing Investment Programme.
- 6.3 The former Denny High School Phase 2 site acquisition and development is dependent on the site being declared surplus to operational requirements. This requires resolution of a number of factors relating to sports facilities on the site.

Resources

- 6.4 The SHIP will be managed from existing resources and therefore no additional resources will be required.

Legal

- 6.5 There are no legal implications.

Risk

- 6.6 Unforeseen development and funding constraints may restrict the number and size of proposed projects, reducing the number of affordable housing units delivered. This could impact adversely on meeting housing need.

Equalities

- 6.7 A full Equalities & Poverty Impact Assessment was carried out for the LHS 2017-2022 and no significant equality issues were identified.

Sustainability/Environmental Impact

- 6.8 A screening of environmental impacts has been carried out for the LHS 2017-22 and identified that there was no likelihood of significant environmental impacts.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 This report provides information on the SHIP 2020/21 – 2024/25. This is influenced by the housing supply targets set in the LHS and Local Development Plan. The SHIP demonstrates the potential to deliver 1,806 affordable housing units. After taking account of slippage, there are sufficient

projects included within the SHIP to fully utilise and exceed the allocated grant funding over the next 5 years.

- 7.2 Although a shortfall of c£35m in funding has been identified over the next 5 years, there is sufficient funding to deliver the annual supply target of 123 new build units identified in the Council's LHS 2017-2022. Officers will continue to review and manage the SHIP to maximise the amount of available funding from the Scottish Government, in order to deliver the maximum number of locally available affordable properties.
- 7.3 The SHIP includes a project that will require the HRA to purchase a Council site at King Street Stenhousemuir.

Director of Corporate and Housing Services

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Date: 24 September 2019

APPENDICES

1. Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2020/21 to 2024/25

List of Background Papers:

The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973:



Falkirk Council

Corporate & Housing Services

Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2020/2021 to 2024/25



Cadzow Avenue, Bo'ness



Graham Place, Denny

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1. Introduction

The Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) sets out the annual priorities for new affordable housing for the following five years as set out in Scottish Government guidance.

[SHIP Guidance Note](#)

2. The Role of The Strategic Housing Investment Plan

The SHIP sets out proposed affordable housing projects funded from Scottish Government Affordable Housing Supply Programme (AHSP) grant, developer contributions, 2nd homes council tax and contributions from the Council and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs).

The SHIP reflects housing policies and outcomes set out in the Local Housing Strategy (LHS). It also reinforces the role of the Council as the strategic housing authority.

2.1 *Alignment to Local Housing Strategy 2017-2022*

The LHS was approved by Executive on 15 August 2017 with final agreement by Scottish Government in March 2018. The priorities are set out below:

1. Increasing Housing Supply
2. Creating Sustainable Communities
3. Improving Access to Housing
4. Providing Housing and Support to Vulnerable Groups
5. Tackling Fuel Poverty, Energy Efficiency and Climate Change
6. Improving Housing Conditions

As required, the LHS is kept under regular review. This means the LHS is updated and revised annually to take account of national and local legislative and policy changes. The LHS Update 2019 was revised to take account of Rapid Rehousing (section 7), the new Housing Contribution Statement requirements for wheelchair accessible housing (section 6). The LHS Update 2020 will consider regeneration, the final Housing Contribution Statement and Fairer Falkirk Strategy 2019-2024. We are working with colleagues across services to ensure town centre sites are explored as part of the LHS/SHIP process.

[Local Housing Strategy Update 2019](#)

2.2 *Summary of Methodology to Prioritise Projects*

A project submission form and scoring methodology was developed and agreed by Falkirk Council's Strategy and Development Team, Council New Build Team and RSLs. Following discussion at the Strategic Housing Group on 11 June 2019 amendments to the methodology were agreed. These amendments reflected recent guidance from the Scottish Government setting out their commitment to more homes for wheelchair users and their renewed commitment to tackling homelessness. The commitment to homelessness requires a greater allocation of lets to homeless households. The SHIP methodology therefore awards higher priority to projects where partners agree to consider reviewing their allocation policy to provide a greater percentage of lets to homeless households. In addition, the methodology

takes account of:

- LHS 2017-2022 outcomes
- The Housing Need Demand Assessment (HNDA) areas of high demand
- Deliverability
- Bedroom sizes
- Tenure and house type
- Number of accessible units
- Grant funding requirement

The methodology can be found here: [SHIP Methodology](#)

2.3 *Steps taken to Resolve Development Constraints*

The methodology agreed for project submissions takes account of development constraints. The projects with full planning permission and full land ownership are scored highest.

This year all proposed projects were sent to Scottish Water, Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) and planning colleagues for comment. SEPA advised they did not have the resources to respond on individual projects, however they will comment on projects through their regular meetings with planning colleagues. Scottish Water and planning comments were shared with developing landlords to enable them to give further consideration to the issues highlighted.

A workshop was arranged in September 2019 with Scottish Water, Council New Build, Planning colleagues and RSLs to discuss the impact of the Surface Water Policy.

Affordable housing is discussed at the Strategic Housing Group (SHG). This group is the Housing Market Partnership for Falkirk. It meets annually and comprises Council officers from across services and external partners including Scottish Government, RSLs and Homes for Scotland. Partners at the SHG identified issues relating to parking requirements in new build developments. RSLs agreed to provide examples from across Scotland as a comparison and this will be considered at the Housing Planning Liaison meeting.

Tripartite meetings between the Scottish Government, Council and RSLs are held on a 3 monthly basis to explore issues impacting on delivery.

The Council Strategy & Development team contact developing landlords approximately 6 weekly to discuss progress with projects. Also, the Council does not charge for pre planning application discussions and we encourage developing landlords to consult with planning colleagues as early as possible.

A Design Guide has been written in partnership with developing landlords. This sets out specific local priorities for planning colleagues. It was agreed by the SHG in June 2019 and is available here:

[Design Guide](#)

3. Funding

3.1 Scottish Government grant, Housing Investment Plan, 2nd homes council tax, developer contributions

The Scottish Government have issued Resource Planning Assumptions (RPA) for grant until 2020-2021. For planning purposes Scottish Government advised using the annual figure for 2020/21 for years 2 to 5.

On 23rd January 2019 Falkirk Council approved the housing investment requirements for 2019/20 to 2023/24. This included £90 million for Council new build and £30 million for Council buy backs over the 5 year period 2019-2024.

Scottish Government grant covers approximately one third of the cost of a new build property. The balance is met from either the Council's Housing Investment Programme or funded through RSL's own financing arrangements.

Falkirk Council's Housing Investment Programme is funded mainly from borrowing. This is repaid over a number of years by the Housing Revenue Account as loans charges. A report to Policy and Resources committee on New Affordable Housing in 2012 set out £250k annually would be transferred to the Housing Revenue Account from the 2nd Homes Council Tax as funding towards the borrowing costs for the Council's new build programme.

In relation to RSLs, £188,000 from 2nd homes Council Tax is being used to support Link's project at Williamson Street, Falkirk to provide social rented housing for older people.

The use of all developer contributions are monitored and agreed by the Planning Obligations Group led by Falkirk Council's Development Services.

It is planned to use developer contributions of £80,000 for the project at Torwood to assist with gas infrastructure costs. In addition, £104,000 will be used to support the purchase of a ransom strip to assist with a Weslo project in Bo'ness.

Table 1 considers all resources to deliver affordable housing including grant, 2nd homes Council tax and developer contributions.

Table 1: Scottish Government Grant, 2nd Homes and Developer Contributions

	RPA	SG grant (£m)	2 nd homes council tax (£m)	Developer Contributions (m)	Total
Year 1	2020-21	£12.882	£0.252	£0.280	£13.414
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Source: Scottish Government & Falkirk Council

3.2 *Buy Back Scheme*

The Council introduced a buy back scheme in 2013. This scheme aimed to buy back 1 and 2 bedroom ex-council properties which had been sold under the Right to Buy. Council Executive agreed on 20 October 2015 to widen this commitment to include buying back houses (not flatted accommodation) with 3 or more bedrooms.

The benefits of the Buy Back scheme are:

- Providing more affordable housing
- Assist with improving Council properties by bringing the Council into majority ownership
- Where the Council has majority ownership, this facilitates carrying out communal repairs, meeting statutory requirements such as the Scottish Housing Quality Standard and Energy Efficiency Standard in Scottish Social Housing
- Purchasing empty homes through the Buy Back Scheme assists with area regeneration and creating sustainable communities

Table 2: Falkirk Council Buy Backs

Table 2: Buy Back of Former Council Properties	
Years	Number of properties bought
2013-2014	69
2014-2015	77
2015-2016	76
2016-2017	80
2017-2018	95
2018-2019	88
Total	485

Source : Falkirk Council

Scottish Government provides a grant of £25,000 per property to purchase former Council properties. In 2018-2019 the average purchase price of buy back was £72,246. The average figure at the start of the Buy Back scheme was £62,150.

The Buy Back scheme links to the empty homes project. This assists in returning empty properties into use and creates sustainable communities. In 2018-2019 a total of 26 long term empty former Council properties were purchased.

As the scheme has been operating for 6 years, a review is currently underway to ensure it continues to address LHS priorities.

3.3 *Empty Homes*

Falkirk Council has operated an Empty Homes project since April 2013. This was initially a shared service project between Stirling, Clackmannanshire Council and the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership. Since July 2016 there has been an officer in post only covering the Falkirk Council area. Currently the Council has two officers who work on empty homes and the buy back scheme. This equates to one full –time equivalent on empty homes.

There have been over 400 empty properties brought back into use across the Falkirk Council area since the project started in 2013.

3.4 Affordable Housing Policy

The Affordable Housing Policy (AHP) was revised in March 2019 to take account of the types of affordable housing supported locally and the new HNDA. The AHP requires new build developments of 20 or more units to make a contribution towards affordable housing. This assists diversity of house types and tenures to create more integrated communities. Table 3 highlights the number of sites subject to the AHP which may be considered during the period of this SHIP.

Table 3: Sites Subject to AHP programmed to come forward in 2020-25

Locality	Number of Sites	Potential Unit Numbers
Central	6	86
East	7	165
West	7	114
Total	20	365

Source: Falkirk Council Development Services

To deliver all of the above as social rent would require up to an additional £26,280,000 of grant funding.

4. Housing Infrastructure Fund

The Scottish Government Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) is available to deliver housing sites where the scale and nature of infrastructure costs would prevent the site from being supported through affordable housing grant.

Falkirk Council submitted a funding application for 3 sites in Banknock and Dennyloanhead. The number of units delivered at these sites was constrained due to development works being required at Junction 7 of the M80. The Scottish Government offered grant of up to £1.543m in May 2018 to facilitate the junction improvements.

Table 4: Housing Infrastructure Fund Projects

Site Location	Developer	Number of Units to be delivered by 2021
Site to the north of Kilsyth Road, Banknock (LDP site reference M03) - Cannerton	I&H Brown Ltd	30
Site to the north of Glasgow Road, Dennyloanhead (LDP site reference H08)- Broomridge Farm	Mactaggart & Mickel/ Bellway	30
Site to the South of Kilsyth Road, Banknock LDP site reference H07)	Falkirk Council/ JB Bennett	0

Post 2021 the McTaggart and Mickel site has potential to deliver an additional 54 affordable units and the Falkirk Council/JB Bennett site has potential to deliver 99 affordable units. Currently a working group has been set up to oversee the HIF projects including Scottish Government, private developers, Falkirk Council and Link Housing Association.

To date circa £70k has been spent on transport infrastructure.

5. Progress towards delivery of Affordable Housing Supply Programme

One of the actions in the LHS is to explore a range of models to deliver more affordable housing. Table 5 sets out models used locally and numbers of affordable properties delivered.

Table 5: 2018-2019 Progress towards delivery of the Affordable Housing Supply Programme

	Units Delivered
New build by Council and Registered Social Landlords	49
Buy Back of Former Council Stock	88
Buy Back of Paragon Stock	5
Scottish Government Open Market Shared Equity Scheme – Properties for sale on the open market available to first time buyers and priority groups ¹ .	Not available from Scottish Government yet
Scottish Government Help to Buy ² scheme helping first time buyers/existing homeowners to buy an affordable new build home from a participating home builder	80
Discounted Sale property without public subsidy sold at an affordable level. Conditions are attached to the missives to ensure the properties remain affordable units to subsequent purchasers	15
Mortgage to rent allowing people whose homes are at risk of being repossessed to remain in their home by the Council or Registered Social Landlords buying their home and renting back to them	7
Empty property sold on the open market without subsidy but within the local maximum price ceiling ³ set by Scottish Government for Open Market Shared Equity	7
Total	250

The above table relates to 148 social rented properties and 102 privately owned properties.

6. Housing Contribution Statement

Work is ongoing to develop the Housing Contribution Statement as part of the Falkirk Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan 2019-2022. A workshop was held with the Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Planning Group on 14 June 2019. This focused on 5 draft priorities. Details on priorities and actions are currently being finalised and work to date is noted below.

- 1. Make best use of technology so people can stay at home for longer**
- 2. Make best use of communal facilities in older peoples' housing developments to provide social activities and/or as a base for health and social care staff to provide services closer to home.** We are currently consulting with Council and RSL tenants. Views are being asked about what activities are currently ongoing in their housing development and what events, activities or information sessions they would like. This will allow us to identify gaps and potential services which could support older people to remain at home for longer and delay reliance on formal health and social care services. We are currently also exploring options relating to community benefits clauses in affordable housing contracts (section 11).

¹ People over 60, social renters, disabled people, members of the armed forces, veterans who have left the forces within the past 2 years, partner of service personnel up to 2 years after partner died whilst serving

² Further details on Scottish Government web site

³ <https://beta.gov.scot/publications/open-market-shared-equity-omse-administrative-procedures-9781788513555/pages/17/>

- 3. Ensure the built environment suits the needs of older and or physically disabled people through a disabled person's adaptations service, provide more wheelchair accessible housing and rolling out Combined Heat and Power** – The Council has increased priority given to developing landlords who provide new affordable housing using grant through the SHIP. We are also considering possibilities to increase the supply of accessible homes across all tenures with the Housing Planning Liaison Group. After the Local Development Plan (LDP) is adopted in 2020 there will be a further review of the Affordable Housing Policy which will explore this.
- 4. Improve access to housing for those currently in care settings, delayed in hospital or vulnerable people from the Falkirk area who are currently housed out with the area and want to return**
- 5. We will take forward Rapid Rehousing and set up Housing First**

The Housing Contribution Statement Steering Group will finalise the Housing Contribution Statement following consideration of the ongoing consultation. This will be presented to a future Integrated Joint Board meeting for consideration and approval.

<https://falkirkhscp.org/publications/>

6.2 **Wheelchair Accessible Housing**

The Falkirk HNSA identified an all tenure need for between 300 - 510 wheelchair accessible properties. The LHS has set a target that 5% to 10% of new build affordable properties will be wheelchair accessible where viable. There are also actions around improving information on the need for wheelchair accessible housing and on the supply of more accessible housing.

Analysis on need and demand for housing at a local level is completed annually. This will link in with work carried out for the Housing Contribution Statement (section 6.1) on wheelchair accessible housing. It will also inform the further review of the AHP from 2020 and explore all tenure options.

The Council new build team, Housing Occupational Therapist and design colleagues are also exploring a set percentage of properties with a bedroom on the ground floor for someone with mobility issues.

This SHIP sets out projects to deliver 1,331 new build properties to housing for varying needs standards. SHIP guidance highlights Scottish Ministers would like to see an increase in the number of accessible homes and a target set in the LHS. Our aim is to maximise the number of new builds suitable for elderly/ambulant tenants.

7. **Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan**

The Scottish Government have renewed their commitment to address homelessness, transform temporary accommodation and eradicate rough sleeping

Where homelessness cannot be prevented, Rapid Rehousing means settled mainstream housing as quickly as possible. In addition, time spent in temporary accommodation should be reduced. Also, Local Authorities must also set up a Housing First model for people with multiple and complex needs.

Falkirk Council has submitted a Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan to the Scottish Government. This has received feedback and confirmation of the first tranche of funding. This will allow progress to be made on the key elements of the plan, this includes the development of a Housing First model.

A steering group will be established to ensure the core objectives of the plan are achieved. This group will also monitor the ongoing process through the plan's 5 year life span.

The Scottish Government has increased the funding stream for Local Authority Rapid Rehousing Plans to £16 million. This acknowledges the commitment to end homelessness in Scotland by 2024. Further announcements for funding beyond 2019-2020 will be issued before the end of 2019.

8. Gypsy Travellers

The HNDA did not identify the need for more gypsy traveller pitches within the Falkirk area. In line with consultation, the LDP has a specific application process for private sites.

The LHS Update 2019 highlighted that action 39 *review service delivery at the Council's travelling persons' site* has been completed. There has been a full refurbishment of chalets and improvement work to meet standards specified by the Scottish Government was completed in October 2017.

The Council's landlord report to tenants highlights that the percentage of Gypsies/ Travellers satisfied with management of the Travelling Persons' site has increased significantly and is ahead of the Scottish average. This will be included in Falkirk Council's landlord report to tenants due October 2019.

During the summer of 2019 a Site Residents Group was established. The Group will enable residents to be more involved in their site and will help improve communication.

We have also been successful in obtaining funding for the Travelling Persons site. This includes funding for digital inclusion which will allow us to provide IT equipment and Wi-Fi within the community block. In addition, the residents have also been supported to apply for Make a Difference funding to provide aesthetic improvements including hanging baskets and additional play equipment for the children (including books to promote literacy).

A multi agency work-stream has recently been developed to address continuing inequalities within the Gypsy/Traveller community. This will provide opportunities for residents to participate and influence policy.

We recognise that a Ministerial Working Group including representatives from the Gypsy Traveller community and COSLA will set out an action plan before the end of the year. Also refreshed LHS guidance will be published shortly. To take account of this we have carried out some initial research identifying that locally, most gypsy travellers applying for and allocated Council housing are younger than all applicants. We also recognise that nationally gypsy

travellers have poorer health across all health conditions.⁴ In addition, life expectancy is lower.⁵

As we start work to update the HNDA, extensive consultation will be carried out with the Gypsy Traveller community.

9. **Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017**

The Falkirk Community Planning Partnership (CPP) is committed to making Falkirk a fairer and more equal place to live. The CPP are committed to mitigating the impact of poverty on individuals, families and communities in the area, as set out in the Fairer Falkirk Strategy 2019-2024 and the Integrated Children's Services Plan 2017-2020. The CPP Fairer Falkirk Partnership brought a number of partners together to map related work and gather information on the actions being taken to tackle child poverty.

As part of the annual LHS Update we review actions to align with strategic change nationally and locally. The Fairer Falkirk Strategy highlights the importance of making a new house a home and having access to furniture. One of the actions from the Strategy is to provide front line staff with poverty awareness training. The LHS review 2020 will explore how this training could link to front line housing staff with priority given to people signing new tenancies. We will also explore linking with RSLs particularly where the Council have nominated tenants or through referrals under homeless legislation. This links to the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (section 7) and Housing Contribution Statement where we are exploring greater allocations to homeless households (section 6).

[Poverty Strategy](#)

10. **Consultation and Partnership**

Meetings with developing landlords and Scottish Government

We are exploring improvements in the arrangements for partnership working, to facilitate and maximise development opportunities. As such, we aim to explore two suggestions. Firstly having at least one annual joint meeting of developing landlords and Scottish Government. Currently we meet quarterly with Scottish Government at the tripartite meeting. This also involves 7 individual meetings between developing landlords, Scottish Government and Strategy & Development team. A joint meeting is considered beneficial as developing landlords face similar issues delivering affordable housing.

Secondly, having a meeting with Scottish Government, developing landlords, Scottish Water, SEPA, Planning and Roads. Locally developing landlords are identifying similar issues at the Strategic Housing Group e.g.: in June 2019 similar concerns were expressed by all partners around parking requirements and developer contributions.

The Housing Planning Liaison (HPL) Group takes place quarterly and consists of Falkirk Council Housing Strategy & Development team and Planning Officers. This reviews progress with the SHIP. At a recent meeting it was agreed to explore parking requirements across Scotland with

⁴ Scotland's Census 2011 – National Records for Scotland

⁵ Equalities and Human Rights Commission 2009

RSLs and ask them to provide examples for the next meeting of the HPL Group.

A Corporate Group has been established to explore best use of Council assets and as a result has identified potential future sites for Council new build.

Scottish Water, Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, Planning and developing landlords

We have provided details of proposed projects to partners at Scottish Water, Scottish Environmental Protection Agency and planning colleagues who responded with comments and queries for each site. This information has been passed to developing landlords for comment and discussion. This consultation will improve future planning for project delivery and take cognisance of site constraints.

Housing Contribution Statement Steering Group

The SHIP is a recurring item on the agenda for the Housing Contribution Statement Group. The Steering Group progresses housing's role in health and social care integration and includes representation from Falkirk Health and Social Care Partnership, RSLs and housing services. Discussions at the Housing Contribution Steering Group have led to grant funding through the SHIP to reconfigure Link's former warden accommodation at Castings House. This SHIP includes proposals by RSLs to also reconfigure sheltered accommodation.

Tenant and Resident Forum

The Strategic Housing Investment Plan was considered by the Tenant and Resident Forum in August 2019 and have intimated their support for the Council projects discussed.

11. Procurement

We ask developing landlords with proposed projects for the SHIP to provide information on additional community benefits beyond affordable housing. This is drawn together and an annual report prepared. Generally projects included in the SHIP contribute to the local community providing:

- New employment and training opportunities
- Contribution to local economic growth
- Improvements and investment in local communities

Our Community Engagement and Procurement colleagues are exploring how to progress work on community benefits relating to older people and those with disabilities and we will set this out in the new Housing Contribution Statement.

12. Equalities

A comprehensive Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment was undertaken for the Local Housing Strategy 2017-2022. The assessment identified age, disability, sex and ethnicity as the main protected characteristics which have an impact on housing need and demand.

Priorities, actions and indicators detailed in the Local Housing Strategy 2017-2022, along with

consultation on the needs of these specific groups, has been designed to ensure adequate housing is in place to meet the continuous demand for affordable housing in the area.

[Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment](#)

13. Strategic Environmental Assessment

A pre-screening Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Local Housing Strategy 2017-2022 was sent to Strategic Environmental Assessment Gateway in September 2015. Confirmation was received in October 2015 that a full assessment would not be necessary.

[Strategic Environmental Assessment](#)

14. Monitoring

We will continue to monitor the SHIP through the LHS Update considered by Executive annually. Additionally we will monitor through tripartite meeting with Scottish Government and developing landlords.

The SHIP is also discussed quarterly at the Housing Contribution Statement Steering Group, Housing Planning Liaison group and as required at the Housing Infrastructure Fund meeting.

We will continue to monitor the SHIP at the SHG annually.

15. Summary

The SHIP is influenced by the housing supply targets set in the LHS and LDP and takes account of Scottish Government policy.

The SHIP demonstrates the potential to deliver 1,806 affordable housing units. A detailed list of projects is attached as appendix 1.

The Scottish Government Guidance expects Councils to over-programme for the first 2 years of the SHIP period to 31 March 2022, albeit grant has been advised to 2021. Guidance also recommends a 25% slippage for year 1 and 2 of the SHIP. After applying this there still remains sufficient projects to fulfil the RPA allocated.

The annual supply target of 123 new build properties required in the Housing Supply Target set out in the LHS 2017-2022 will be deliverable via Scottish Government grant. However, there is insufficient grant to meet all projects in the SHIP. Negotiations and discussions with the Scottish Government will therefore continue to explore additional funding opportunities.

Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2020-2025

Developer	Project Name	Area	Total Units	SG Grant	Total Points
2020/21 - Year 1					
Link Group Ltd	Williamson Street	Falkirk	37	£3,634,653	810
Falkirk Council	Former Torwood School	Torwood	24	£1,576,008	770
Falkirk Council	Buy Backs	All	90	£2,250,000	725
Paragon Housing Association Ltd	Buy Backs	Grangemouth	5	£125,000	725
Link Group Ltd	Former Whyteside, Lewis Road	Polmont	32	£2,931,645	680
Weslo Housing Management	Former Castings Club, Etna Road	Falkirk	15	£1,126,750	665
Kingdom Housing Association	Rosebank, Stirling Road	Dunipace	16	£1,177,920	665
Kingdom Housing Association	Thorndale Gardens	Allandale	35	£2,862,209	655
Link Group Ltd	Former Carron Coop	Falkirk	70	£5,040,000	610
Loretto Housing Association	Cobblebrae Farm	Falkirk	21	£1,753,000	590
Cairn Housing Association	Former Builders Merchant, Etna Road	Falkirk	40	£3,035,520	580
Link Group Ltd	Kilsyth Road	Dennyloanhead	30	£2,388,240	560
Link Group Ltd	Kilsyth Road (Phase 2)	Dennyloanhead	50	£3,980,400	560
Link Group Ltd	Banknock North	Banknock	33	£2,641,824	560
Weslo Housing Management	Grahamsdyke, Drum Road	Boness	33	£2,547,072	540
Cairn Housing Association	Toravan Farm, Vellore Road	Maddiston	46	£3,490,848	475
Cairn Housing Association	Dock Street	Boness	12	£941,760	455
Annual Total			589	£41,502,849	
2021/22 - Year 2					
Falkirk Council	Former Bainsford Adult Centre	Falkirk	19	£1,121,000	770
Falkirk Council	Former Oakbank Home, Wilson Avenue Polmont	Polmont	24	£1,416,000	750
Falkirk Council	Buy Backs	All	90	£2,250,000	725
Paragon Housing Association Ltd	Buy Backs	Grangemouth	5	£125,000	725
Falkirk Council	Woodend Farm, Hallglen	Falkirk	111	£6,549,000	720
Falkirk Council	Main Street	Bonnybridge	22	£1,298,000	710
Falkirk Council	Banknock South	Banknock	99	£5,841,000	660
Weslo Housing Management	King Street	Falkirk	23	£1,718,692	650
Hanover Housing Association	Thornton Avenue	Bonnybridge	19	£1,800,744	605
Link Group Ltd	Victoria Buildings	Falkirk	70	£5,040,000	585
Kingdom Housing Association	Canalside Drive	Falkirk	8	£646,848	495
Cairn Housing Association	Commissioner Street	Boness	30	£2,114,640	475

Places for People	Crawfield Road (Phase 1)	Boness	35	£2,162,310	400
Annual Total			555	£32,083,234	
2022/23 - Year 3					
Falkirk Council	Haugh Gardens	Falkirk	39	£2,301,000	770
Falkirk Council	Buy Backs	All	90	£2,250,000	725
Paragon Housing Association Ltd	Buy Backs	Grangemouth	5	£125,000	725
Falkirk Council	Seabegs Road	Bonnybridge	35	£2,065,000	710
Cairn Housing Association	Adam Grossert Court	Stenhousemuir	23	£575,000	685
Falkirk Council	Former Denny High School (Phase 1)	Denny	139	£8,201,000	660
Places for People	Crawfield Road (Phase 2)	Boness	40	£2,565,440	420
Annual Total			371	£18,082,440	
2023/24 - Year 4					
Falkirk Council	Buy Backs	All	90	£2,250,000	725
Paragon Housing Association Ltd	Buy Backs	Grangemouth	5	£125,000	665
Annual Total			95	£2,375,000	
2024/25 - Year 5					
Falkirk Council	King Street	Stenhousemuir	24	£1,416,000	730
Falkirk Council	Former Denny High School (Phase 2)	Denny	77	£4,543,000	660
Falkirk Council	Buy Backs	All	90	£2,250,000	725
Paragon Housing Association Ltd	Buy Backs	Grangemouth	5	£125,000	725
Annual Total			196	£8,334,000	
SHIP Total			1806	£102,377,523	