



STRATEGIC HOUSING INVESTMENT PLAN

2024/25 - 2028/29

October 2023

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Ensuring that North Lanarkshire is a place where everyone enjoys good quality housing in a pleasant and safe environment is a key priority for the North Lanarkshire Partnership and for North Lanarkshire Council.
- 1.2 This is the fifteenth North Lanarkshire Council Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP). It identifies affordable housing investment priorities over the next five years that will contribute to meeting the priorities set out within the Local Housing Strategy 2021-2026.
- 1.3 The main purpose of the SHIP is to ensure that the resources available through the Scottish Government's Affordable Housing Supply Programme (AHSP) are effectively targeted to deliver new and improved housing to meet local housing priorities. The SHIP also contains details of the council's own contribution to meeting the need for additional affordable accommodation through its new build programme.
- 1.4 The SHIP covers a period of 5 years and projects are prioritised to reflect their contribution to meeting strategic housing priorities, and their deliverability. The Scottish Government will utilise the SHIP to form the basis for agreeing the Strategic Local Programme Agreement (SLPA) which will set out the programme of housing projects to be funded over the next three years. The SLPA will be reviewed and updated annually.
- 1.5 In March 2021, the Scottish Government published 'Housing to 2040', Scotland's first ever long-term national housing strategy. The strategy sets out an ambitious target to deliver 110,000 affordable homes by 2032, with at least 70% for social rent. The strategy also commits to ensuring that these new homes are high-quality, zero emission and help create strong and vibrant places. There is emphasis on quality of place, developing vacant and derelict land, re-purposing existing properties, and on residential development within town centres. The strategy recognises the importance of making use of off-the shelf purchases and buy backs, as well as building new.
- 1.6 The council's Affordable Housing Supply Programme budget for 2024/25 has been confirmed as £32.988m and the budget allocation for 2025/26 has been confirmed as £33.534m. The council welcomes early confirmation of budgetary allocations to allow effective planning of housing delivery. The impact of current national issues affecting the cost and availability of materials and labour, along with general high inflation of programme timescales, is having a continued increase on tender costs where over the past 12 months there has been an increase of 5% to 10%, on average, excluding the additional changes to legislation and meeting Scottish Government energy targets. This is likely to negatively impact the budgetary support available for affordable housing and the council's ability to deliver the units as set out in Appendix 1 and 2 of the SHIP which help meet the national 110,000 home target.
- 1.7 The Scottish Government published guidance note MHDGN 2023/01 in June 2023, confirming an uplift in the baseline grant benchmarks and additional quality measures. For North Lanarkshire, this equates to a benchmark increase to £83,584 per social rented unit delivered by the council and £91,182 per social rented unit delivered by housing associations. In addition, the guidance details grant conditions relating to Fair Work First compliance and participating in a continuous improvement programme, analysing procurement and development value for money.
- 1.8 The Local Housing Strategy (LHS), and the supporting SHIP, are important strategic documents which set out the council's housing priorities and contribute to The Plan for

North Lanarkshire. The preparation and delivery of the SHIP requires close collaboration between a range of stakeholders including Registered Social Landlords, the Scottish Government, private developers, and other services within the council, including Planning and Transportation. All RSLs who operate in North Lanarkshire were given the opportunity to submit potential projects for inclusion within the SHIP. There are well established partnership arrangements operating in North Lanarkshire to help facilitate the development and implementation of the LHS and SHIP.

- 1.9 The scale of the council's new build programme presents a number of delivery challenges, not least in procuring enough homes that meet the required standard and which can be delivered in a cost-effective and timely way. We have therefore expanded the use of 'off the shelf' acquisitions of completed homes from private developers. Our Pathfinder 'off the shelf' scheme aims to engage with developers who can play their part in North Lanarkshire's future by building homes that support and cater for all communities and promote mixed tenures. The council released its latest Prior Information Notice (PIN) via Public Contract Scotland on 22nd May 2023 to call out to developers for site proposals throughout the North Lanarkshire area, where there is an evidenced local housing demand and/ or where re-provisioning is a council priority. The Pathfinder scheme also supports North Lanarkshire's local economy by providing opportunities for investment in the construction industry to help secure local jobs.
- 1.10 To date we have brought 687¹ homes back into council stock through our Empty Homes Purchase Scheme and the Open Market Purchase Scheme. Despite current market pressures which have reduced supply and increased costs, the schemes continue to be popular, allowing us to increase the supply of affordable housing whilst also addressing issues associated with property repair and long-term empty homes. In addition to this, a recent expansion to the scheme means that the council will now consider buying homes from private landlords and allow the tenant to remain in the home as a council tenant to help prevent homelessness, increase the council's housing stock and ensuring these homes meet ESSH. We await Scottish Government guidance to confirm the availability of grant for the landlord purchases but in the meantime we have continued to purchase properties in order to prevent the sitting tenants from being made homeless.

2. Local Housing Strategy Priorities

- 2.1 The council and its strategic partners have a Local Housing Strategy (LHS) for the five year period 2021-2026.
- 2.2 The vision within the LHS 2021-2026 is:

'To make North Lanarkshire the place to live, through the provision of high-quality housing and support in sustainable communities, that enables people to thrive and prosper'

To support this vision the LHS sets out seven strategic housing priorities:

- 1. We increase the supply of high-quality sustainable homes across tenures*
- 2. Our communities are vibrant, attractive and sustainable*
- 3. We prevent and resolve homelessness effectively*

¹ as of 6th September 2023

4. *We have a range of housing options and supports which promote independence, health and wellbeing*
 5. *We will tackle climate change and fuel poverty*
 6. *Our homes will be fit for the future*
 7. *We contribute to improving the quality and accessibility of the private rented sector*
- 2.3 The Housing Supply Target (HST) within the LHS has been informed by GCV HNDA2, published in 2015, and remains at the same level as set in our previous LHS (5,000 homes over the five-year period of the LHS, including at least 1,500 affordable homes). It is a requirement that HNDAs are carried out every five years to support the evidence base for housing policy in Local Housing Strategies and land use in Development Plans.
- 2.4 While work on the latest GCV HNDA3 is now nearing completion, due to delays caused by the global pandemic and national planning reform, output from the assessment was not available at the time of writing the LHS. As a result, evidence from GCV HNDA2 was used, alongside the latest and most accurate local and national data, statistics, and research, to help determine the outcomes and priorities in the LHS.
- 2.5 The strategy will undergo a light refresh in early 2024 to reflect the output from the third GCV HNDA which was submitted to the Centre for Housing Market Analysis (CHMA) for appraisal in December 2022. Work is ongoing to address the eleven recommendations made by the CHMA. It is anticipated that Robust and Credible status should be achieved in late 2023. The refresh will also provide the opportunity to address any key considerations arising from NPF4 that are relevant to the LHS.
- 2.6 Following confirmation from Scottish Ministers, the North Lanarkshire Local Plan was replaced by the Adopted North Lanarkshire Local Development Plan on 6 July 2022. The North Lanarkshire Local Development Plan includes the continuation of the application of an Affordable Housing Policy in Cumbernauld Housing Sub-Market Area, with the potential for this to be applied elsewhere on a case-by-case basis.
- 2.7 Our LHS and SHIP also aim to address particular housing needs, climate change and regeneration priorities, including town centres. Therefore, the priorities identified in the SHIP reflect these priorities, as well as the main priority of meeting identified housing need, particularly in areas of acute housing shortfall.

3. RSL, Community and Developer Consultation and involvement

- 3.1 All RSLs operating in the North Lanarkshire area were invited to submit projects that they wished to be considered for subsidy in the period 2024/25-2028/29. Submissions for new projects were received from 7 RSLs and all new projects were assessed according to the prioritisation framework set out below.
- 3.2 More generally all RSLs are invited to attend the council's Local Housing Strategy and Housing Forum events, which are supplemented by RSL representation on the Local Housing Strategy Steering Group. In addition, the council hosts regular liaison meetings with developing RSLs to monitor progress of current SHIP projects.
- 3.3 Our local communities have been consulted with regards to the North Lanarkshire Local Development Plan, of which the SHIP sites form part. There is also community

consultation arranged in relation to specific development sites as proposals progress to the design development stage and through the statutory planning process.

4. Prioritising the Programme

4.1 Sites are evaluated and prioritised based on their contribution to meeting the following key assessment criteria:

- LHS Strategic Housing Priority 1: *We increase the supply of high-quality sustainable homes across tenures*
- LHS Strategic Housing Priority 2: *Our communities are vibrant, attractive and sustainable*
- LHS Strategic Housing Priority 4: *We have a range of housing options and supports which promote independence, health and wellbeing*

Sites must be acceptable in planning terms and capable of completion within the Plan period before any assessment is made. Other factors taken into consideration include the level of subsidy required, sustainability benefits, deliverability, and housing mix and location.

4.2 Projects are assessed on the basis of information provided and available at the time. Clearly, as further information becomes available the prioritisation of individual projects may change.

4.3 There are three large scale privately-owned blocks of flats in poor condition at Millcroft Road, Cumbernauld where it is proposed that acquisition, re-housing and regeneration represents the most sustainable strategy to deliver good quality, affordable rented accommodation and improve the amenity of the area. Following consultation with owners of the three blocks (a total of 169 flats and 59 lock up garages), the council approved proposals in November 2017 to work in partnership with the Scottish Government to progress proposals to acquire the flats through a Compulsory Purchase Order to make way for a new development of high-quality housing for social rent. The project remains a high priority for the council and the Scottish Government, and funding has been included within the SHIP. The council are leading the project which includes progressing the CPO, and the demolition and re-development of the site for new council housing. The CPO was submitted to the Scottish Government for determination on the 29th of March 2023. Three objections were made. A target hearing date of April 2024 has been scheduled and a decision is expected within 6 months. The Re-housing Strategy is underway, with the first 19 voluntary acquisitions having now taken place to allow owner occupiers to move to Sanctuary's new development at Burns Road, as per the partnership approach in place for this strategic regeneration project. All existing tenants are being actively engaged to assess re-housing requirements and allow necessary preparations to be made to allow re-housing via the CHR in the event that the CPO is approved. The Planning application process for the new homes is underway, meaning the proposals for the new build development are approved and ready to be delivered if the CPO is approved.

4.4 The council has approved ambitious plans to transform its town centres and re-vitalise the local economy through the development of an integrated Economic Regeneration Delivery Plan. Town Visions for our eight major towns of Airdrie, Bellshill, Coatbridge, Cumbernauld, Kilsyth, Motherwell, Shotts and Wishaw were approved in September 2021. These Visions are intended to inform the long-term future and transformation of

our towns. The Visions were shaped through extensive consultation and engagement with community planning partners, landowners, retailers, residents and other agencies in 2020 and 2021.

- 4.5 The next stage in the delivery of the Visions is the development of Town Action Plans (TAPs). The TAPs will be developed in two phases, given the complexity of the work and available staff resources. The towns in the first phase are Airdrie, Motherwell and Wishaw, with the other five towns in phase 2. The draft TAPs are being developed in consultation with the local communities in each town through a series of community workshops and briefings to specific stakeholder groups. The draft TAPs for the first phase were published for public consultation in May and June 2023, accompanied by both physical and online exhibitions. The final versions are due to go to Committee in November 2023 for approval. Community and stakeholder engagement for phase 2 will begin in Autumn 2023 with the intention of finalising the Town Action Plans for Kilsyth, Shotts and Bellshill by April 2024. Following the recent announcement by the UK Government of £20m over 10 years for Coatbridge Town Centre, the timescale for production of the Town Action Plan for Coatbridge will be amended to reflect the opportunities and requirements of this new funding. Following the acquisition of Cumbernauld Town Centre by the council in June 2023, supported by UK Government Levelling Up Funds, a masterplan for the town centre, incorporating opportunities for new homes, is also being progressed.
- 4.6 The TAPs identify specific development proposals and timescales for delivery, and will be subject to review every two years to ensure they remain focussed on key priorities and opportunities. A key priority for the Town Visions is to promote the development of strategic sites and refurbishment of heritage buildings to create additional and improved residential provision to replace a declining retail footprint. A number of strategic town centre housing projects have already been completed or are underway, and other future town centre projects are contained within the SHIP. Sites include major developments at Brandon Street/ YMCA and Motherwell Town Hall (Motherwell), the former Orr's building (Airdrie), and Kildonan Street and Bank Street (Coatbridge) which are either on site or in the design development stage. Smaller town centre sites include Caledonian Road, Kings House, Graham Street and Kings Street (Wishaw). In total there are 31 town centre, or edge of town centre, sites included within the SHIP.
- 4.7 In May 2018, following consultation with tenants, the council approved proposals to demolish 1,700 flats, including 14 tower blocks, as part of a programme to potentially demolish all of its 48 tower blocks over the next 20-25 years. It is proposed to re-develop the cleared sites with new, high quality housing to meet current and future housing needs.
- 4.8 The first phase of the re-provisioning programme commenced in 2019 and is progressing as planned with a number of high and low-rise blocks now demolished, making way for new-build developments. The three high rise tower blocks at Dykehead Road were demolished in early 2021 and construction started in June 2021 for 150 low-rise residential units with expected completion in Spring 2024. Sixty-seven homes have already been handed over. There are currently a number of projects on-site, with the demolition of Coursington, Allan and Draffen Towers in Motherwell; Jackson Court and the Shawhead low-rise flats in Coatbridge; and the Gowkthrapple low rise blocks in Wishaw all underway and progressing well. We have temporarily reinstated around 200 properties within High Coats (Coatbridge) and Birkshaw (Wishaw) towers to support displaced citizens affected by the war in Ukraine. Refurbishment of the towers is now complete and the towers are home to several Ukrainian families. The refurbishment was fully funded by the Scottish Government who provided £5.9m to support the resettlement scheme. While the towers will remain part of the phase 1

programme, new programme dates will be required for High Coats, Dunbeth and Birkshaw.

- 4.9 Some of the initial re-provisioning sites are included within this SHIP, including the Gowkthrapple estate where demolition of the mid-rise blocks of council flats is currently underway, allowing regeneration of the entire area through a masterplan approach in partnership with Garrion People's Co-operative. The Masterplan (Phases 1-4) was approved in Principle in December 2021 and subsequent detailed planning permission was granted in March 2022 to develop 97 new homes (Phase 1 of the Masterplan), including 18 amenity bungalows for social rent. The bungalows were prioritised to complete first in order to re-house the elderly residents in the existing Allershaw tower, which is in the initial phase of the demolition programme. The bungalows are now complete and ready for handover, ahead of the remainder of the homes on the Phase 1 site which are due for completion in 2024. A Compulsory Purchase Order is being progressed to acquire the last remaining owner's property at 99 Stanhope Place in order to allow the entire demolition of the walk-up flats and facilitate onward development of Phase 2 of the Masterplan.
- 4.10 In May 2023, Committee approved proposals to consult tenant and stakeholders on the second phase of the re-provisioning programme which consists of 974 properties, including 8 tower blocks. The proposals will continue to transform local communities by building on the success of Phase 1 and will create new, high quality, energy efficient housing that will meet the current and future needs of local areas.
- 4.11 The second phase of the re-provisioning programme will be progressed on a staggered basis and is estimated to take a minimum of 5 years to complete, given the scale of re-housing required and the need to balance the re-housing of tenants from the flats with the needs of others on the council's housing waiting list. At the same time as re-housing is being progressed, feasibility work will commence regarding the future proposals for the cleared sites.
- 4.12 The council continues to invest in its tower blocks to ensure they are safe, secure and attractive places for tenants to live. In 2016 the council began a survey programme to inform the structural condition of all 48 of its high-rise towers (c 4,000 flats). The exercise has resulted in a wide-ranging programme of works being progressed which will enhance fire safety in our towers, with installation of new fire doors and fire-stopping complete. The council have also completed the programme to install smoke detection in line with the new statutory requirements in all towers.
- 4.13 The programme to install sprinkler systems within individual properties is also progressing well with the pilot block, phase 1 sprinklers, and 4 additional towers complete as part of a wider refurbishment. Work installing sprinklers in the phase 2 towers is currently on site. Upon completion this will mean 13 of our high-rise blocks have been retrofitted with sprinklers. Plans for phase 3 are underway.

5. Delivering the programme

- 5.1 The successful development and implementation of the SHIP relies on close collaboration between the council, Scottish Government and individual RSLs. These relationships remain strong in North Lanarkshire, with all stakeholders committed to working together to deliver the projects within the SHIP and to overcoming any challenges or constraints. We continue to maintain the increased levels of routine communication introduced during the pandemic and continue to host the now established 'Affordable Housing Partner' forum every quarter.

- 5.2 The SHIP has been prepared in consultation with a number of services within the council, and in particular the Planning service, to ensure that projects identified are broadly acceptable to Planning.
- 5.3 Only projects that are capable of starting on site within the SHIP period have been included. However it is important to note that until full site investigations and detailed consultation with the statutory authorities have taken place (including Scottish Water), it is not possible to confirm with absolute certainty that all projects contained within the SHIP can be delivered within the estimated timescale.
- 5.4 According to the framework providers, the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) and the Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply (CIPS), the past 12 months has seen a significant increase in material cost and availability which is having a knock-on effect on supply chains, the ability of contractors to complete contracts timeously, and their ability to submit fixed price tenders with programme certainty. Future tenders are expected to include a significant cost allowance for risk, including to mitigate the risk incurred for loss of rent due to programme uncertainty. Over the past 12 months there has been an average 5% to 10% increase in tender costs, and this is expected to extend into 2024. The Scottish Government More Homes Division is fully aware of the current issues, and to help mitigate the increased costs they have advised that additional grant monies (for abnormal costs associated with the site) can be considered on a project-by-project basis. This includes additional costs associated with Scottish Water surface water sewer connections.
- 5.5 Due to issues of capacity in the market we will continue to use the ability in the SPA and Scotland Excel Frameworks to direct award to available contractors, including to contractors who are not highest ranking, subject to value for money assessment. A potential direct award to other contractors on the framework could occur in the circumstance where the first ranked contractor does not have the capacity to deliver the project within the required timescale or within the projected budget.
- 5.6 In February 2023, the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing & Local Government issued a letter regarding the Affordable Housing Supply Programme grant application criteria. It confirmed that anyone intending to apply for grant from 1 December 2023 should ensure that homes within new build and conversion projects contain zero direct emissions heating systems, unless there are compelling reasons why this would not be considered appropriate, or where a valid building warrant application has been submitted prior to that date. This requirement is being incorporated into our designs, ensuring homes are future-proofed against the need to switch heating systems in the future. It is however noted that air source heat pumps and other zero direct emission heating systems continue to have a significantly higher capital installation cost compared to traditional gas boiler systems.
- 5.7 The majority of sites within the SHIP are brownfield sites and a number of these sites help address regeneration priorities and/ or are currently vacant and derelict. However these sites often present considerable challenges in terms of poor ground conditions and/ or other development constraints such as service diversions and access. Scottish Water's Surface Water Policy of not accepting any new connections to the combined sewer network has impacted our ability to develop several sites. Alternative drainage solutions have been explored, however many are untested within a social housing environment or are financially unviable.
- 5.8 In terms of joint procurement with RSLs, while no opportunities have yet arisen to proceed with a joint venture with RSL partner, the council continues to have dialogue with developing RSLs and welcomes any opportunity for potential joint projects. The

scale of the council's own programme is considered to be large enough to ensure that best value/ economies of scale can be delivered without the added legal complexity of putting in place joint procurement arrangements.

- 5.9 The council will continue to support the Scottish Government and RSLs to deliver the projects identified within the SHIP, as well as implementing its own ambitious new build programme.

6. Resources

- 6.1 In addition to the AHSP the following resources will be used to deliver the SHIP in North Lanarkshire:

6.2 Council New Build programme

Using its own resources to fund additional borrowing, the council has approved a programme to develop 5,000 new homes for rent by 2035. This includes assumptions around the demolition of the tower blocks and re-development of the cleared sites, and acquisition of over 1,400 homes through the council's Open Market Purchase Scheme. The new build programme is funded through a combination of borrowing; Capital Finance from Current Revenue (CFCR); ring-fenced contribution from council tax for second and empty homes and Scottish Government Grant.

6.3 Affordable Housing Policy (AHP)

The Affordable Housing Policy (AHP) has been endorsed through the planning process and forms part of the adopted Local Development Plan. The AHP applies to sites, of 5 units and over, in the Cumbernauld Housing Market Area (HMA). The AHP helps to deliver additional affordable housing through on-site provision or use of commuted sums for re-investment in the future. The commuted sum payments, totalling £3.74m to date, will be re-invested to meet affordable housing requirement in the Cumbernauld HMA by helping to fund the Empty Homes/ Open Market Purchase Scheme and other strategic new build projects in the Cumbernauld HMA. Between 2017/18 and 2022/23, commuted sum payments were used to fund a total of 69 homes bought through the scheme. A number of AHP sites, where on-site provision has been agreed, have been included within the current SHIP. Discussions are underway with developers regarding other potential sites.

6.4 Council Tax from Second and Empty Homes

- 6.4.1 The council receives around £168k per annum from the reduction in discount for second and empty homes. This funding is ring fenced for investment in affordable housing and the council currently uses this revenue stream to help fund borrowing for the new build programme.
- 6.4.2 Following the introduction of the Council Tax (Variation for Unoccupied Dwellings) (Scotland) Regulations 2013, the council decided to increase the council tax by 100% on homes that have been empty for over a year, effective from April 2014. The council raises around £411k per annum from this source. This funding is not ring-fenced for investment in housing; however, the council has agreed in principle that any additional revenue may be used for initiatives to tackle empty homes and is currently used to fund a dedicated Empty Homes Officer post and to contribute to the purchase of empty homes.

6.5 Empty Homes/ Open Market Purchase Scheme

- 6.5.1 The council has allocated a budget of £9.56m in 2023/24 to purchase up to 100 (mainly former council) properties. This includes properties where there is one remaining owner within a council-owned block of flats. In this case the resident may be eligible to remain in the property as a council tenant and so enable common works to progress. The scheme has proved to be very popular and is an economic way for the council to increase supply of housing to meet housing need, whilst at the same time addressing issues caused by long term empty properties and enabling common works to be progressed by acquiring full or majority ownership of blocks of flats.
- 6.5.2 The scheme has recently been extended to allow acquisition of homes from private landlords, helping prevent homelessness and enable private tenants to remain in their home. So far this year, 31% of applications received were from landlords, highlighting the interest in the expansion of the scheme. Last year, 35.8% of homes purchased through the open market/ empty homes purchase scheme were allocated to homeless households, highlighting the significant contribution the scheme makes to addressing homelessness in North Lanarkshire.
- 6.5.3 The Scottish Government has agreed to provide £1.98m grant funding in the current financial year to support the purchase of 50 homes. Additional funding may be accessed, dependent on progress with the scheme. The council considers that acquiring former public sector stock is an excellent way to increase housing supply, improve stock condition and help sustain and enhance local communities. The average cost of each property is around £110,000 (including repair/ refurbishment costs), which is less than half the cost of a typical new build in the current market.
- 6.5.4 Since inception, the Empty Homes Purchase Scheme has brought 357 long term empty properties back into use at an average cost of £71,255. The council's Empty Homes Officer has contributed to the number of homes brought back into use in the private sector. The role actively involves locating homeowners with empty properties to provide them with advice and assistance (including accessing merchant discounts and VAT reductions) to help bring their properties back into use. Since 2020, the Empty Homes Officer has brought 105 empty homes back into use in the private sector. On average, these properties were empty for over four years.

	PRIVATE		EHPS		TOTAL (PRIVATE + EHPS)	
	NUMBER BROUGHT BACK	AVERAGE TIME EMPTY (DAYS)	NUMBER BROUGHT BACK	AVERAGE TIME EMPTY (DAYS)	NUMBER BROUGHT BACK	AVERAGE TIME EMPTY (DAYS)
2020/21	30	1,264	32	211	62	721
2021/22	41	1,222	23	388	64	922
2022/23	34	2,044	33	95	67	1,084
	105	1,500	88	214	193	914

6.6 Mid-Market Rent

- 6.6.1 Evidence, including from Housing Need and Demand Assessments, suggests that there may be significant need and demand for intermediate tenure housing, particularly for mid-market rent. Mid-market rented housing allows social landlords to meet a broader range of housing need and aspiration and its provision, particularly in North

Lanarkshire's town centres, will contribute to a range of strategic housing, regeneration and economic development objectives. This is recognised in both North Lanarkshire's Local Housing Strategy (which identifies delivering mid-market rent as a key strategic action) and the area's Economic Regeneration Delivery Plan.

- 6.6.2 However delivering mid-market rent in North Lanarkshire is particularly challenging due to the relatively low level of private sector rents (with MMR rents initially linked to the 30th percentile of local market rents) which may undermine project viability. To date 64 mid-market rented homes have been delivered. The council will continue to work with RSLs, Scottish Government and other funders to address these viability challenges and aims to deliver more MMR homes during the lifetime of this Strategic Housing Investment Plan.

7. Wheelchair Accessible and Specialist Housing

- 7.1 Meeting the housing and related support needs of older people and people with disabilities or other additional support needs is a strategic priority set out in the Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2021–2026:

'We have a range of housing options and supports which promote independence, health and wellbeing' - Strategic Housing Outcome 4

- 7.2 Ensuring an adequate supply of affordable, accessible, and adaptable housing for households is crucial in enabling disabled people to live full and independent lives and creating inclusive communities. A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People Delivery Plan sets out the Scottish Government's approach to policy for disabled people and how it intends to meet its obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCPRD), which is part of a wider agenda to support a fairer Scotland. The Plan sets out an action to work with local authorities, disabled people and other stakeholders to ensure each local authority sets a realistic target for the delivery of wheelchair accessible housing across all tenures and that local authorities report annually on progress. The Scottish Government Wheelchair Accessible Guidance Note: MHDGN: 2019/20 sets out the requirement to set all-tenure wheelchair home targets. It also states that homes suitable for wheelchair users should, as a minimum, comply with the design criteria 'column B' in Housing for Varying Needs (HfVN), however it strongly encourages local authorities to adopt the design criteria indicated as desirable 'column D' wherever possible.
- 7.3 We have targets in place to ensure that 10% of council new build properties and 5% of wider social rented properties are built to meet the desirable design criteria (column D) set out in HfVN design standards. Local area housing teams work alongside the New Supply Team to ensure the housing needs of people with disabilities, including those who use a wheelchair, are met through council and RSL new build sites. Local pressure analysis helps inform specialist provision on each site. The local area housing teams also meet identified needs through existing homes and by working with Health and Social Care in the provision of adaptations, equipment and technology. Progress is monitored and reported on annually via the LHS annual progress report. The target is also subject to annual review, to enable an increase where evidence supports this.
- 7.4 These targets have been informed by both local and national evidence which indicates that there is a shortfall of accessible housing in North Lanarkshire, with an estimated 7% of households reporting that they require an adaptation, and 11% of households restricted by dwelling attributes. National evidence estimates that there are 17,266 wheelchair users across Scotland with unmet needs (19.1% of wheelchair users). This is projected to increase as our population ages and the number of people living with

long-term conditions and complex needs increase. The methodology used in the 'Still Minding the Step' has been used to estimate the housing needs of wheelchair users in North Lanarkshire. It is estimated that there are 5,378 wheelchair user households in North Lanarkshire, of which there are 938 wheelchair user households with unmet need.

- 7.5 This applied methodology approach has also been used to project the future unmet housing need of wheelchair users in North Lanarkshire and to help inform a target for wheelchair housing delivery in the private sector. Alongside these housing estimates a survey was carried out in 2023 to gather a better understanding of the needs of wheelchair users in North Lanarkshire. Collectively the findings from the survey and the wheelchair housing estimates provide an evidence base to continue our engagement with private developers, with a view to establishing an all-tenure wheelchair target in North Lanarkshire.
- 7.6 National Planning Framework 4, which sets out in Policy 16 that proposals for accessible, adaptable and wheelchair homes should be supported, provides the foundations for our next Local Development Plan to help further improve provision. Consultation on the revision of part 1 of Housing for Varying Needs, which will be incorporated in the new accessible housing standard introduced from 2025/2026, will also be instrumental in enabling improved provision of accessible homes in North Lanarkshire across tenures.

8. Child Poverty

- 8.1 There are still significantly high levels of child poverty in North Lanarkshire with nearly one in four children living in poverty. There are 61,452 children aged 15 and below in North Lanarkshire, with 14,256 of those children living in poverty. Furthermore, 5,455 children live in areas where the poverty figure is over the national average of 24%, and 3,185 of those children live in areas where poverty levels are over 30%. According to the Family Resources Survey 2019-2022, more than two-thirds of children in poverty live in working households (69%). There are some types of households with children who are known to be at a particularly high risk of poverty such as single parents (38%); those with three or more children (34%) or a disabled household member (28%); those who are of a minority ethnic background (39%), and households with a child aged under one or a mother aged under 25. Thus, there are clear levels of inequality in relation to areas and types of household groups resulting in a degree of social exclusion across our towns and communities.
- 8.2 North Lanarkshire's approach is to embed the Local Child Poverty Action Report into its overall Tackling Poverty Strategy to ensure that tackling poverty is an area that is considered in decision making across the Partnership. We are committed to tackling the root causes of child poverty and alleviating the impact of poverty in North Lanarkshire, and the Housing Service is a key partner on the council's Tackling Poverty Officers Group (TPOG) and subgroups. Housing, alongside partners, have progressed actions contained in North Lanarkshire's Tackling Poverty Strategy 2022-23 and Local Child Poverty Action Plan 2022-23 to tackle poverty and inequality across our communities.
- 8.3 The provision of affordable and accessible housing makes a significant contribution to tackling child poverty in conjunction with the delivery of a wide range of housing supports which maximise household income and tackle fuel poverty. Housing generated £15m in additional benefits for tenants during 2022/23 through the Income Maximisation Service. The council has delivered 1,371 family homes from a total of

1,646 new affordable homes² since 2010 (up to 31 March 2023). Expansions to the OMPS made during 2022/23 will help further increase supply whilst preventing homelessness, contributing to tackling child poverty in North Lanarkshire. The need for additional larger family homes in North Lanarkshire is recognised, with pressure for 4 and 5 bedroom homes significantly higher than pressure for other property sizes. Evidence also suggests that pressure is increasing for 3 bedroom homes. This is at the same time as an overall increase in waiting list applications of 10% in the past year.

- 8.4 Improvements continue to be made to the energy efficiency of our new build homes, which helps tackle fuel poverty. Our new energy advice service provides additional household support with fuel debt, advice on reducing energy bills and signposting to household energy funds, as well as other services to help reduce financial hardship and increase household income. Evaluation of a pilot of low carbon new build homes on the former multi-storey tower re-provisioning site in Airdrie is underway to help ensure the transition to low and zero carbon technologies is a just transition for households.
- 8.5 The impacts of the cost-of-living crisis continue to be felt across our communities and significant challenges remain despite the positive proactive partnership work to tackle poverty in North Lanarkshire. Work continues as part of the TPOG to implement several actions to mitigate adverse impacts, with a newly established council Programme of Work framework in place in 2023, which considers both Tackling Poverty and Homelessness Prevention within a unified scope of activity. Increasing the delivery of family homes through the SHIP is a crucial component in our efforts to tackle child poverty in North Lanarkshire.

9. Gypsy Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

- 9.1 There are no planned housing investment projects outlined in this SHIP specifically linked to Gypsy Travellers or Travelling Showpeople provision. The Glasgow City Region (GCR) Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) 3 has recently been completed and has been submitted to the Scottish Government's Centre for Housing Market Analysis (CHMA) for 'Robust and Credible' status assessment. It highlights the diverse accommodation preferences of Gypsy/Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and broad range of influencing factors. Although it does not set out a specific requirement within GCR local authority areas, it sets out the need for local authorities to engage with Gypsy/Travellers and Travelling Showpeople populations in their respective areas to develop a greater understanding of housing needs.
- 9.2 A Strategic Gypsy Traveller Liaison Group is well established within North Lanarkshire and comprises membership from the council, NHS Lanarkshire and Police Scotland. This group meets on a regular basis to consider and develop a better understanding of the accommodation and wider support needs of Gypsy/Travellers and Travelling Show people to help improve outcomes and achieve the objectives set out in the national plan 'Improving the Lives of Gypsy/Travellers'.
- 9.3 As part of the work undertaken by this group, and as a commitment set out in the LHS, we intend to undertake further localised housing need and demand assessment work. We continue to work with COSLA and the Scottish Government in relation to national developments and research which will help inform our approach to carrying out this assessment.

² Includes open market purchase scheme/ empty homes purchase scheme

10. Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan

- 10.1 North Lanarkshire's Rapid Re-housing Transition Plan (RRTP) was submitted to Scottish Government on 19 December 2018, in line with the recommendations outlined within the report which Committee approved on 14 November 2018.
- 10.2 The five-year plan sets out how North Lanarkshire Council and its partners will move forward from our current position to deliver a future vision. It sets out the changes required in temporary accommodation supply, housing supply and support across all partners to enable settled housing options for homeless households.
- 10.3 This is the final year of RRTP funding, however it is likely that future funding will be provided to enable the implementation of the Prevention of Homelessness Bill which is due in Parliament after the summer recess. This Bill is intended to lead to system change and a person-centred and trauma-informed service response that would meet individual needs, improve prevention, and provide greater choice and control for those at risk of homelessness. This comes at a time when homelessness is rising both nationally and locally.
- 10.4 The emphasis in 2022/23 has been on strengthening partnerships within the RRTP, focussing on key objectives to reduce and prevent homelessness, providing sustainable housing for homeless households, and responding to the challenges of a post-pandemic climate and cost-of-living crisis.
- 10.5 The Homes First Team has had two full years of operation since it was established in March 2021 and has been upscaled to provide wrap-around support to an increased number of people. A trauma-informed approach is now embedded in homelessness practice with a focus on improving joint assessment and operational processes. This ensures a person-centred approach to prevent and reduce homelessness and improve tenancy sustainment.
- 10.6 Other key areas of success and activity over the past year include the creation of a prevention worker post, extension of the furniture fund, implementation of a technology fund to improve digital inclusion, and introduction of a household prevention fund in response to the acute problems experienced by households in the wake of the cost-of-living crisis.
- 10.7 The RRTP Steering Group is well established and has responsibility for reviewing existing service provision, processes, practices, outcomes and performance in relation to collaboratively working together to rapidly re-house people and reduce time spent in temporary accommodation. Alongside this approach we continue to transfer temporary accommodation tenancies to SSTs for homeless applicants where appropriate, helping minimise their time spent in temporary accommodation.
- 10.8 We will continue to focus on increasing our percentage lets to homeless applicants and ensure front line staff promote an effective prevention and housing options approach to maximise choices for service users, as well as ensuring we provide effective tenancy sustainment services. This is anticipated to reduce homeless presentations and in turn reduce demand for temporary accommodation.
- 10.9 The SHIP supports the RRTP outcomes in two ways, through the provision of supported accommodation projects, including Bank Street in Coatbridge, which will deliver small scale supported accommodation, and through the delivery of affordable housing which increases supply to enable settled accommodation to be allocated as swiftly as possible, reducing the need for time spent in temporary accommodation.

Although there is no specific new build target set for allocations to homeless households, a significant proportion of our new build homes and open market purchase acquisitions are let to homeless households or households who have received priority for housing insecurity on the Common Housing Register. In 2022/23, 7.7% of new build homes were let to homeless households and a further 33.0% of new homes were allocated to households with insecure housing points. Sixty-four percent of homes acquired through OMPS/ EHPS in 2022/23 were allocated to households who were homeless or experiencing housing insecurity.

- 10.10 A review of the Temporary Accommodation Strategy is currently underway with support procured from an external consultant to help identify the future temporary accommodation requirements. This is anticipated to conclude in late 2023, setting out pathways and recommendations for consideration. This may impact on future SHIP investment priorities.

11. Equalities

- 11.1 The planning and delivery of good quality housing and appropriate information, advice and support services in North Lanarkshire embraces the principle of equal opportunities. The SHIP plays a significant role in promoting the equalities. The 2023 SHIP demonstrates the on-going commitment to develop a range of housing that is suitable for people with a range of needs, including those with physical disabilities and wheelchair users. The council's approach is to enable integrated and inclusive developments to assist individuals with community care needs to live independently with appropriate support rather than develop any new specifically designed schemes.
- 11.2 The LHS also outlines our strategic approach to ensuring that equalities are addressed. This is reflected in specific LHS targets such as ensuring a minimum of 5% wheelchair standard homes in new build social rented housing. We have also committed to involving our LHS co-production group for disabled people in the design of new build affordable homes. This builds on work that has been undertaken with the group examining the general accessibility standard of new build homes. The council's own new build programme has a minimum target of 10% wheelchair standard homes.
- 11.3 An Equality and Fairer Scotland Duty Impact Assessment has been carried out for the SHIP. This has identified no adverse impact for people with or who share a protected characteristic. Positive impacts have been identified for older people, younger people, disabled people, and people on low incomes through the provision of affordable and accessible housing.

12. Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 12.1 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a legal requirement on local authorities to assess public policies, plans and strategies showing their potential impact on the environment. A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) ensures that environmental issues are considered by decision makers alongside social and economic issues.

In terms of the environmental impact the SHIP has been considered through the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and there are no major issues of relevance identified.

Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2024/25-2028/29

Previously Approved Priorities

Project	Developer	No. of Units
Cumbernauld South CGA (AHP)	NLC	75
Berwick Street, Coatbridge	NLC	19
1-13 Bank Street, Coatbridge	NLC	16
Dykehead Rd, Airdrie	NLC	150
Former Columba High School, Coatbridge	NLC	130
Northburn, Airdrie	NLC	31
Castlehill Road, Wishaw (Phase 1)	NLC	97
Castlehill Road, Wishaw (Phase 2)	NLC/Garrion Co-op	100
Glenmavis – Village Site	NLC	21
Laburnum Road, Viewpark	NLC	26
Orrs Building, S Bridge St, Airdrie	NLC	20
Shawhead, Coatbridge	NLC	111
Motherwell Town Hall, Hamilton Road, Motherwell	NLC	20
Thorn Road, Bellshill	NLC	26
Gartferry Road, Chryston (AHP)	NLC	22
Former Cumbernauld Village PS, Glasgow Road, Cumbernauld Village	NLC	8
Former Police Station, Main Street, Glenboig	NLC	6
Brandon Street, Motherwell	NLC	49
Graham Street, Wishaw	NLC	13
Kings Street, Wishaw	NLC	5
Kings House, Wishaw	NLC	18
Caledonian Road, Wishaw	NLC	15
Glenacre Drive, Airdrie	NLC	16
Gibb Street, Chapelhall	NLC	25
Kildonan Street, Coatbridge	NLC	49
Millcroft Road, Cumbernauld (new build)	NLC	72
Airdriehill Street, Airdrie	NLC	65
Former Petersburn PS, Petersburn Road, Airdrie	NLC	40
Ravenscliff Road, Ravenscraig	NLC	24
Coshneuk Road, Steps	NLC	12
Lorne Place, Coatbridge (OTS)	NLC	24
Auchengeich Miners, Gartferry Road, Moodiesburn (AHP)	NLC	12
Former Kingfisher Building, Dowanfield Road, Cumbernauld (AHP)	NLC	24
Former Work Pensions Building, 1-3 South Circular Rd, Coatbridge (OTS)	NLC	39
Kirkwood Sports Pitches, Coatbridge	NLC	100

Coursington and Draffen St, Motherwell	NLC	60
Jackson Court, Dunbeth, Coatbridge (Phase 1)	NLC	48
High Coats and Dunbeth, Coatbridge (Phase 2)	NLC	122
Former St. Marys Primary School site, Caldercruix	NLC	25
Masonic Hall, Motherwell	NLC	10
Johnston Road, Gartcosh (Phase 2) (AHP)	NLC	12
Main Street, Coatbridge	NLC	49
Cleland Club, Main Street, Cleland	CVHA	28
Parkfoot Street, Kilsyth	CVHA	32
East Avenue, Carfin	CVHA	24
Overtown PS, Overtown	CVHA	17
Bellaville Grove, Chryston	CVHA	24
Mill Loan, Airdrie	CVHA	16
Abernethyn Road, Newmains	Places for People	45
Philip Murray Road, Bellshill	CVHA	48
Leslie Street, Motherwell	CVHA	13
Hollandhurst Road, Coatbridge	CVHA	20
Gartloch Road, Gartcosh	SSHA	22
Ellis Street, Coatbridge	Cairn HA	27
Caledonian Road, Wishaw (ML2 8LP)	Link	21
Heathfield Farm, Gartcosh	SSHA	44
HMRC site, St Mungos, Cumbernauld	SSHA	184
Lennox House, Cumbernauld	SSHA	41
137 Craigneuk Road, Motherwell	Trust	43
Reema Road, Bellshill	Trust	48
Former United Reform Church, Bank Street, Coatbridge	Wheatley	17
Hogg Street, Airdrie	Trust	36
Constarry Road, Croy	Wheatley	15
Berryknowe Avenue, Chryston	CHA	9
East Muir Street, Wishaw	VHS	8
	Total	2588

Key

CGA – Community Growth Area

AHP – Affordable Housing Policy site (off the shelf purchase)

OTS – Off the Shelf Purchase

CVHA – Clyde Valley Housing Association

SSHA – Sanctuary Scotland Housing Association

CHA – Caledonian Housing Association

VHS – Veterans Housing Scotland

Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2024/25-2028/29

New Priorities

Project	Developer	No. of Units
Empty Home Purchase Scheme	NLC	250
St Brigids PS, Newmains	NLC	35
Pentland School, Tay St, Coatbridge	NLC	16
Dalzell Drive, Motherwell	NLC	24
Portland HS, 31-33 Kildonan St, Coatbridge	NLC	16
Prospecthill Road, Ravenscraig (OTS)	NLC	23
Torrance Park, Newarthill (OTS)	NLC	14
Springhill Road, Shotts (OTS)	NLC	22
Castlecary Road, Cumbernauld	Link	43
Chryston Bowling Club, Chryston	CVHA	18
	Total	461

Key

OTS – Off the Shelf Purchase

CVHA – Clyde Valley Housing Association