



Falkirk Council
Corporate & Housing Services

Local Housing Strategy 2011-2016

2014/2015 UPDATE

Please note the information obtained for this report is provided by a variety of sources that become available at various times throughout the year.

Outcome No.		Actions	Actions complete	%
1	Best use is made of the existing and new affordable housing to address local needs	10	10	100%
2	Advice and information is provided on a range of affordable housing options in order to prevent homelessness	9	8	89%
3	People with disabilities are able to adapt their homes or have the information they need to make appropriate housing choices	8	8	100%
4	Housing support services are provided to help people live independently	6	6	100%
5	The condition and sustainability of housing is improved and measures put in place to address fuel poverty	14	14	100%
6	All rented housing is managed effectively and efficiently	12	9	75%
		59	55	93%

Source: Local Housing Strategy 2011-2016 Outcomes Template

Action	Reason Action is not met
Action 19 Social rented landlords increase mainstream lets to 50% to statutory homeless applicants with right to permanent accommodation to 50% by 2013 in line with the Scottish Government requirements	This action has been impacted on by policy changes. The introduction of Housing Options interviews has seen a decrease in the numbers presenting as homeless, which in turn has seen a reduction in the percentage of lets to homeless applicants
Action 50 Social rented landlords set up a project group to take forward the development of a Common Housing Register (CHR)	There is a facility on Falkirk Council's website which allows applicants to advise if they are interested in housing with the main general needs RSLs in the area. The applicant's details are passed onto the relevant RSL and they contact the applicant directly.
Action 51 The project group explores the software for a CHR based on the annual list of all applicants for social rented housing	Leads in from above
Action 52 The project group works to increase the number of partners on the CHR	Leads in from above

Source: Local Housing Strategy 2011-2016 Outcomes Template

Falkirk Council Local Housing Strategy Update 2014/15.

Falkirk Council's Local Housing Strategy received full Committee approval on 28th November 2011. The Local Housing Strategy Action Update provides an annual account of the progress made and our commitment towards achieving our six Local Housing Strategic Outcomes.

Outcomes:

1. Best use of the existing and new affordable housing to address local need.
2. Advice and information is provided on a range of affordable housing options in order to prevent homelessness.
3. People with disabilities are able to adapt their homes or have information they need to make appropriate housing choices.
4. Housing support services are provided to help people live independently.
5. The condition and sustainability of housing is improved and measures put in place to address fuel poverty.
6. All rented housing is managed effectively and efficiently.

Since the publication of the Local Housing Strategy in 2011 the housing strategic landscape has changed. This has had an adverse effect on the way our front line services are currently delivered. The most significant challenges to affect our housing landscape include the uncertain economic climate, the housing market, Welfare Reform in particular Universal Credit, an increasing elderly population and significant reduction in public spending.

Falkirk Council has responded to these challenges by developing a flexible and responsive approach in delivering the six strategic outcomes alongside striving to continue to provide quality services to customers. The impact of these challenges will inevitably affect the housing landscape across all tenures and will continue to place further demand on an already pressured social rented housing sector.

The Action Plan has been designed to drive the Strategy's six outcomes and due to the challenges highlighted above some actions may require to be re-evaluated due to factors out with the control of key stakeholders. The monitoring, evaluation and reporting arrangements currently in place are adaptable and robust enough to respond to the current landscape and while individual actions may require to be amended, the Vision remains: **Homes for Now; Homes for the Future.**

It is important to add that the Update is all tenure and draws on a variety of different sources released in various timeframes.

OUTCOME 1. Best Use is made of the existing and new affordable housing to address local needs.

Action	Update
<p>1. Provide new social rented housing including social rented, low cost home ownership, mid-market rent, properties for people with disabilities</p>	<p><u>Falkirk Council.</u> The Council’s total stock figure has risen from 16,175 in 2013/14 to 16,328 in 2014/15, which is a net gain of 153 properties. The changes to the stock figure in 2014/15 comprises the following :</p> <p><u>243 - Acquisitions/Additions to Stock</u> 144 - New council homes were completed in 2014-15. A total of £18m was invested, supported by £4.25m of grant funding from the Scottish Government. A breakdown of the 144 new homes, by project, is detailed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40 units – Parkhall Drive, Maddiston Falkirk; • 24 units– Merchiston Road Phase 1, Falkirk; • 24 units - Windsor Road, Falkirk; • 56 units - Tinto Drive, Grangemouth. <p>10 - New council homes developed by refurbishing the ground floor at 3 high rise flats. 77 – Properties acquired through the Buy back initiative. 11 - Mortgage to Rent (MTR) properties acquired. 1 – Property transferred to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA)</p> <p><u>90 - Stock Deductions/Disposals</u> 87 – Right to Buys sales 2 – Reconfigured units as part of the remodelling of flats at Kersiebank Avenue. 1 – Reclassified as a commercial HRA asset.</p> <p><u>Link</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 units – Auchincloch, Banknock – completed in March 2015 social rented units includes 2 x 2 bed wheelchair bungalows, 1 x 3 bed bungalow) <p><u>Lorretto</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 35 units – Glenburn Road, Hallglen – social rented units includes 4 x 5 bed properties.

<p>2. Continue to participate in Scottish Government initiatives (such as the NHT) to increase affordable housing supply</p>	<p>There are no NHT developments currently in development for 2014/15.</p>
<p>3. Consider purchasing former Council or RSL properties when they become available for sale (larger properties if cost effective) and rationalising flatted accommodation (links to blocks where Council majority/ minority landlord also if cost effective)</p>	<p>Since Falkirk Council Buy Back Scheme was granted committee approval on 12/2/2013, 69 properties were acquired 2013/14, 77 in 2014/15 and 45 properties from the period April 2015 to September 2015. Currently on target to achieve the 90 property target set for 2015/16.</p>
<p>4. Falkirk Council Corporate and Housing Services (FC C&N) and RSL partners will explore the potential of a pressured area status bid in 2012</p>	<p>The Scottish Government have announced the Right to Buy will be abolished for all tenants on 1st August 2016. There is no longer a requirement to pursue a Pressured Area Status bid.</p>
<p>5. Falkirk Council (C&N) and Housing Associations review partnership agreements annually in order to monitor working relationships which inform the annual LHS update and the SHIP</p>	<p>A Partnership Agreement was drafted and discussed by the Strategic Housing Group, however, it was agreed that the best way to progress joint working was through the Strategic Housing Group rather than through a written agreement.</p>
<p>6. Increase the supply of larger homes in the social rented sector by offering incentives to people under-occupying larger properties to downsize, add extensions to existing properties, convert properties and build a proportion of larger houses in Council and RSL development programmes</p>	<p>Extensions and conversions have proved to be a complex and costly option to meet tenant's needs, therefore the Buy Back scheme has been extended to larger properties which will provide a less complex and more cost –effective option. A key criteria for purchasing larger properties will be to identify properties in locations with over-crowding need.</p> <p>40 new larger homes were completed through the Council's new build programme in 2014-15, comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 x 5apt/6p accessible homes at Parkhall Drive; • 8 x 5apt/6p accessible homes at Windsor Road; • 4 x 5apt/6p accessible homes at Merchiston Rd, Phase 1; • 12 x 5apt/7p accessible homes at Tinto Drive. <p><u>Conversions.</u></p> <p>The refurbishment of Kersiebank Avenue consisted of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 units refurbished for mainstream accommodation • 14 units refurbished for elderly accommodation – 2 units were lost in this block as they were combined to make larger properties and a lift was also installed.

	<p>The Tenants' Incentive Scheme which was introduced in April 2013 to try and encourage tenants' living in properties which are too big for them to move to smaller properties has continued. During 2014/15, grants were paid to 15 applicants that moved to smaller properties. The Council made payments of £30,000 of which £5,000 was used to pay housing debt. An analysis of the scheme and the outcomes will be included in the Allocations Outcomes Report.</p>
7. Provide advice and information in a range of formats and from a range of providers to ensure it is compliant with the National Standards and is available to all groups including minority ethnic groups, young people and those with disabilities	<p>Two online tools have been developed through the East Hub and are now accessible online at www.eastscotlandhousingoptions.co.uk. Members of the public can use the self-assessment tool to identify housing options and the homechoice tool to search available private lets in the Falkirk area and in other Hub member authorities. Landlords can access homechoice to advertise their properties. A formal publicity launch is to be arranged.</p>
8. Develop a new build database to record developers models re affordable housing	<p>A new database has been developed and updated monthly recording the number of development models and initiatives, for example shared equity schemes advertised by developers, in the local area.</p>
9. Participate in the Scottish Government/ Shelter initiative re empty homes	<p>In 2014/15, the partnership with Shelter returned 61 long term empty private homes generating c£30k of Council Tax revenues for Falkirk Council. Other Falkirk Council staff also assisted with the project, bringing the number of returned from long term empty private properties in the Falkirk Council area to over 100 in 2014/15. Engagement was made with 485 homeowners.</p> <p>Falkirk Council was allocated £100,000 of Empty Homes Loan Funding by the Scottish Government to bring 10 empty properties back into use in 2013; All homes renovated with the fund have to be made available for affordable housing for at least five years - either for social rent, intermediate (mid-market) rent, shared equity or for use in a private sector leasing scheme via the private sector leasing scheme. As the PSL Scheme is no longer an option, the EHO continues to investigate alternative avenues to encourage owners to use the loan fund.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council's Empty Homes Officer won Scottish Empty Homes Champion of the Year Award in 2014 from Scottish Empty Homes Champion of the Year Award • The Empty Homes Project won Falkirk Council Celebrating Success Service Improvement of the Year Award in 2014. • In 2015, the project won the "Best use of media" award in the Scottish Empty Homes Champion of the Year Award 2015.
10. Develop an Empty Homes Plan	<p>An Empty Homes plan was developed and approved by Executive Committee on 19th August 2014.</p>



**Outcome 1
Indicators**

1. Best use is made of the existing and new affordable housing to address local needs	Baseline	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Target	Progress
Number of new houses across all tenures	499	345	401	393	617	725	
Council refurbishment*		2	10	0	0	32	
Council new build	12	84	36	16	154	100	
RSL new build	116	56	42	0	51		
New build advertised for sale below affordable threshold	-	-	123	102	67		
Private Sector Leasing	100	-	68	70	70		
Increase provision of accommodation to meet the needs of wheelchair users (<i>totals included in overall new build above</i>)	16 - Amenity 1 - Wheelchair	79 - Amenity 2 - Wheelchair	24 - Amenity 12 "accessible"	105 Accessible (suitable for wheelchair users)	99 Accessible (suitable for wheelchair users)	Annual increase of 4 amenity and 11 wheelchair	
Number of Falkirk Council Mortgage to Rent applications completed	15	23	18	9	11		
Number of RSL Mortgage to Rent applications completed	13	17	19	14	8	133	
Mid-Market Rent			10	0	0		
National Housing Trust				0	0		

			27			
Number of buy back properties concluded and tenanted			42 (in 2013)	69	77	
Number of empty homes	1238	1638	914	746	1070	Reduce
Number of empty homes back into use			27	45	141	1

***Refurbishment:** houses acquired by housing associations and refurbished either for rent or low cost home ownership. Refurbishment of private dwellings funded wholly or partly through the Affordable Housing Investment Programme. Available from: www.gov.scot/About/Performance/scotPerforms/TechNotes/newhomes

Outcome 2 Advice and Information is provided on a range of affordable housing options in order to prevent homelessness	
Action	Update
11. Social rented landlords work together to prevent homelessness wherever possible through a range of positive interventions such as maximising income, assisting people to deal with debts and providing family mediation services	Monitoring arrangements are in place to identify all those at risk of homelessness through Social Rented landlords and mortgage lenders via Section 11 & Section 14 notifications. Each individual client is contacted and offered money advice to assist with prevention of homelessness. Family mediation service is open to all to prevent homelessness. The Service receives referrals from Social Work and Education across tenure type, as well as from Access to Housing. Information leaflets and posters have been widely circulated to raise awareness. 154 referrals were made to the Family Mediation Service in 2014/15.
12. Social rented landlords work together to increase awareness of the range of local affordable housing options available by rolling out the housing options approach	Housing options interviews are available at all neighbourhood offices. A housing options diagnostic tool is now available online at www.eastscotlandhousingoptions.co.uk .
13. RSL partners supply the necessary information and data requested by Falkirk Council to meet the Council's strategic responsibilities set out by the Scottish Government. This relates to RSL pro-formas which collect information and data for the Single Outcome Agreement, Equalities Impact Assessments for the SHIP, monitoring data for the HNDA and LHS and rolling out the housing options approach. Information and data required by Falkirk Council is solely for statistical purposes and therefore does not impinge on the Data Protection Act.	The annual RSL proforma request was made in October 2014. Completed information was received early 2015 and analysed together with Council information to produce the Annual RSL/Falkirk Council Stock Information Report 2013/14. The information requested includes stock information, house type and size, waiting list times, relets, voids, disabled adaptations and equalities monitoring. This information assists to identify future service delivery priorities, in addition to providing housing advice and information for people wishing to find housing in the local area. Currently considering Data Sharing Agreements with RSLs as a first step towards developing better partnership working and improving data sharing between housing providers. This will be discussed at future Strategic Housing Group meetings.

<p>14. Falkirk Council C&N collate all information and data supplied by RSLs and include comparison Council data and feed it back annually to RSLs.</p>	<p>The completed RSL/Falkirk Council Stock Information 2012/13 was issued to RSLs in July 2015.</p> <p>A further RSL pro-forma request was issued in October 2015 for data on 2015/16, to enable Falkirk Council to meet its strategic commitments laid down by the Scottish Government.</p>
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<p>15. Falkirk Council C&N work in partnership to develop a range of housing support options for homeless people with complex needs with Social Work and Health.</p>	<p>Access to Housing provides generic housing support, however where it is identified that a client has additional needs we will work in partnership with all relevant agencies to ensure a person centred approach in meeting the needs of clients.</p> <p>A review of hospital discharge protocol completed and a new protocol implemented in May 2014.</p> <p>A prison outreach assessment officer post has been created to ensure advice and assistance can be provided to prisoners during incarceration and support needs identified and with relevant services and/or suitable accommodation made available on release.</p>
<p>16. All RSLs comply with Section 14(5A) (notice to local authority of proceedings for possession of a house let on a Scottish secure tenancy) of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 (asp 10) and demonstrate to the Council they have taken steps to avoid their tenants becoming homeless</p>	<p>A robust monitoring process is in place which documents Section 14 (5A) notifications. This is reviewed quarterly to ensure compliance with legislation and good practice.</p>
<p>17. Falkirk Council and RSLs have in place section 5 agreements</p>	<p>Falkirk Council has Section 5 Agreements in place with Paragon, Kingdom, Loretto and Bield. Link operates Choice Based lettings and where an applicant has been awarded Homelessness priority, Link will award a Gold Pass. In practice, due to the good working relationship with the local RSLs, the Council have rarely required to use Section 5 referrals as the RSLs accept homeless applicants as nominations.</p>
<p>18. Falkirk Council and RSLs have in place nominations agreements</p>	<p>Nomination Agreements are in place with all major RSLs in the area. Increasingly, when we are requested to nominate for a vacant property, the property is advertised in HomeSpot (Falkirk Council's Choice Based lettings policy) and applicants can decide if they want to bid for it.</p>
<p>19. Social rented landlords increase mainstream lets to 50% to statutory homeless applicants with right to permanent accommodation to 50% by 2013 in line with the Scottish Government requirements</p>	<p>This action has been impacted on by policy changes. The introduction of Housing Options interviews has seen a decrease in the numbers presenting as homeless, which in turn has seen a reduction in the percentage of lets to homeless applicants.</p>

Outcome 2 Indicators

2. Advice and information is provided on a range of affordable housing options in order to prevent homelessness	Baseline	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Target	Progress
Numbers presenting as homeless	2323	1188	1089	1043	1206	1161	
% assessed as homeless priority	84%	90%	89%	(Abolition of Priority Need) (Scotland) Order 2012 information no longer collected.			
% of local authority mainstream lets allocated to homeless households	48%	40%	40%	34%	32%	50%	
% of available lets within the RSL sector allocated to homeless households	28%	32%	24%	19%	13.4%	50%	
% of homeless applicants who find lets in the private rented sector	4%	4.90%	6.30%	4.3%	3.2%	6%	
% of applicants the LA has a duty to house where duty is discharged through the private rented sector (Section 32a)	0	0	0	0	0	Increase	
Average length of stay in: B&B accommodation	34	36	23	55	0	Reduce	
Average length of stay in: Temp accommodation	138	181	159	130	109	138 days	
Average length of stay in: Interim	99	102	73.3	66	96.5	99	

accommodation							
Average length of stay in: RSL temp accommodation	107	11	193	125	106	164 days	
% of homeless tenancies sustained for 12 months	92.2%	88.1%	87.60%	82.5%	86.9%	90%*	

* Target changed from 95% (January 2016)

2. Advice and information is provided on a range of affordable housing options in order to prevent homelessness	Baseline	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Target	Progress
Number of referrals for housing support	262	334	356	620	660	262	
Number of people in supported accommodation	140	160	148	260	132	No target required. Dependant of the needs of each applicant presenting.	
Number of homeless applicants provided with floating support	220		338	This is being progressed with the Housing Support Co-ordinator	Access to Housing no longer require to report on this action		



Outcome 3 People with disabilities are able to adapt their homes or have information they need to make appropriate housing choices.

Action	Update
<p>20. Participate in the accessible housing register being developed by Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living (GCIL). (12.)</p>	<p>The Health and Social Care Integration agenda has impacted on progression of this action. However, this is being taken forward through the Housing Contribution Statement recommendation around specialist advice and information services. This is being progressed through the Integration Joint Board (IJB) sub group progressing the Housing Contribution Statement. This sub group will report to the IJB in April 2016.</p>
<p>21. Social rented landlords try to ensure properties with disabled adaptations are allocated to those who need them</p>	<p>All properties which have been adapted are advertised in HomeSpot as “Adapted” and only applicants who have had a Functional Needs Assessment carried out and have a recommendation for a property with specific facilities such as a shower or a ramp can bid for these properties.</p> <p>In 2014/15, 230 adapted properties were let to applicants who needed a property with adaptations. 67 Housing with Care properties were let to applicants with a recommendation that they need some form of sheltered housing.</p>
<p>22. Explore the potential to redesign properties in the social rented sector to meet the needs of people with physical disabilities</p>	<p>For 2014/15 a budget of c. £1.1m was committed towards adapting properties for people with disabilities or the elderly to meet their identified needs allowing them to remain in their homes.</p> <p>Registered Social Landlords also receive money for adaptations from the Scottish Government that can be used for housing stock held within the Falkirk Council area.</p> <p>The Change Fund project finished in February 2015 and in anticipation of this in late 2014 a bid was submitted to the Scottish Government to take part in one of 5 demonstration sites. These sites aimed to progress the work and recommendations of the National Disabled Adaptations Working Group. Falkirk was successful in this bid and became one of the test sites.</p> <p>Known locally as Adapting for Change the following have been achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practitioners working in the statutory agencies have agreed definitions of adaptations to include minor, moderate, major and major complex • Pathways to adaptations have been mapped • Proposals have been agreed to set up a complex cases panel to make decisions on major complex adaptations. <p>Proposals have been developed to realign the roles of Occupational Therapists (OTs) within Social Work Adult Services and the NHS. In addition proposals have been developed to train a range of staff</p>

	<p>across health, Social Work Adult Services and NHS to carry out assessments for minor adaptations to enable OTs to concentrate on more complex cases.</p> <p>Funding was provided with £25,000 from the Joint Improvement Team (JIT) and £69,000 from the Integrated Care Fund.</p>
<p>23. Develop specific housing advice and information for older people and those with physical disabilities so that they are better informed about their housing options</p>	<p>Updated information for the Small Repair and Handy Person Service is available online. The Electrical pilot continued during 2014/15 with the handyperson element still accessible by all tenures during 2014/15. This pilot will continue in 2015/16.</p> <p>There is still a gap in service provision for housing options advice for older people, however, work is ongoing as part of the Housing Contribution Statement to progress this. In the meantime we are referring potential complex adaptation cases to the Charity Housing Options Scotland for detailed advice on housing options and adaptations.</p>
<p>24. Develop a Housing Plan for Older People with Social Work and Health that takes account of people living longer and housing expectations and aspirations in the 21st Century</p>	<p>An Older People's Housing Plan has been completed and has been used to inform the Housing Contribution Statement which has been included in the Integrated Joint Board's Strategic Plan.</p>
<p>25. Review with Social Work Services current provision of specialist accommodation for people with learning disabilities and develop appropriate models for future provision</p>	<p>Access to Housing provides generic supported accommodation focussing on tenancy sustainment. Where a client had additional needs we will work in partnership with all relevant agencies, however clients with profound and enduring learning difficulties would be accommodated in specialist supported accommodation by Social Work. Discussion are ongoing with the Health & Social Services in relation to the future service provision as part of the Housing Contribution Statment</p>
<p>26. Explore equity release schemes with the voluntary sector</p>	<p>This is being taken progressed by Link Group's Help to Adapt Project.</p>

Outcome 3 Indicators

3. People with disabilities are able to adapt their homes or have the information they need to make appropriate housing choices	Baseline	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Target	Progress
Council budget for disabled adaptations	£1,143,500	£1,025,810	£1,066,840	£1,109,510	£1,138,264	Maintain	
RSL budget for disabled adaptations	£253,000	£183,000	Not available	£258,059	£200,305	Increase % of national grant amount	
Council properties with disabled adaptations - properties with disabled adaptations	674	1047	1188	1407	1542	Work being carried out by Project Development Officer	
Council properties with disabled adaptations - properties suitable for someone with mobility difficulties	434	677	771	894	1127	As above	
Number of RSL properties with disabled adaptations	90	94	88	119	89	As above	
% of dwellings where adaptations are required by household	7% 08-10		3% 10-12	2% 11-13	2% 12-14	As above	
Number of applicants on the FC register whose home is unsuitable	147	197	242	286	370	As above	
Numbers of applicants on FC register whose home is unsuitable for medical reason/disability and unable to leave hospital?	7	9	12	10	4	As above	
Number of FC applicants who have been assessed as requiring disabled adaptations	708	830	791	832	932	As above	

3. People with disabilities are able to adapt their homes or have the information they need to make appropriate housing choices	Baseline	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Target	Progress
Number applying to RSLs with medical needs				No figures available at present	Being considered at the Strategic Housing Forum	Agreement required in relation to data protection/info sharing protocol before this information can be produced.	

4. Housing support services are provided to help people live independently.	
Action	Action Update
27. Falkirk Council carries out a programme of regular reviews of housing support to ensure that they continue to meet changing needs and offer best value for money	<p>Currently tendering our supported accommodation with a completion date of May 2016. At present a monthly monitoring meeting is held to discuss performance and financial arrangements for all our supported accommodation providers. In addition, Review Officers who regularly review the support provided to clients within each of the facilities ensuring it meets with the strategic objectives of the Council.</p> <p>The current housing support contract has recently been extended by a further year, we have monitoring arrangements in place, undertake monthly operational meetings and quarterly contract meetings.</p>
28. Falkirk Council along with RSL and voluntary sector partners ensure that services are integrated as well as possible and people with complex needs receive joined up services	Although there is formal arrangements in place for integrated services the Council has undertaken training and awareness sessions with all local RSLs to the Housing Support service and provided routes of referral. Again we would identify all key stakeholders and work in partnership to ensure identified needs were met
29. Falkirk Council considers the viability of breaking down the age band of those 65+ receiving housing support (65-75, 75+) in order to take account of national reporting shifts due to a correlation between old age and disability.	This is minimal as would be addressed via personal care and community care assessments not housing support.
30. 4.4/a Review the provision of specialist supported accommodation for young people and for people with learning disabilities	Recent review of supported accommodation has been undertaken and currently in process of writing specification which will take account of young people. As advised we provide generic supported accommodation therefore no specific accommodation will be identified for learning disabilities – this is a Social Work function.
31. Review the provision of refuge accommodation for women and children to ensure provision meets current needs and expectations	Research has shown that refuge accommodation is not the most appropriate way of accommodating those fleeing an abusive situation. We have a range of dispersed accommodation across the area that can the meet the needs of women and children. The recent supported accommodation review has also identified a requirement for supported accommodation for women and families and our future provision will meet this need
32. Carry out research into the extent of male domestic abuse in the Council area and investigate appropriate responses	Anecdotal information suggests male domestic abuse is not an issue with Falkirk Council and current provision continues to meet the needs of males experiencing domestic abuse. Work is ongoing with Public Protection partners to ensure that the services currently provided are sufficient.

Outcome 4 Indicators

4. Housing support services are provided to help people live independently	Baseline	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Target	Progress
Total number of hours of housing support provided to 65+	1,773	1,778	1,837	Social Work Services no longer require to report on this action	Social Work Services no longer require to report on this action	+ 5%	
Total number of hours of homecare provided to 65+	13,675	12,530	12,506	13,951	13,150.71	+ 5%	
Total number of people with community alarms at end of year	5,814	5,763	4,216	4,124	4,484	+ 5%	

Outcome 5. The condition and sustainability of housing is improved and measures put in place to address fuel poverty.

Action	Action Update
33. Social rented landlords meet the SHQS by 2015	<p><u>Falkirk Council.</u></p> <p>We consider the Council has met the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) requirements in full, in that 100% of all properties that can be upgraded have been upgraded, excluding exemptions and abeyances as defined in the guidance. However, the most recent ARC was submitted in May 2015, for the reporting year 2014/15, and reported that 82.8% of all Council houses fully met the SHQS by the end of March 2015.</p> <p>In terms of SHQS reporting it should be noted that recording parameters have changed this year. The SHQS guidance recognises there will inevitably be situations where homes cannot be brought up to the SHQS due to a range of technical and social reasons i.e.: factors out with the direct control of the Council. Technical reasons are referred to as ‘Exemptions’ and social reasons as ‘Abeyances’. The Council was unable to bring 17.2% of our houses up to the SHQS due to factors out with our control. These factors included no access, tenant refusals and technical issues associated with installing energy efficiency measures.</p> <p>Work will continue to be undertaken in relation to identify measures to reduce the number of properties defined as exemptions and abeyances and thereby improve the standard of these properties. It is anticipated our overall compliance will continue to be monitored through the ARC beyond 2015. It is however not clear what the future performance measure for Housing Quality Standard will be defined as.</p> <p>£51.45m has been allocated in 2015/16 to 2017/18 towards ensuring the Council’s stock continues to meet the SHQS. This will also allow for investment towards the new Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH) which has a target date of 31 December 2020.</p> <p><u>Registered Social Landlords.</u></p> <p>There are 15 Registered Social Landlords that collectively have 3510 units within the Falkirk Council area with 3346 meeting the SHQS (95%).</p> <p>The 15 RSLs with housing stock in the area provided the following information in relation to any planned capital works they may be carrying out in 2016. Kingdom Housing Association and Blackwood Housing Association confirmed they have no capital works being carried out to their housing stock in 2016. Key Housing Association could not confirm at the time the request was made</p>

	<p>(November 3015) if capital works were planned for 2016. Ark, Barony, Cairn, Castle Rock Edinvar and West of Scotland Housing Association gave no indication whether capital works were planned for 2016.</p> <p>The remaining RSLs (Hanover, Horizon, Loretto, Paragon and Weslo Housing Management) confirmed they will be carrying out various planned capital works in 2016 on their Falkirk stock. These works to include bathroom replacement, boiler replacement, kitchen installations, central heating systems installed, replacement doors and windows, installation of extractor fans, consumer units fitted, ventilation work, electrical work, roofing work and external rendering and painting.</p>
<p>34. Continue to invest in repair and improvement programmes in respect of the external “weather envelope” of properties (roofs/walls) to ensure that they are wind and watertight</p>	<p>The 3 year Housing Investment Programme (HIP) plans to investment £26.1m on roughcasting, external wall insulation and re-roofing. This will allow improvements to c. 2,300 properties.</p>
<p>35. Continue to invest in the installation of central heating and insulation measures in Council properties to improve the energy efficiency of the stock and reduce fuel poverty</p>	<p><u>Heating Replacement</u> The 3 year HIP plans to investment £6.6m on replacement heating and heating controls. This will allow improvements to around c. 2,500 properties.</p> <p><u>Insulation Measures</u> Insulation improvements will continue to be considered when investment is being carried out to the weather envelope.</p> <p><u>Fuel Poverty.</u> The HIP included the following measures which improved the energy efficiency of Council properties to meet the SHQS/ESSH and which in turn reduce fuel poverty:</p> <p><u>External wall insulation</u> to 130 homes with a non-traditional construction in fuel poor areas. Participating owners in mixed tenure blocks benefited from Scottish Government Home Energy Efficiency Programme for Scotland (HEEPS) funding.</p> <p><u>Over-cladding of the high rise blocks</u> in Callendar Park Estate. 168 properties in Marshall and Leishman Towers were insulated using ECO funding from Scottish Power which completed in Spring 2014. Owners received ECO funding and HEEPS funding. Work completed in Spring 2015 on 84 properties in Symon Tower, the final high rise block to be insulated in the Park. ECO funding was provided by Npower and again the owners received ECO and HEEPS funding.</p>

Cavity wall insulation to 30 tenants and 3 owners as part of a Council project to ensure as many homes as possible met the SHQS. In addition to this 82 tenants and 2 owners had loft insulation installed up to 300mm.

Design Feasibility Study CHP - The Council secured a grant from Energy Savings Trust in 2014/15 towards the costs of a DFS to extend the CHP system in the Callendar Park Estate. A draft report has been developed and reviewed for final report and proposed recommendation.

Partnerships tackling Fuel Poverty Across All Tenures

Partnership working with Home Energy Scotland (HES) continued with tenants and owners being signposted to HES for impartial help and advice.

Outreach events with HES supported the delivery of HEEPS funded external wall insulation projects. Energy advice and signposting to HES is included on the Plasma screens in One Stop Shops.

We continue to attend Central Fuel Forum to highlight areas of concern, develop new projects and network with partners e.g. Citizens Advice Scotland, Energy Savings Trust etc.

HES also administer the Central Heating Loans Scheme for owners on behalf of Falkirk, Stirling and Clackmannanshire Councils, reporting on progress annually.

External Funding

ECO funding agreement with Npower continued into its second year throughout 2014/15 covering external wall, over cladding and cavity and loft insulation projects.

£1.73m HEEPS Funding for owner occupiers properties in fuel poverty areas was awarded to the Council for 2014/15. Working in partnership with Paragon Housing Association and their Contractor, Everwarm to install external wall insulation, Scottish and Southern Energy to install heating in off-grid areas and the Council's Contractor, Everwarm to install cavity wall and loft insulation. Full spend has been achieved.

Energy efficiency.

Stock improvements in the Council and private sectors have improved energy efficiency and

	reduced fuel poverty. External funding streams such as ECO and HEEPS have been maximised to include as many homes as possible.
36. Continue to invest in rewiring and kitchen/bathroom replacement to make homes more comfortable and suitable for 21 st Century living.	<p>The 3 year HIP includes:</p> <p>£9m of investment for electrical work and installing carbon monoxide detectors.</p> <p>£6.6m of investment is planned for replacement kitchens and bathrooms.</p> <p>This will allow improvements to around c. 4,000 properties.</p>
37. Continue to invest in controlled door entry systems in tenement properties to improve security	A programme of installing controlled door entry systems was completed in 2014/15, with the exception of where the Council is not in the majority and where owner occupiers do not want to participate.
38. Advice and information is given in a range of formats to groups most likely to be a risk from fuel poverty	<p>As noted at(section 5/3a) we have made energy advice available in a range of formats throughout 2104/15 including:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant Information Pack • Plasma screens in One Stop Shops • News Items in Falkirk Council News • Information cards used by front line staff to signpost clients to Home Energy Scotland. • “Get ready for Winter” booklet in Council venues • Partnership events with Home Energy Scotland (HES) to promote the delivery of insulation programmes and subsidies e.g. HEEPS project open days, Landlord Forums. • Web site pages are under development. <p>Home Energy Scotland operates a Freephone telephone number offering free, impartial energy efficiency advice. They can provide access to grants and supported the Council by handling calls for the Cavity and Loft Insulation programme for Council tenants and qualifying owners.</p>
39. Develop a comprehensive database of private sector BTS housing by 2015	Environmental Health has forwarded addresses which have a works notice attached to them. These have been used to set up a database which will be sent back to Environmental Health to confirm if works notice is due to BTS. Future notices re BTS will be added to the Building Standards Register by Environmental Health. This has not been done as yet and no date set to complete by Environmental Health.

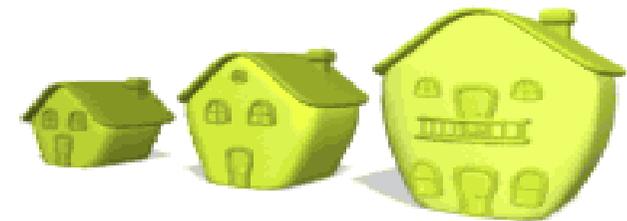
<p>40. Raise awareness of owners of the need to maintain private sector housing on a continuous basis</p>	<p>Raised awareness of the need to maintain private housing in 2014/15 by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care and Repair Service continued to facilitate repairs and adaptations • Small Repair Handyperson Service, part of Care & Repair, includes joiner, plumber and pilot electrical service, advertised via leaflets and web pages • Scheme of Assistance advice and information service for homeowners, landlords and private tenants covers property conditions and repairs. Our 2014/15 Housing Statistical Annual Return to the Scottish Government reported: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Information = 4,791 Leaflets/ web hits on private sector pages on communal repairs, Scheme of Assistance and BTS housing – Advice/Practical Assistance = 11,710 cases – Grants = 29 Repair grants, 125 Disabled Adaptations grants • Private housing webpages provide information to Landlords & Private Tenants about the Repairing Standard in the Private Rented Sector • “Common Repairs Checklist” and “Below Tolerable Standard” leaflets are available on our website and Council offices • ‘Common Repair, Common Sense’ Booklets are issued with Capital Works letters to owners • Landlord Forums – helped raise awareness of condition issues and funding to improve energy efficiency within the Private Rented Sector.
<p>41. Implement a programme of continuous surveys to ensure stock condition information is up to date</p>	<p>Updating and refreshing stock condition information will improve the quality of the information held on the Asset Management Database and inform future investment decisions.</p> <p>In order to continue and refine the Council’s stock condition information, we have a rolling programme of in-house stock condition surveys over a 5 year cycle in conjunction with our cyclical maintenance programme. In addition to this we have introduced Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) elements within our post inspection of our void properties and during 2015-16 we will establish a standardised energy survey for each of our archetypes.</p>
<p>42. Explore other heating options in areas that do not currently have a gas supply in order to meet the SHQS and reduce fuel poverty</p>	<p>The extension of the gas network was completed in 2014/15, which allowed properties to have efficient gas heating systems installed.</p> <p>A programme of switching solid fuel heating to a more energy efficient Electric Wet System for properties out with the existing gas network is complete.</p>
<p>43. Investigate the feasibility of achieving economies in fuel costs in grouped accommodation such as housing with care schemes</p>	<p>The extension of the Combined Heat and Power (CHP) or the installation of a district heating system continues to be investigated to establish the technical and economic viability of carrying out this work to the high flats that are not currently connected.</p>

<p>44. Explore the feasibility of using excess heat generated from a biomass plant in Grangemouth as a by-product of a scheme being investigated by Forth Ports and Scottish and Southern Energy</p>	<p>The joint work with Forth Ports and SSE did not progress. However Falkirk Council has secured consultants employed through Economic Development and working in conjunction with the Scottish Government to explore the feasibility.</p>
<p>45. Corporate and Housing Services and Development Services will work together , with the Scottish Government and other partners to deliver the Scheme of Assistance; to enforce standards and to comply with duties in respect of BTS housing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Services and Development Services continued joint work to address BTS properties throughout the area • The Scheme of Assistance 2011-16 aims to use prevention, support, with enforcement as a last resort, to improve conditions • Joint decisions are taken by a corporate Enforcement Panel if assistance fails. To date most problems have been tackled through assistance and a small number of Work Notices have been served with none being enforced and recharged.
<p>46. Falkirk Council will work with local landlords, tenants, home owners, contractors and advice agencies to raise awareness about housing conditions and the Scheme of Assistance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Landlords and Tenants in Stewart Road Falkirk and Links Road Bo'ness and Gleanbervie Drive Grangemouth are areas received intensive support to improve property conditions and back-courts. Other cases are ingoing e.g. Glebe Street, Falkirk. • The Landlords Forum included a speaker from Home Energy Scotland to promote take up of energy efficiency improvement subsidies. • Published articles in Falkirk Council News and the Daily Record about assistance with Empty Homes and Energy Efficiency. • See also 5.8/a and 5.13/a.

Outcome 5 Indicators

5. The condition and sustainability of housing is improved and measures put in place to address fuel poverty	Baseline	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Target	Progress
% of Falkirk Council stock meeting the SHQS	53%	70.5%	80.9%	87.3%	82.79%	100%	
% of RSL stock meeting the SHQS	74%	73.9%	83.1%	93%	95%	100%	
SHQS fails in social housing	69%	63%	68%	52%	55%	100%	
SHQS fails in owner occupied housing	55%	50%	42%	42%	35%	100%	
% Social housing with any disrepair	88%	92%	95%	89%	84%	To meet Scottish average - 85% - 2013	
% Owner occupied housing with any disrepair	82%	81%	80%	76%	73%	To meet Scottish average - 77% - 2013	
% Social housing with urgent disrepair	32%	35%	40%	38%	40%	To be in the top 50% of Councils	
% Owner occupied housing with urgent disrepair	31%	27%	33%	35%	34%	To be in the top 10 performing Councils nationally	
% of homes Below Tolerable Standard (BTS)	3.6% 2009	3.1%	3.7%	1%	1%	Reduce	
Number of individuals accessing the Scheme of Assistance	2,072	14,821	18,614	28,390	16,685	Figure calculations include website hits	

5. The condition and sustainability of housing is improved and measures put in place to address fuel poverty	Baseline	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Target	Progress
% fuel poor social housing	25%	27%	31%	45%	42%	To be in the top 25% of Councils	
% fuel poor owner occupied housing	18%	19%	20%	27%	23%	To be in the top 25% of Councils	
% of pensioners in fuel poverty	34%	29%	39%	50%	42%	To be in the top 5 Councils	



Outcome 6 - All rented housing is managed effectively and efficiently

Action	Action Update
47. All social rented landlords increase awareness amongst with those looking for social rented housing of provision from all social rented landlords with stock in the Falkirk Council area	Housing options advice and assistance is available from numerous locations throughout Falkirk area. Housing options diagnostic tool now available online at www.eastscotlandhousingoptions.co.uk and members of the public can obtain advice by completing the self-assessment.
48. All social rented landlords encourage applicants to register on the list for more than one provider	There is a facility on Falkirk Council’s website which allows applicants to advise if they are interested in housing with the main general needs housing providers. The applicant’s details are passed onto the relevant Housing Associations, and they contact the applicant directly.
49. Falkirk Council annually pull together a total list of all Council and RSL applicants for social rented housing taking account of duplication between providers	Analysis on all applicants wishing to be housed in the area was carried out and the production of the RSL/Falkirk Council Stock Information Report 2013/14 was sent to RSLs in July 2015. Following the publication of the 2013/14 Report, the next annual proforma request for 2014/15 information was issued to RSLs in October 2015.
50. Social rented landlords set up a project group to take forward the development of a Common Housing Register (CHR)	There is a facility on Falkirk Council’s website which allows applicants to advise if they are interested in housing with the main general needs Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) in the area. The applicant’s details are passed onto the relevant RSL and they contact the applicant directly. Further discussion will take place with local RSLs in relation to a CHR during 2016/17.
51. The project group explores the software for a CHR based on the annual list of all applicants for social rented housing	Leads on from Action 50 above.
52. The project group works to increase the number of partners on the CHR	Leads on from Action 50 above
53. Falkirk Council and RSLs develop a protocol on data sharing and the provision of housing advice and information	This has been developed using the online tools which have been developed through the East Hub in relation to Housing Options, etc and are detailed in outcome 1.
54. Falkirk Council and RSLs work to implement partnership agreements between Falkirk Council and all RSLs with stock in Falkirk Council area to ensure an integrated approach to funding bids and the provision of new housing	Currently drafting Data Sharing Agreements with RSLs as a first step towards developing better partnership working. Data Sharing Agreements will also assist with the development and implementation of the Common Housing Register (CHR). This will be discussed at future Strategic Housing Group meetings.
55. All social rented landlords work together to identify applicants at risk of losing their home through anti-social behaviour or rent arrears and	The housing support contract in place with Y- People provides the Tenancy Support Service for Falkirk Council. This has been extended for another year and information detailing the new service was advertised and presented to housing providers throughout the Falkirk area.

offer support	
56. Work with the Private Landlords' Forum to collect information on property sizes and prices in the private rented sector in order to inform housing advice and information materials	<p>The All Tenure Housing Database, Local House Condition Survey 2009 and Census 2011 provide relevant information on Private Rented Sector characteristics.</p> <p>The Council have requested that the Scottish Government's forthcoming Landlord Registration website contains property reference numbers for analysis purposes.</p>
57. Work with the Private Landlords' Forum to consider how public awareness of the private rented sector as a valid housing option can be increased	<p>The Council has continued to source Deposit Guarantee Scheme properties and to use Private Sector Leased properties to alleviate homelessness</p> <p>We have worked in partnership with the Access to Housing Service and other East Hub Local Authorities to introduce an online Housing Options website (East Hub Home Choice), delivering easy access to person advertised lets and housing options advice.</p> <p>East Hub Home Choice Website has been promoted to landlords and letting agents with a soft launch in 2014/15 and planned a full launch in 2015/16</p> <p>We have continued to refer relevant private tenants to our floating support service to help them sustain private tenancies, in response to feedback from the Landlords' Forums</p>
58. Continue to develop the Private Landlords' Forum to help drive up management standards in the private rented sector	<p>Statutory advice on landlord registration is provided to private landlords and tenants, disseminating information on regulatory requirements on property conditions and letting practices</p> <p>The Service has hosted two Landlords Forums in 2014/15 and 2015/16 to deliver free expert advice on management practices. Speakers and topics included: Scottish Association of Landlords (Housing (Scotland) Act 2014/ associated changes and the current private rented tenancy consultation); Private Sector Co-ordinator (policy and practice updates); and Home Energy Scotland (energy assistance for landlords and tenants)</p> <p>Consultation with Private Landlords has been carried out in relation to the quality of our services and this will be included in a future Landlord Forum. Feedback will be used to inform our future forums.</p>

Outcome 6 Indicators

6. All rented housing is managed effectively and efficiently	Baseline	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Target	Progress
% of RSL applicants on the Council list	17.5% 09-10	33%	31%	37%	Awaiting RSL proforma returns	10%	
% of RSL applicants on more than one list	13% 09-10	10%	2%	5%	Awaiting RSL proforma returns	25%	
% of Council applicants on RSL lists	10% 09-10	31%	8%	9%	Awaiting RSL proforma returns	Increase	
% of Council and RSL applicants who had name on both Council and RSL list	25% 09-10	33%	31%	37%	Awaiting RSL proforma returns	Increase	
Number of RSLs on a Common Housing Register (CHR)	1	0	0	0	0	All mainstream lets on CHR	
Number of registered private landlords	4,176	4,567	5,109	5,552	5,605	4,176	
Number of accredited landlords	0	27	28	34	39	0	
Number of rent deposits	85	92	58	38	24	85	
Number of properties available through Mid-Market Rent (MMR)	0	22	27	0	0	0	
Number of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) licences at year end	43	40	35	34	34	43	
Number of HMO licences granted annually	1	0	2	2	2	1	
Enforcement actions taken against poor landlords	0	0	0	0	0	As required	