

WESTERN ISLES LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY 2004-2009

APRIL 2004

LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY OBJECTIVES

Our 5 themes and 14 strategic objectives summarise what we want to achieve between 2004 and 2009. They have been numbered, not ranked, for ease of reference.

Housing Supply

1. Increase the supply of affordable housing by at least 350 units by 2009
2. Bring back into use 15 empty homes to provide affordable accommodation in Greater Stornoway Area by 2009
3. As a matter of priority the Comhairle secure access to land for additional housing

Economic Regeneration

4. Support inward migration of at least 30 households on average per annum
5. Secure at least 5 additional full time job or training opportunities for jobseekers per annum in the construction sector
6. Increase private accommodation targeted at younger economically active households in Greater Stornoway by 50 units as part of a wider area regeneration strategy by 2008

Community Regeneration

7. Strengthen and make better use of sound evidence on links between housing investment and economic/ social development in the Western Isles to inform policy development

Warm Homes

8. Ensure that at least 70% of the social rented stock achieves the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2009
9. Improve stock condition in the private sector by 2009
10. Reduce Fuel Poverty by 50% by 2009

Social Inclusion

11. Provide appropriate housing related solutions to prevent homelessness
12. Increase assistance to all households who become homeless by the introduction of a range of new initiatives by 2009
13. Provide additional and more responsive housing related services to enable vulnerable people to remain in the community
14. Increase the proportion of older people assisted by housing and related services to maintain their independence in their own home or community

Further Information

This Local Housing Strategy and supporting appendices are available on the Comhairle's web site at: www.cne-siar.gov.uk. The Comhairle can also make copies available in Braille, in tape format or in another language if required.

The future development of this strategy relies on the contributions of residents and partners and we welcome your comments. All responses will be reviewed as part of our process for producing the Local Housing Strategy Update in April 2005. A summary paper detailing the main comments and issues raised in response to the contents of this document and how we intend to pursue these matters over the coming months will be published on the Web in the summer of 2004. For further information please contact Matt Bruce with your views at: mbruce@cne-siar.gov.uk

**Foreword by Councillor Norman M MacLeod
Chairman of Housing Committee
Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar**

I am delighted to present the Western Isles Local Housing Strategy which sets out our vision for the future of housing in the Western Isles over the next five years. This first Local Housing Strategy is based on the principle that everyone should be able to have access to a home that meets his or her needs. The Comhairle's vision extends both to existing Western Isles residents and to those that wish to return or relocate here in the future. The regeneration of the islands and how quickly this can be done is therefore dependant on having a balanced supply of appropriate housing.

This Strategy covers all housing tenures within the Western Isles. Whilst the Comhairle has led the development of the Strategy and is responsible for seeing it put into practice, there are also many key partners without whom the preparation of this Strategy could not have been achieved. Their continuing participation is vital to ensure we can make the changes and improvements contained within this document.

Our Strategy has been prepared at a time when the future for the Comhairle's own houses has still to be determined. We have carried out an extensive Option Appraisal on the future ownership of our housing stock. The preferred option to deliver the required investment was Stock Transfer. Potentially Stock Transfer offers the ability to deliver the best investment in the public rented stock. Whilst this decision ultimately rests with tenants through a ballot, stock transfer offers exciting prospects for increased investment in tenants' homes and a positive way forward.

Considerable improvements have been achieved since the Comhairle's last Housing Plan, both in owner occupation and in the public rented sector. Five years ago 1 in 5 houses in the Western Isles fell Below the Tolerable Standard however I can now report that figure has been halved. Investment has been maintained on housing grants for the private sector and additional grant regimes are being introduced. However despite this significant reduction in BTS housing levels it is still much higher than the national figure and therefore much work remains to be done.

Significant improvement to the former Ministry of Defence housing stock in Balivanich has also been achieved. In the last two years we have seen increased investment in additional Housing Association stock and we need to maintain this level of investment to enable us to meet the Objectives contained in this Strategy.

I am aware that preparing this Strategy is just the start. The Comhairle, with its partners, is committed to meeting that challenge and working together to improve housing standards and options across the Western Isles over the next 5 years and beyond. We are at a critical time in the regeneration of the islands and housing is a fundamental part of that process. Working together we can help to create the communities of the future.

I am keen to obtain views on whether the right priorities have been set and all topics affecting housing in the Western Isles have been covered. As usual, feedback is welcome and if you have any comments on this strategy please contact me through the Comhairle offices.

In conclusion I would like to thank all that have participated in and contributed to this Strategy, particularly those who were able to attend the Seminars we held across the islands.

1. INTRODUCTION	7
1.1 Introducing the Western Isles Housing Strategy	7
1.2 Our Vision.....	7
1.3 Who is the Local Housing Strategy for?	7
1.4 National Priorities	8
1.5 Links between LHS and other National and Local Strategy Processes	9
2. THE STRATEGIC THEMES	10
2.1 Theme A - Increase Supply	10
2.2 Theme B - Economic Regeneration	11
2.3 Theme C - Community Regeneration	12
2.4 Theme D - Warm Homes and Improved Housing Conditions.....	13
2.5 Theme E - Social Inclusion.....	15
3. DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE STRATEGIC PROCESS	17
3.1 Working Together	17
3.2 Developing The Evidence Base	18
3.3 Future Strategy Development	18
SECTION 2	20
4 THE LOCAL HOUSING SYSTEM: HOUSING NEEDS AND CHALLENGES.....	20
4.1 The Landscape and Geography of the Western Isles	20
4.2 Economic and Demographic Trends and Prospects	21
4.3 The Local Housing System.....	23
4.4 Responding to Changing Demand	25
4.5 House Conditions and Affordable Warmth.....	28
4.6 Homelessness	31

4.7	Independent Living.....	32
4.8	Conclusion	33
SECTION 3		34
5	SETTING THE STRATEGY	34
5.1	Introduction.....	34
SECTION 4		55
6	RESOURCES TO DELIVER THE STRATEGY.....	55
6.1	Introduction.....	55
6.2	Investment Priorities	55
6.3	Resource Planning: Assumptions, Uncertainties and Risks.....	56
6.4	Landlord Capital Expenditure	56
6.5	Crofters' Building Grants and Loans Scheme (CBGLS)	58
6.6	Development Programme.....	58
6.7	Homelessness Implementation	58
6.8	Supporting People.....	59
6.9	Identifying External Risks.....	59
6.10	Other Resourcing and Capacity Issues	60
6.11	Summary.....	61
7.	MONITORING AND EVALUATING THE STRATEGY	62
7.1	Purpose.....	62
7.2	Responsibilities for Reviewing and Reporting Progress.....	62
Appendix A: Summary of Related Local Policy Documents		77
Appendix B: Contacts for Other Local Planning Processes /Documents		81
Appendix C: Glossary.....		82
Appendix D: Commissioned Research to support LHS Development and List of Supporting Documents		86

1. Introduction

1.1 Introducing the Western Isles Housing Strategy

This is the Western Isles' first Local Housing Strategy.

It sets out our:

- Shared understanding of the emerging housing needs and demands across the Western Isles based on an analysis of housing, demographic and economic issues and a review of national and local policies.
- Strategic themes and objectives and the actions we will take in partnership with others to achieve these objectives

1.2 Our Vision

Our vision is that every resident of the Western Isles is able to live in good quality, warm and affordable homes that meet their needs and that housing contributes to sustaining the economic and social environment. Although the vision is simple, the challenges associated with its delivery are many and complex. To ensure that our objectives and actions over the next five years contribute to the achievement of our vision in the long term, we have focused on 5 key themes:

- ***Increase Supply*** - Improve the responsiveness of both private and social housing sectors to the increasingly diverse range of housing needs and demands of residents across the Western Isles.
- ***Economic Regeneration*** - Maximise the contribution of housing investment to the achievement of our broader economic objectives.
- ***Community Regeneration*** – Enhance the part that housing plays in bidding sustainable communities with safe, secure and attractive environments.
- ***Warm Homes and Improved Housing Conditions*** - Improve house conditions, management standards and eliminate fuel poverty.
- ***Social Inclusion*** - Support vulnerable people by the provision of secure suitable housing and support services to optimise their independence in their community.

1.3 Who is the Local Housing Strategy for?

Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar has a duty under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 to carry out an assessment of housing needs and provision in the Western Isles. This Local Housing Strategy for the years 2004 – 2009 (**LHS**) tells how the Comhairle and its partners aim to meet these housing needs and associated economic and social aims. The LHS deals not only with Council

housing but all housing, including Housing Associations, Owner Occupied and Private Rented sectors.

This strategy is intended to articulate the aims and priorities of the Comhairle over the next five years and to be readily used during that period. It will be reviewed, evaluated and updated during that time. A progress report will be issued every year

The Strategy is to be used by other agencies, Community Councils and local voluntary organisations and groups as the guide setting out how national housing priorities will be addressed in the Western Isles and also the range of issues experienced in the Western Isles

1.4 National Priorities

Section 89 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 requires local authorities to undertake a comprehensive assessment of housing needs and conditions, and to produce strategies to tackle the housing problems in their areas.

These strategies are to be submitted to Scottish Ministers and are required by April 2004.

The Scottish Executive's three national housing priorities are:

Tackling Homelessness

Promoting renewal through community ownership and empowering tenants

Reducing the number of households in Fuel Poverty.

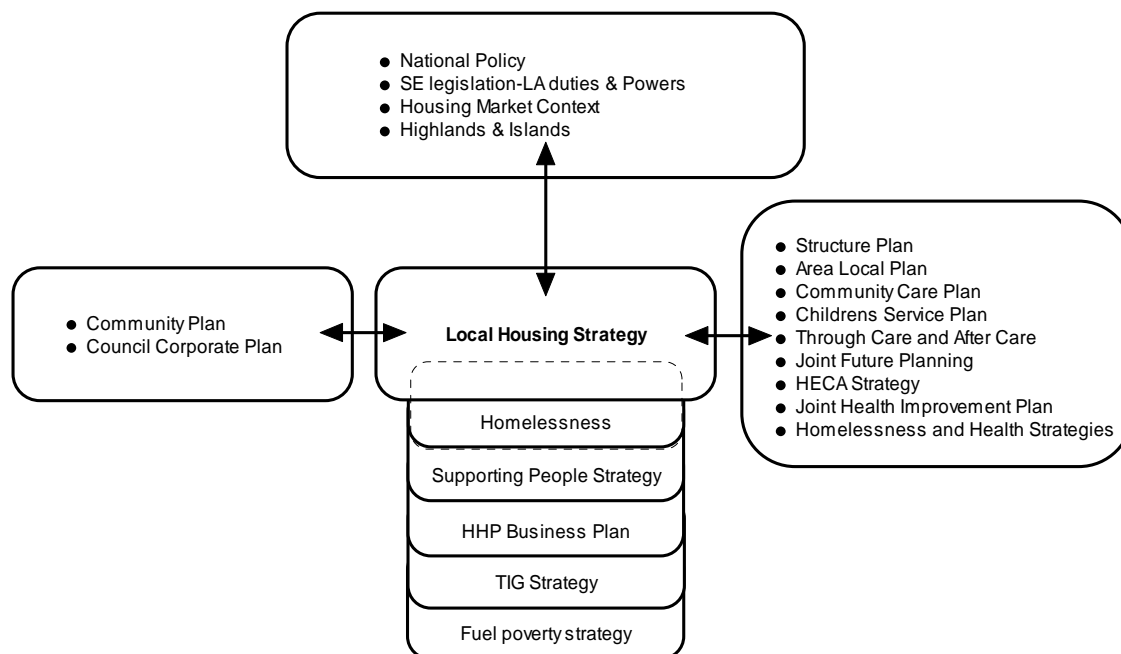
The Scottish Executive is determined to improve the quality of life for all in Scotland. The high level commitments within Social Justice most relevant to housing and wider regeneration are to:

- regenerate our communities, with the aim of building safe, strong communities
- deliver good quality, sustainable and affordable housing for all, with a renewed commitment to have a national housing quality standard
- work with communities to improve their standard of living
- support the voluntary sector

The Scottish Executive is keen to see these key priorities reflected in local housing strategies. Extensive guidance has been provided on the range of topics to be covered within the Strategy document, and also a detailed guide to the basis that the documents will be assessed

1.5 Links between LHS and other National and Local Strategy Processes

The following table shows the range of local and national Planning frameworks to which this Local Housing Strategy must link:



In preparing this Local Housing Strategy we have sought to:

- Ensure that our housing priorities complement and support wider corporate objectives regarding economic competitiveness, community regeneration and social inclusion.
- Take account of national and local policies and targets that provide the broad strategic framework within which we work.

Scottish Executive's Stated Priorities for Housing

- Achieving the Scottish Social Housing Standard, particularly through community ownership
- Tackling homelessness
- Eradicating fuel poverty
- Reducing the number of houses with poor energy efficiency
- Reducing the numbers of houses Below the Tolerable Standard

Appendix A summarises the main local priorities and activities that are detailed in various local plans and strategies that we have prepared in partnership with other agencies.

2. The Strategic Themes

The following paragraphs detail the relevant national and local strategic themes that shaped the development of our Local Housing Strategy.

2.1 Theme A - Increase Supply

Our first theme is concerned with increasing the supply of housing. This covers more than simply aggregate supply; of equal importance is ensuring an appropriate mix of tenure options, house types and sizes in locations that meet the changing demographic patterns in the Western Isles.

The shortage of housing for rent has not become any less acute in recent years, with the Comhairle being unable to build any houses and the Western Isles based Housing Associations having a limited ability to respond to local housing pressures. The demand for rented housing has increased significantly as a result of additional households presenting as homeless.

While the number of new private sector houses being built has increased in the very recent past, these are virtually all being built for individual clients. There remains no regular supply of new housing provided by private sector housing developers – there has been one scheme providing four new units completed in the whole of the Western Isles in the last five years.

The options for buying an existing house are also limited due to the small number of houses being offered for sale by private owners. Although the number of house sales has doubled in Lewis in 2002 compared to average turnover for the last decade, the second hand housing market in the Western Isles is still very limited.

The take up of Right To Buy by the Comhairle's tenants has also increased in the last two years, with 135 houses (over 7% of the Comhairle's remaining stock) being sold. During the same time there were 26 houses added to the social rented sector by the islands' Housing Associations – a net loss to this sector of 109 houses.

Difficulties in securing land suitable for house building that can be serviced at economic rates have resulted in supply problems across all sectors in the recent past. We want to ensure that land supply issues can be resolved both in the Greater Stornoway area and in the more remote communities.

The Western Isles Structure Plan was approved by Scottish Ministers and became operational on 15th December 2003. It provides the framework for all new housing developments. The Structure Plan outlines that future demand will remain largely concentrated in the Greater Stornoway area. No specific land is allocated for housing development within the Structure Plan in order to retain the flexibility to respond to local needs and demands – although new sites will be identified in the forthcoming Western Isles Local Plan.

2.2 Theme B - Economic Regeneration

2.2 (1) Economic Competitiveness

The Scottish Executive's overarching framework for promoting economic growth and development in Scotland is detailed in "The Framework for Economic Development" published in 2000 and the "Smart Successful Scotland" published in 2001. This framework emphasises the importance of adopting a crosscutting long term strategy for growing the economy and the labour market in a socially and environmentally sustainable basis. We share the Scottish Executive's desire to prioritise sustainable economic development. As our Community Plan highlights, our vision is to create: "*a prosperous and healthy community based on the principle of sustainable development through respect for the natural environment and the cultural traditions of the Western Isles*".

The Comhairle publication of 2002 - "Creating Communities of the Future"- sets out a long-term strategy to transform the Western Isles economy and has been positively received by Ministers. The Local Economic Forum, which provides the economic development input into the Community Planning process, has detailed the specific activities that will be pursued over the next 2 years to help re-structure and modernise our local economy and help achieve long term economic development and social improvement.

The long-term vision that underpins the work of the Local Economic Forum (LEF) is:

- A stable (and ultimately growing) population.
- Economic equality founded on a diversified economic base, including a dynamic renewable energy industry, a stable public sector including the decentralisation of some Government functions, promoting leisure (e.g. surfing and sailing) and tourism based on local culture, heritage and language.
- A high quality internal and external transport infrastructure.
- A modern university campus and a network of learning centres, providing a range of educational and training opportunities.
- Leading edge telecommunications, including Broadband connectivity, available to all sections of the community.

Western Isles Local Economic Forum Membership

- Western Isles Enterprise
- Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
- Western Isles Tourist Board
- Employment Service
- Lews Castle College
- Federation of Small Business
- Chamber of Commerce
- Western Isles Aquaculture Forum

If we are to attract and retain people with the skills and expertise required to strengthen and diversify the economy, housing must be available to enable job seekers to relocate. Key to this will be ensuring new housing investment is targeted in areas where greatest economic growth is forecast. At the same time, it is vital we improve our understanding of the links between housing investment and economic development. We therefore welcome the acknowledgement in the LEF Economic Development Framework of the need for closer working with housing.

2.2(2) Stornoway Regeneration

As part of the wider corporate agenda, we are seeking to rejuvenate Greater Stornoway through re-establishing thriving, vibrant retail, commercial and leisure sectors that are better able to compete for inward investment with mainland areas and retain younger economically active households.

Major improvement works are currently underway to transform the former oil fabrication yard at Arnish near Stornoway into a new location for renewable energy supply chain businesses. Looking further ahead, up to 120 full time jobs could potentially be realised.

A Stornoway Regeneration Group, as part of the Community Planning process, has been established. Members of this group include the Comhairle, Western Isles Enterprise, Stornoway Pier and Harbour Commission, Stornoway Amenity Trust, Stornoway Trust, Western Isles Chamber of Commerce, the Stornoway Historical Society and Lews Castle Trust. Initiatives and activities pursued by this group will undoubtedly impact on housing demand within and around Stornoway. As both the Corporate Strategy and the Broadbay Local Plan emphasise, securing housing investment to deal with economic growth around Stornoway, and ensuring sufficient housing is provided to meet the demands and needs in Stornoway and the other communities within Broadbay, is a major challenge that we believe this Local Housing Strategy must begin to address.

2.3 Theme C - Community Regeneration

The Structure Plan highlights our commitment to maintaining and enhancing communities in outlying parts of the Western Isles. Aside from ensuring that development of Greater Stornoway does not prejudice the viability of other communities, it highlights the need to ensure that people can remain in their own communities by providing opportunities for them to access suitable housing alongside access to a range of community facilities and secure employment. In line with our Structure Plan, this Strategy has examined the role we can play in assisting households to remain in their community.

Although not on the scale that affects some parts of Scotland, anti social behaviour does occur in the Western Isles. We share the Scottish Executive's principle that everyone has the right to live in peace and safety. Anti social behaviour by individuals, families or commercial interests is not ignored or tolerated in the Western Isles and we have introduced practical measures to tackle such behaviour where it happens. These practical measures include:

- Inclusion and enforcement of clear statements and conditions of expected behaviour in our tenancy agreement.
- Using Acceptable Behaviour Contracts and Anti Social Behaviour Orders where appropriate.
- Preparation of an Anti Social Behaviour Strategy and establishment of Joint Response Protocols with agencies such as Police, Social Work, NCH and local tenants and residents groups (under the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2003).
- Establishing an Anti Social Behaviour team to respond to incidents across all tenures and development of a Neighbour Mediation Service.

- Introducing a pilot Community Warden Service on the West Side of Lewis.
- Piloting the use of Loud Neighbour Declarations which set out the responsibilities of landlord tenants and other agencies.
- Establishing tenancy support workers to help individuals and families to address and change their anti social ways.

2.4 Theme D - Warm Homes and Improved Housing Conditions

2.4(1) Improving Condition and Tackling Fuel Poverty

Housing improvement has long been a central feature of our housing investment priorities across all tenures. The need for sustained action to improve housing conditions and reduce fuel poverty has been reiterated and reinforced through our:

- Corporate Strategy which has as one its priorities “ Enabling people to live in a warm, well maintained home and promoting high quality design and specification of houses and their components”.
- Community Planning Partnership, through its Well Being Forum which has the stated aim of “Providing warm, dry and energy efficient housing to 'barrier free' standards and address the below tolerable standard housing stock”.

Improving housing conditions and eradicating fuel poverty now feature strongly in the Scottish Executive’s housing priorities. We have been especially mindful of the following national policy priorities in setting our local housing priorities:

- By 2015 all social landlords will be expected to ensure their housing stock meets the Scottish Social Housing Standard. This means that all stock must be free from serious disrepair, achieve a reasonable level of energy efficiency, and be equipped with modern facilities and services, including kitchens
- Reducing the number of properties Below Tolerable Standard (BTS)
- Eradicating fuel poverty by 2016

Creating warm homes is a major issue throughout the Western Isles where poorer climatic conditions relative to elsewhere in the UK and the high use of solid fuel fires contribute to the high cost of heating homes. As a result of the Home Energy Conservation 1995 Act we already have a strategy for improving domestic energy efficiency across all tenures.

Securing the necessary investment to bring our own stock up to modern standards as quickly as possible was a major factor underpinning our in principle decision to seek the transfer of our own stock into community ownership.

A Local House Condition Survey of Private Sector stock was carried out early in 2004 to better inform the Comhairle of the current conditions which exist in the Western Isles.

2.4(2) Promoting Greater Tenant Control and Choice in Social Rented Sector

We are committed to ensuring the provision of quality housing services and to continually improving these services to reflect the changing needs and expectations of residents.

One of the Minister for Communities' highest priorities is to promote community-owned and controlled housing organisations. Following extensive appraisal of alternative options for the future ownership and investment of our existing stock, we are looking to the transfer of our houses to Hebridean Housing Partnership. This is a new locally based Housing Association that is controlled by a voluntary Management Board made up of five councillors, five tenants and five community representatives. It is hoped to ballot tenants in November 2004. Subject to tenants voting in favour, it is anticipated that Transfer will occur in summer 2005.

The proposed transfer is expected to result in various direct benefits:

- Hebridean Housing Partnership will ensure that all its houses achieve a high modern standard in a shorter timescale than would be possible otherwise via the removal of our outstanding Capital Debt and the freeing up more rental income for funding improvements.
- Community control and tenant participation will be enhanced through involving tenants on the Management Board and by the setting up of Area Committees which will have strong representation from tenants.
- As a Registered Social Landlord, the Hebridean Housing Partnership would be subject to independent inspection to ensure that it is delivering high quality services to tenants and the wider community.

2.4(3) Sustainable Housing Development

Sustainable development, including concern for the environment and reducing emissions is a theme that runs through national and local policies. "Down to Earth: a Scottish Perspective on Sustainable Development" sets out the Scottish Executive view that sustainable development involves achieving a balance between economic, social and environmental objectives and priorities and this approach that should underpin all policies.

Housing has a vital role in creating a more sustainable future. As Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) 3 highlights:

- The location of houses, the materials used to construct them and the accessibility of local transport infrastructure all have environmental implications.
- Occupants' consumption of energy and water also has a significant impact on the environment.
- The location and design of housing also influence employment opportunities, community spirit and identity - which are important elements of the social and economic dimension of sustainable development.

In preparing this Local Housing Strategy we have therefore looked at how we might contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. In keeping with the Structure Plan, we have

sought to ensure that new social housing is concentrated in existing settlements where there is evidence of long term sustained demand. We have also examined ways to improve the energy efficiency of existing homes and the potential scope to introduce innovative approaches in the use of renewable energy.

2.5 Theme E - Social Inclusion

2.5(1) Preventing and Alleviating Homelessness

- A key Scottish Executive and local authority strategic priority is to prevent and alleviate homelessness. The Community Planning Partnership, through its Well Being Forum, places a high priority on the link between housing and health, the need to tackle homelessness and improve the living conditions of disadvantaged groups. In preparing this strategy we have sought to take on board the key housing related priorities arising from these three local strategic priorities.
- Our Homelessness Strategy details the range of accommodation and support services that are provided to homeless, and potentially homeless, persons and future priorities to prevent and alleviate homelessness. The development and ongoing review of our Homeless Strategy is co-ordinated through a Western Isles Homelessness Taskforce. A Homelessness Strategy Network is currently being established, and will enable a broader range of partners and stakeholders to engage in the ongoing strategy process.
- Young people previously looked after by local authorities are vulnerable to homelessness. We have a corporate responsibility to support those leaving care in making a successful transition from the care system to independent adult living. A strategy is currently in preparation to ensure “throughcare”, to prepare them for independence, and “aftercare”, as they move out of the care system, is available to young people.
- The Scottish Executive also places a requirement on NHS Boards to address the healthcare needs of homeless people and to produce Homelessness and Health Strategies.
- Aside from close officer working through participation in the Homelessness Taskforce, the Community Well Being Forum has responsibility for ensuring that all three strategic priorities dovetail smoothly.

2.5(2) Community Care and Supporting People

The aim of community care is to enable vulnerable households to access the care and other services they require to remain in their own home or in a community setting. There are a range of Community Care strategies and corporate responsibilities that require support from housing, including:

- Supporting People, the Government programme for funding housing related support services, came into effect in April 2003. Our Supporting People Strategy details our priorities for the commissioning, development and re-provision of housing support services.
- The Joint Future Agenda is the Scottish Executive's policy for developing close working between local authority and health boards. Our initial focus has been on older people but joint working is in the process of being extended to other vulnerable groups. Housing

Services are already involved in joint service planning and housing staff will shortly undertake multi-agency training in relation to Single Shared Assessment.

We are conscious of the need to ensure there is enough accommodation and housing related support available for vulnerable people. In particular, we need to assist older people to live as independently as possible. In preparing this strategy we have therefore sought to:

- Meet the needs of both those who wish to remain in their present housing and those who wish to move or require a move to suitable accommodation
- Ensure that whilst appropriate levels of specialist provision, including temporary accommodation and shared provision, are available, emphasis continues to be placed on making best use of existing properties across all tenures.
- Ensure that housing decisions are part of integrated into wider decision making processes regarding revenue funding for related support and care 'packages'.

2.5(3) Equal Opportunities

We have a legal and moral responsibility to uphold the rights of peoples' cultural traditions, language and other requirements and to ensure that no-one is unfairly excluded from accessing public services, including employment. We are committed to ensuring that the ongoing development and implementation of this Strategy promotes equal opportunities and will give careful consideration to this aspect of our work as part of our ongoing Strategy review and updating process. In line with our corporate policy, grant funding will be used to ensure third parties comply with equal opportunities legislation and good practice. Wherever possible and feasible, grant funding will be offered preferentially to projects promoting or encouraging accessibility for all.

3. Developing an Effective Strategic Process

3.1 Working Together

As already highlighted, this strategy has been developed within the context of the Western Isles community planning process. We have sought to involve all relevant Comhairle services, other partners and stakeholders as fully as possible in the development of this strategy. We are therefore confident that all partners required to assist in the delivery of the strategy have been involved in, and are signed up to making the LHS Actionplan happen. It is intended to adopt of formal signing up process partner agencies once the final Strategy is approved.

A Housing Strategy Working Group involving key representatives from the following Comhairle Departments has overseen the production of this document commissioning of research to support its preparation:

- Housing
- Sustainable Communities
- Social Work
- Chief Executives Office

Various representatives from external agencies, including Western Isles Enterprise, Western Isles NHS Board and TIG have attended meetings of this Working Group to assist in the identification of crosscutting issues, objective setting and the identification and appraisal of options.

We launched our process of engaging elected members, partners and other stakeholder in shaping this strategy at our Securing the Future: Housing for the Hebrides Conference held in Lews Castle College, Stornoway in September 2003.

Since last summer we have organised other events to engage a range of partners and stakeholders. This has been accompanied by more informal liaison with partners such as Communities Scotland, WIE and TIG. In addition, briefings have been submitted to the Community Planning Partnership – and its associated forums – as well as to Comhairle committees.

Since the New Year, we have we have held several participatory events, including:

- A two day Strategic Option Appraisal Workshop in February at the Coastguard Station in Stornoway to discuss the appropriateness of the draft LHS objectives and undertaken an initial examination of possible options for achieving these objectives.
- Two “Securing the Future: Housing For the Hebrides” Follow Up Seminars were held in March – one in Stornoway and one in Benbecula. These seminars provided elected members and other stakeholders the opportunity to learn about the LHS, comment on the proposed strategy and offer views on how to deal with unresolved issues and funding constraints.

These events all helped to sharpen up our themes and make our objectives more measurable. They also provided the basis for establishing the specific actions, timescales and responsibilities for achieving our objectives. Summaries of the main content and recommendations from these

various external events can be found in a series of reports in the accompanying volume to this document.

3.2 Developing The Evidence Base

A considerable amount of commissioned research detailed in-house analysis of a range of evidence has been undertaken to assist develop a shared understanding with our partners of the most pressing housing challenges across the Western Isles. A complete list can be found in Appendix D but amongst the most significant have been:

- Western Isles Local Housing System Analysis, 2004
- Housing Stock Option Appraisal Study, 2001
- Local Private House Condition Survey, 2004
- Western Isles Housing Needs Study, 2001
- Empty Homes Survey Update, 2003

National studies and surveys have also been used to inform the development of this strategy. These include key information sources such as the [GROS - 2001 Scottish Census](#) and the [Scottish House Condition Survey](#) 2002.

3.3 Future Strategy Development

This document summarises the outcomes of our ongoing strategy process to date. It is essentially a working document as we will be continuing to develop and refine our Strategy in the year ahead.

In terms of ***Warm Homes and Improved Housing Conditions*** we will be reviewing our Actionplan in light of the recently announced Scottish Housing Quality Standard and the re-released Scottish National House Condition Survey findings and our Local Private House Condition Survey. In addition, we will be considering the impact of the level of additional funding awarded under the PSHG bid when that becomes known.

We will also be looking to revisit the Actionplan in relation to ***Social Inclusion*** to take account of the findings of the Community Care Housing Needs Assessment, the Review of Sheltered Housing, and the Review of the Home Care Service. These are all expected to report by September 2004. The Local Housing Strategy Update to be published in April 2005 will therefore contain a revised section on this theme.

We also wish to build on the consultation network developed in the course of preparing this strategy to ensure that a partnership approach to our ongoing review and implementation of the strategy is maintained. We want to ensure that all stakeholders are involved in the process. We are therefore investigating the most suitable arrangements for:

- Communicating regularly with other organisations.
- Bringing the wide range of local knowledge and expertise available throughout the Island communities together in a meaningful forum that will assist in the regular updating and eventual renewal of the Housing Strategy.

We would welcome suggestions as to how this may be best achieved, particularly in light of the potential transfer of the housing stock to Hebridean Housing Partnership in 2005, and the resulting need to restructure the delivery of the housing planning function.

The significant resources made available by the Scottish Executive to assist in the development of our Local Housing Strategy to date are acknowledged. There will be a continuing need for research work and consultation exercises if our ongoing strategy development and implementation process is to be one of continuous improvement and partnership. It is hoped that significant additional funding will be made available to local authorities for this specific purpose in coming years.

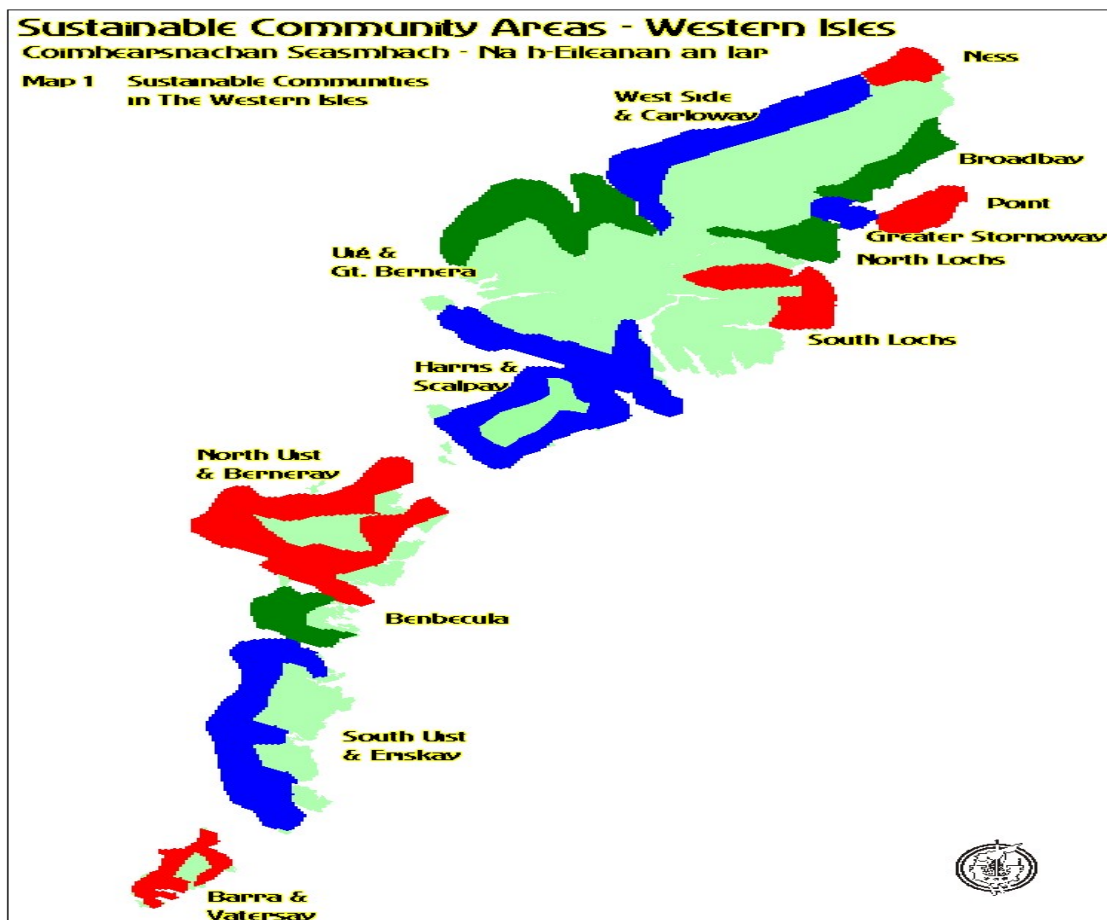
Section 2

4 The Local Housing System: Housing Needs and Challenges

4.1 The Landscape and Geography of the Western Isles

The Western Isles is increasingly described as an area of super-sparsity. This term encapsulates the fact that it is remote from the mainland and has an average 9 people for every square kilometre compared to the average of 65 people for Scotland. Stornoway is the only town and around a third of the population live there or in its immediately vicinity. Most of the remaining population is scattered over 280 townships, covering 14 islands, which extend 210km from the Butt of Lewis to Barra. There are around 6000 crofts in the Western Isles, over a third of the Scottish total of 17,000. Each croft has had at least one house either on it or legally connected to the croft, although many of these have been legally separated from the croft tenancy in order to secure a loan against the property. The shape or layout of the townships generally reflects the layout and boundaries of crofts and common grazing. Thus crofting has shaped the housing circumstances and living arrangements of most islanders.

Figure 2: Map of Western Isles Sustainable Community Areas



Analysis by the University of Glasgow indicates there is only one discrete housing market area¹ in the Western Isles and that operates in the Greater Stornoway area. The wide variation in the housing needs and pressures on housing and other services arising from population changes means that it is vital to have an informed picture of the circumstances and needs of different community areas across the Isles. Over the next couple of years, improvements in data availability should enable us to examine local housing needs and demands at the Sustainable Community Area level, in line with the Structure Plan. In the interim, we have looked at housing needs problems across the following local geographies:

- Greater Stornoway and rural Lewis
- Harris and Scalpay
- North Uist and Berneray
- Benbecula
- South Uist and Eriskay
- Barra and Vatersay

4.2 Economic and Demographic Trends and Prospects

Labour Market Trends

In 2001 there was an estimated 10,000 employees in the Western Isles and around 11,000 residents were in employment, including those working on the mainland. Over three out of ten members of the workforce are employed in the Public Administration, Education and Health sector and a further 17.5% are Hotels and Restaurants sector. In keeping with other remote Scottish Islands, some 7% are employed in the Agriculture & Fishing, Construction and Transport & Communications sectors. This compares to only 2.4% in Scotland. Crofting, although declining, remains a widespread agricultural activity. Manufacturing is also important with 10% working in textiles, call centres, fish processing and aquaculture.

The Western Isles economy has grown in recent years but remains fragile. Economic performance continues to lag behind the rest of Highlands and Islands and remains characterised by out-migration and low incomes. Being on the very periphery of Europe, it is difficult to maintain a strong, diverse and prosperous economy due to the distance from major service centres and the high transport costs. Unemployment rates have fallen but continue to fluctuate. In part this reflects the greater concentration of jobs in tourism and primary sectors, such as agriculture and fishing that tend to be seasonal relative to Scotland. In part it reflects the prevalence of jobs in industries subject to peaks and troughs generated by external market forces such as oil-related work, construction, engineering and Harris Tweed.

Population and Household Patterns

The Western Isles has experienced population decline for over a century and this underlying trend continued throughout the last decade. In 2001 the Western Isles population was 26,450, almost 10% lower than in 1991. Historically, Stornoway has been much less affected by depopulation than other parts of the Western Isles, but over the last decade rates of depopulation across the Islands have generally converged.

¹ A Housing Market Area is the geographical area in which households wishing to relocate for housing search for and eventually purchase or rent a property.

Official population projections indicate what might occur if no radical changes occur. They suggest that the population could decline by 17% from 26,200 in 2002 to 21,725 by 2018, mainly due falling birth rates leading to an excess of deaths over births. However, out migration is also an important factor, with an annual net out migration of around 100 individuals.

The age structure of the Western Isles is projected to continue to polarise, with older age groups projected to increase and younger age groups projected to decline. By 2018, 13% of the population could be under 15 years of age and 38% could be at least 60 years of age and 14% could be 75 years or older. These projections have serious implications for the provision of housing and others services such as health care and education.

Despite declining population, household numbers continue to increase at a modest rate. In 2001 there were 11,275 households, 305 more than in 1991. Scottish Executive projections indicate that could be 12,070 households by 2014. This equates to around 60 households per annum. Census figures indicate that household formation rates over the past decade were lower than projected.

Alternative Scenarios

As the Local Economic Strategy takes effect, official projections will become less relevant as an increase in jobs and changes to migration take place. To take account of this, three alternative - base, medium and high - scenarios for the Western Isles were prepared based on the "Creating Communities of the Future" drivers. These scenarios are summarised in table 1:

- The base scenario assumes there will be a slight growth in employment and that the major drivers, such as renewable energy, will have had minimal impact by 2010. As this scenario is broadly standstill, official demographic projections have been used.
- The medium scenario is based on partial achievement of our economic aspirations and assumes that 730 extra jobs are created and that average annual net migration falls to -80 from 2005.
- The high scenario is based around major progress towards our 2030 goal of a growing population. It assumes that by 2010 in-migration may be starting and that an additional 1625 jobs have been created.

Table1: Alternative Economic and Demographic Scenarios for the Western Isles, 2010

Assumptions	Base	Medium	High
Population 2002	26,200	26,200	26,200
Households 2002	11,750	11,750	11,750
Potential number of jobs	10,250	10,730	11,625
Natural change, annual average	-165	-165	-165
Migration change, annual average	-100	-80	0
Possible Population 2010	24065	24,200	24,880
Possible No of households 2010	12,030	12,110	12,440
Additional households 2002-2010	280	350	690

Whilst it is vital to take account of the demand that may arise from households taking up the new employment generated, it is also important to avoid building large numbers of new housing in advance of demand. On the one hand lack of suitable housing in the right locations could hinder retention of the existing workforce and prevent households relocating to take up employment opportunities. On the other hand over supply could lead to problems of low demand and increased levels of empty properties. On the basis of these policy based scenarios, we have assumed that at least 300, possibly as many as 350, additional households could appear by 2010. However, these figures are provisional and further research is required to enhance our understanding of the links between housing and the economy.

Economic Regeneration - Emerging Issues

- Implementation of the “Creating Communities of the Future” Strategy for economic regeneration means that official demographic projections are unlikely to be a reliable guide to future levels of housing demand.
- Limited understanding of the links between economic growth, migration and housing demand and the need to enhance our capacity over time to forecast housing demand and keep available forecasts, projections and scenarios under constant review.
- The Comhairle’s pro-active efforts to make rural communities more attractive places to live.
- To seek suitable housing opportunities for inward migrants

4.3 The Local Housing System

Western Isles has a distinctive stock profile. According to the Census, in 2001 there were 13,195 properties, of which 1922, or 15%, were empty. Around 953 of these were second or holiday homes and around 969 are permanently unoccupied, equivalent to 7% of the total stock. Of the 11,275 occupied dwellings in 2001, 93% were houses and 74% comprised of 5 or more rooms.

The Western Isles also has a distinctive tenure profile. Around 72 % of households are owner-occupiers, with around half living in croft houses. At 9%, the share of private renting is similar to that for Scotland but significantly lower than in many other parts of rural Scotland. Around 17% of households are in the social rented sector. Aside from Trust Housing Association (formerly known as Kirk Care) which provides 60 sheltered housing units there are 5 Community Based Housing Associations. Between them these own just over 200 properties. The future of these 5 organisations and the overall structure of the social rented sector may well change if our Community Ownership proposals proceed.

In early 2003 the median house price in Greater Stornoway was £58,000, almost 50% higher than in 1998 and prices have continued to rise over the past 15 months. The numbers of house sales elsewhere in Lewis and on the other Islands are too low to produce meaningful house price trends.

There has been some increase in buyers from the mainland, but there is little hard evidence to suggest they are paying higher prices than existing residents. The fact that in-migrants are mainly buying in rural and remote areas where very few properties are sold may be restricting the opportunities available to existing residents with modest incomes. This is something that we intend to monitor closely.

Although house prices remain below those found in other parts of Scotland, there are reasons for believing that there has been some increase in the numbers of households unable to secure private housing:

- According to the MacPherson Study commissioned by Western Islands Enterprise in 2003, estate agents report that the housing market is very tight and few properties are coming up for sale. As a result demand is exceeding supply.
- According to the Scottish House Condition Survey 2002, average net household incomes are £13,200 compared to £14,500 for all Scottish households. CACI data suggests that the average household income in the Western Isles is the 3rd equal lowest of 121 UK Postcode Areas, with only Dumfries and Truro being lower.
- Aside from the relatively high proportion of older people, unemployment and low paid employment are factors that contribute to low household incomes. In December 2003, claimant based unemployment stood at 4.1% (Lewis and Harris 4.4% and Uist and Barra 3.8%). This compares to 2.7% for the HIE area and 3% for Scotland.
- Households across the Western Isles face higher costs of living, HIE's Rural Scotland Pricing 2002 Survey suggests that, on average, food is 20% higher and fuel 14% higher than in mainland urban areas.
- In the Broadbay area as a whole, the number of applications for every let has increased from 3.7 to 6.1 in the last 4 years as fewer lets have become available and an increasing proportion of these have gone to homeless applicants. In 2003/4 around half of all lets were to homeless applicants.

As Table 2 below shows, there is less pressure for social renting in other parts of the Western Isles. It is unclear whether this is because people do not apply because there are so few opportunities to rent or because they prefer not to become social rented tenants.

Table 2: Key Housing Demand Indicators Across Western Isles

Area	Tenure %			Applicants To Lettings Ratio 2004	Population 2001	Households 2001
	Owner	Private Rented	Social Rented			
Greater Stornoway	63	8	29	6:1	7653	3703
Rural Lewis	82	6	12	1.5:1	10,836	4183
Harris and Scalpay	73	9	18	3:1	1984	870
North Uist and Berneray	74	10	16	2:1	1657	730
Benbecula	61	15	24	2:1	1249	502
South Uist and Eriskay	72	7	21	2:1	1951	789
Barra & Vatersay	71	9	20	2:1	1172	498
WESTERN ISLES	73	8	19	3:1	26,502	11,275

4.4 Responding to Changing Demand

House building rates fluctuate but, over the last 5 years, 330 properties have been built and 135 properties have been demolished. Thus, the housing stock increased by 195 units. Assuming that there will be an at least an additional 300 households over the next 5 years and that demolitions remain at current levels as many as 435 properties could be required to meet rising housing demand. Increasing rates of new provision will therefore be critical to increasing the availability of suitable housing and improving the quality of housing. However, making better use of the existing housing stock also has a role to play.

Empty Homes

Around 8 in every 10 empty properties are outwith Greater Stornoway and most are either second or holiday homes or derelict properties and are sited in locations where there is little effective or sustained housing demand. Empty properties therefore do not constitute a large reserve of potentially available property that could be brought back into use as top-line figures might at first suggest.

Nonetheless, Glasgow University's research suggests there is scope to bring back into use empty properties, including flats above shops, in the Greater Stornoway housing market. Some of the 372 empty properties in 2001 have been sold and are now permanently occupied, possibly due to the upturn in the housing market. Around 3 out of 10 empty property owners surveyed would consider selling and /or renting out their empty property.

As well as providing a potentially cost effective means of meeting housing demand, bringing some empty housing stock back into permanent occupation will have wider benefits. By virtue of increasing the number of people living in the town, it should enhance community safety and create new demand for evening leisure facilities and amenities. It will also assist to minimise ribbon development.

Making Better Use of Existing Social Housing

The social rented sector is small and is continuing to decline while the Waiting List remains at over 750 households. Social rented completions have averaged around 20 units per annum in the last 2 to 3 years. However RTB sales have averaged around 55 sales and close to two fifths of all the social rented properties in 1980 have been sold through RTB.

Much of this decline has occurred in the Greater Stornoway area where there is now great pressure for social rented housing. Evidence suggests that few RTB purchasers have subsequently moved house. It therefore seems unlikely that future RTB sales will have a significant impact on the capacity of the remaining stock to accommodate housing list applicants over the next 5 to 10 years. Applying for "Pressured Area Status" would therefore do little to meet outstanding demand for social rented housing. The benefit to the community that might result from Pressured Area Status is so small that it is not considered relevant to the Western Isles.

The proportion of relet social rented properties which had been vacant for more than 6 months dropped from 21% to 4% between 1990/00 and 2003/4. Likewise the number of vacancies relet within 6 weeks increased from 38% to 55%. This indicates that recent initiatives have brought about considerable improvements in the effective use of social rented stock, although further gains should be possible.

New Affordable Housing

Most new development relies on grant support from either the Crofters Building Grant and Loan Scheme (CBGLS) or Communities Scotland Development Programme. Available data suggests that upwards of 75% of all new housing has received assistance from one of these sources in recent years. Private house building is dominated by individuals contracting with trades people or undertaking self-build. There is virtually no speculative house building across the Islands since development costs - which are significantly higher than on the mainland - generally exceed sales price. Thus the Scottish Executive's promotion of "planning gain" as a means of boosting the supply of affordable housing has no relevance in the Western Isles context.

The Crofters Building Grant and Loan Scheme has proved an effective means of supporting the construction of new houses and improvements to existing houses on crofting land. Latest data indicates that upwards of 40 new housing are supported through this funding stream each year.

Communities Scotland Development Funding Programme has doubled over the last 5 years and now stands at £3 million. Over two thirds of this programme is currently allocated to housing associations, mainly to support new social rented construction. Letting to applicant ratios now average 3:1 and there is increasing pressure from homeless households resulting from changes in the legislation. We therefore anticipate continued significant pressure on the social rented housing stock over the next 5 years, especially in Greater Stornoway.

A proportion of Communities Scotland's Development Programme has also been used to support private housing. With recently increasing house prices and the continuing lack of properties becoming available for purchase, there is increasing demand for more such assistance.

The established pattern of homeownership in the Islands is of building a home for life. It is therefore important to ensure that a higher proportion of new properties are large enough to meet lifetime, rather than short term, housing requirements.

Land and Associated Constraints

The potential to develop new housing in many settlements is constrained. The lack of suitable infrastructure and the requirements for site servicing limit development. Land ownership patterns also impact on the availability of sites for housing.

About 77% of the land area is held in crofting tenure and is subject to crofting legislation. As a form of land use, crofting has helped retain rural populations in areas where they would otherwise have disappeared. However, difficulties in securing suitable land to provide housing opportunities for younger households have contributed to the increasing concentration of older persons in many crofting townships.

The ownership of the land is an important determinant in the ability of rural townships to evolve in response to changing circumstances. The islands are divided into 22 major estates. A recent development has been the move towards community land ownership and the buying-out of estates by locally based communities. Currently within the Western Isles there are 3 community-led Trusts which own a total of 15% of the landmass. With discussions currently continuing on the possible buy-out of other estates, it is possible that within a decade up to half the land mass of the Western Isles could be under community ownership.

Increase Supply - Emerging Issues

- We need to build additional affordable houses to meet changing demand in areas where demand will be sustained in the longer term.
- Increasing prices and modest incomes suggest there is latent demand for affordable private housing.
- There remains difficulty in securing land where serviced plots can be developed.
- There are development related constraints/ site servicing in areas of sustained demand.
- There are some empty properties in the Greater Stornoway area that could be brought back into effective use.
- Concerns that not all new properties are large enough to cater for the changing needs of occupants, as family increases in size or members become older and less mobile.
- New and innovative ways of generating increased funding and output must be found.

4.5 House Conditions and Affordable Warmth

The last 10 years has seen a major improvement in the condition of the housing stock in the Western Isles, predominantly as a result of high levels of public investment in both the social and private sectors. Nonetheless, a large proportion of the occupied housing stock remains in poor condition relative to Scotland as a whole. The Scottish House Condition Survey 2002 suggests that 86% of dwellings have some level of disrepair. The median unit cost associated with rectifying BTS and all visible disrepair and undertaking modernisations such as central heating, sound and thermal insulation was estimated at £1,800 in the Western Isles. The comparable figure for Scotland was £900.

Factors Contributing To Fuel Poverty

Four factors contribute to fuel poverty in the Western Isles:

- A quarter of all properties lack adequate insulation (i.e. NHER 0-2), which increases the level of energy needed to heat a property to an acceptable level
- The low incomes of many households reduces their ability to heat their home to an acceptable level of warmth
- Some households live in properties that are bigger than they require, leading to additional expenditure on heating
- The high levels on solid fuel used, the lower levels of central heating (compared to Scotland) and the high price of energy in the Isles combined with the long heating season all increase the cost of heating a home.

Fuel Poverty is a major problem in the Western Isles. The Scottish House Condition Survey (SHCS) 2002 estimates that 4000, or 34% of households, spend in excess of 10% of annual income on domestic energy and are therefore fuel poor. This is the highest proportion of all households of any local authority in Scotland.

A lot of work has been completed over the last two years by installing new efficient heating boilers or systems, insulation and draught proofing. However, more needs to be done. We are currently preparing a Western Isles Fuel Poverty Strategy that will set out in detail how we intend to tackle this problem.

Lower income and especially older households are disproportionately affected by

disrepair and fuel poverty. A third of households residing in property in disrepair are pensioners, compared to a fifth in Scotland. Moreover, 25% of all households occupying a property with an NHER rating of 5 or less are pensioner households compared to 16% in Scotland.

Quality of Private Housing

The SHCS confirmed that disrepair is concentrated in the private sector. In 2003 we commissioned a Local Private House Condition Survey that will provide detailed information on the scale of disrepair and fuel poverty in this sector. This will help to improve our targeting of available resources to address problems of disrepair and fuel poverty in the year ahead.

Early indications from this survey suggest that as much as 12% of private housing stock in the Western Isles is BTS compared to 1% nationally. Proposed revisions to the Tolerable Standard will undoubtedly increase the number of existing private properties that are declared BTS.

The reasons why housing remains in poorer condition than elsewhere in Scotland are due to a complex combination of:

- The severe exposure of houses throughout the islands reduces the lifespan of various building components and if not attended to, can lead to a property falling Below the Tolerable Standard very quickly.
- Many older and other low income households are unable or unwilling to improve their homes without some form of assistance
- Comparatively expensive repair and maintenance costs due to the high costs of building materials resulting from transportation costs
- Many houses built with crofting grant support were built to a price with inferior materials and little, if any, insulation. These houses now form the bulk of the BTS housing in the islands. This is consistent with the SHCS finding that 67% of dwellings in disrepair were built since 1945.

Nationally, private renting contains some of the worst housing conditions. This is also perceived to be the case by housing staff in regular contact with private renters. Again the Local Private Housing Condition Survey should inform the development of our strategy for promoting better housing conditions and management standards in the private rented sector over the next 12 to 18 months.

Some properties in rural areas rely on untreated and potentially unwholesome water from private sources. Many properties require septic tanks to be repaired or replaced. Treatment of water supplies can be expensive, especially where only one property is involved, and may be beyond the means of low-income households, particularly in rural areas. Lead pipes also remain a problem in the Western Isles. Moreover, the costs of improving water and waste drainage are becoming more expensive, partly as a consequence of higher standards that have been set by SEPA.

Mobile homes and caravans also play a small but important role in meeting needs, including short-term accommodation. Our 2001 survey showed there were 165 residential caravan sites, but many have subsequently closed because of the inability to afford to undertake work necessary to meet Site Licence standards. Common deficiencies include sub standard drainage facilities and sub standard fuel storage and servicing.

Quality of Social Housing

The Comhairle's own Stock surveys as well as the SHCS confirm that the social rented sector is in comparatively good condition. At present about 40% of the stock meets the Scottish Social Housing Standard. However, over 600 houses require their heating systems to be upgraded and investment is also urgently required to improve insulation standards and install modern kitchens and bathrooms.

Work is currently in hand to estimate the investment that will be required to achieve the Scottish Housing Quality Standard - and the Western Isles Housing Quality Standard once developed. This work includes examining the costs of bringing the 67 former Scottish Homes houses that transferred in April 2004 following a ballot of tenants undertaken early this year. These will be used to prepare the SSHS Delivery Plan, which will be incorporated into the Local Housing Strategy Update 2005.

As part of the ongoing work associated with Stock Transfer the Western Isles Housing Quality Standard (WIHQs) is being developed. In broad terms the local standard incorporates the features of the SHQS but with certain enhancements to reflect tenant choice and local circumstances.

As well as stock condition the WIHQs will also commit to high quality housing management services and effective tenant participation policies for all social rented housing.

TIG is also currently in the process of developing similar plans for the five local housing associations currently operating in the Western Isles.

Building Industry Capacity

The Western Isles construction sector largely comprises small building firms spread across the Islands and most of their work revolves around domestic sized contracts. Grant assisted and other publicly funded new build, improvements and repairs are a key source of work. Whilst this sector has been able to respond to current investment programmes, there are likely to be capacity issues in the foreseeable future. Aside from the continued drift of trades' people to the mainland where wages are higher, there are insufficient apprenticeships and younger trades' people.

Warm Homes - Emerging Issues

- There is a continuing need to assist owners to bring property up to the Tolerable Standard and rectify serious disrepair or inadequate water and drainage facilities, as well as allowing residents to remain in their community and help to preserve and strengthen the social fabric of local crofting communities.
- The transfer of the Comhairle's stock to the Hebridean Housing Partnership will enable all social housing is brought up to the new modern housing standards as soon as possible.
- The high costs of fuel, partly reflecting the cost of transporting fuel from the mainland, mean we need to search for new and innovative ways to save and recycle energy that minimise the impact on the environment and reduce households' fuel bills.
- There are concerns about the capacity of building trades to meet anticipated future levels of Housing Investment.

4.6 Homelessness

Level of homeless applications have fluctuated over the last few years but in the last year have risen to an all time high of 215 presentations. Four fifths of homeless presentations are in Lewis and Harris with the remaining 20% shared over the southern isles. There is virtually no rough sleeping on the islands but up to 58 households could be considered hidden homeless.

The Western Isles has a higher incidence of homeless single persons aged over 25 years than found elsewhere in Scotland, reinforcing our perception that such households are finding it increasingly difficult to secure affordable housing. Our plans to increase housing supply under our first strategic theme should help to prevent homelessness. However, homelessness is a complex problem and is often the result of a combination of social and personal circumstances.

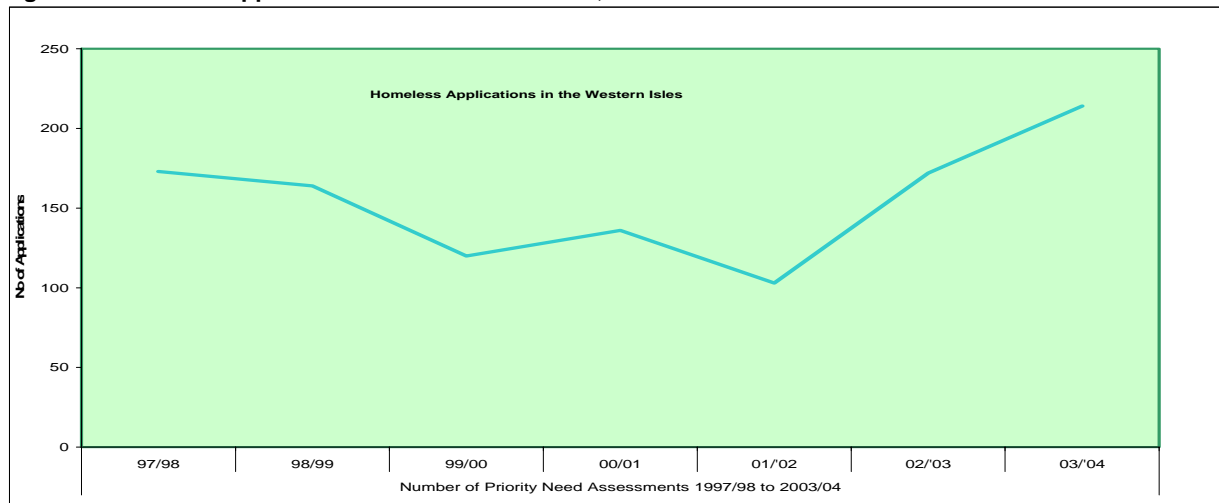
Our first Homelessness Strategy came into effect from 2003. It details the steps we are taking in partnership with others to alleviate visible and hidden homelessness. Measures to prevent homelessness are being introduced, such as the expansion of the current independent housing information and advice service across the Islands. We are also extending the range of housing options and support available to those who become homeless. For instance, we have increased the level of Comhairle owned temporary accommodation with Scottish Executive funding. Further provision is required however to reduce reliance on bed and breakfast accommodation.

Working Together to Reduce Homelessness

- NHS Western Isles
- NCH
- Foyer Project
- Lifestyle
- Women's Aid
- Lewis Street Project
- Penumbra
- CAB – housing information and advice
- Western Isles Family Mediation Service

There is consensus amongst all agencies and service users that support services for vulnerable groups including young people are lacking, especially in the Southern Isles.

Figure 3: Homeless Applications In The Western Isles, 1997/8 to 2003/4



Initial funding and premises have been secured for a Foyer Project that will assist disadvantaged young people achieve a successful transition to independent living by co-ordinating access to accommodation, guidance, support services and training and job opportunities. A joint project with Lews Castle College and the Bridge Community Group to

combine student accommodation, temporary accommodation for Foyer clients and improved community facilities is being investigated. If feasible, this project will help reduce homelessness and also support economic renewal by providing additional student accommodation required to enable the college to expand.

Social Inclusion - Emerging Issues

- The need to enhance the independent housing information advice service across the islands and other measures that contribute to the prevention of homelessness
- To enhance levels of housing provision and support for vulnerable people at risk of homelessness and for young people to prepare them for independence
- The need to minimise reliance by the Homeless service on Bed and Breakfast accommodation.

4.7 Independent Living

According to the 2001 census around a fifth of residents have a limiting long-term illness, health problem or disability and this proportion is likely to rise as the population ages. More housing, particularly in the private sector, therefore needs to be designed in a manner that allows properties to be easily and cost effectively adapted at a later date.

Most vulnerable people require a package of measures that include appropriate housing, care and support. Due to the dominance of owner-occupied and crofter housing, our actions to promote independent living have long centred on the provision of Home Care Services, including the provision of aids and adaptations, community alarms, the mobile overnight support service, and comprehensive home care packages.

Care and Repair and a long-standing policy towards grants for improvements, repairs, and adaptations have played a major role in encouraging older people to invest in their homes. This policy, in combination with the provision of other Home Care Services, has proved to be very popular with residents across the Western Isles and has helped to sustain communities through retaining the population in rural areas. The Strategic Option Appraisal Workshops highlighted strong support for Care and Repair to be expanded to assist a wider group of households to repair and subsequently remain in their own home.

The popularity of these "care at home" services has undoubtedly reduced demand for sheltered housing. We are about to commission a review of the remaining sheltered provision and the possible future use of the "Care Units" - a hybrid facility linked to sheltered housing schemes that provide more intensive support - for which demand has also fallen in recent years.

Aside from projected increases in the numbers of older people and people with dementia, there is a strongly held perception that there is insufficient temporary accommodation for adults with behavioural and other problems. In particular there have been calls for a crisis unit that could provide emergency accommodation for vulnerable people. Supported accommodation projects such as the NCH Scotland Independent Living Project also continue to experience difficulties securing permanent move-on accommodation.

We are about to commission some major pieces of research that will assess the extent to which there are shortfalls or surpluses in the provision of “specialist” housing and housing support services across the Western Isles. The findings for these studies will enable us to better understand what further shifts in the profile of housing provision and housing support services across the Western Isles is required.

However, it is not clear how we are going to achieve such shifts without an increase in our Supporting People budget. Much of the sheltered housing constructed in the 1970's and 80's has already been decommissioned. There are now around 37 sheltered places for every 1000 people over 65 years compared to an average of 44 places in Scotland. It is therefore doubtful that further major reductions in sheltered housing will be possible.

Emerging Issues

- Anticipated growth in demand for Care and Repair services to growing numbers of older homeowners to remain in their own home.
- The need to investigate current and future housing needs of community care groups and other vulnerable households and the balance of housing provision and housing support services
- To encourage all future privately constructed housing to consider features such as level access, wide doors and downstairs toilets, with room in the future for showers.
-

4.8 Conclusion

This Housing Strategy is underpinned by our belief that housing policies are an important way of contributing to developing sustainable communities through integrated economic, social and environmental initiatives. This Housing Strategy must do more than respond to the implications of demographic or economic projections. Our Strategy objectives and proposed actions, which are detailed in the next section, are therefore based on decisions about contributing to steering change as well as responding to changing patterns in relation to the emerging housing issues summarised throughout this chapter.

SECTION 3

5 Setting the Strategy

5.1 Introduction

So far in this document we have set out emerging challenges and local concerns. These issues present a range of challenges that we intend to address through the strategic objectives we will pursue over the next 5 years, The next five pages summarise the challenges we have identified under each of the five Themes that are set out in Section 1 of this document.

It includes each of our 14 objectives for addressing these challenges. The range of approved Objectives and the actions proposed within them were considered following extensive discussion both within the Comhairle, involving staff and elected members, and also with other agencies.

5.2

THEME A

Housing supply

Emerging Challenges

How do we...

- Meet the demand for affordable rented housing in greater Stornoway
- Encourage private sector house building
- Improve access to affordable developable land
- Bring back empty homes into use
- Maximise and target available resources

National Issues

- Everyone to have access to a range of warm, affordable and secure housing
- Tackling Homelessness

Related Objectives

1. Increase the supply of affordable housing by at least 350 units by 2009
2. Bring back into use 15 empty homes to provide affordable accommodation in Greater Stornoway Area by 2009
3. As a matter of priority the Comhairle secure access to land for additional housing

5.3

THEME B

Economic Regeneration

Emerging Challenges

How do we...

- Contribute to reversing population decline
- Support the growth of Stornoway
- Sustain fragile remote communities
- Access regeneration funding

National Issues

Improve links between housing and regeneration using the Community Planning Partnerships approach

Related Objectives

4. Support inward migration of at least 30 households on average per annum
5. Secure at least 5 additional full time job or training opportunities for jobseekers per annum in the construction sector
6. Increase private accommodation targeted at younger economically active households in Greater Stornoway by 50 units as part of a wider area regeneration strategy by 2008
7. Strengthen and make better use of sound evidence on links between housing investment and economic/ social development in the Western Isles to inform policy development

5.4

THEME C

Community Regeneration

Emerging Challenges

How do we...

- Make the Western Isles a safe, secure and attractive place to live and work
- Enhance social infrastructure of rural communities
- Improve visual impact of rural townships
- Improve Utility service provision in remote areas

National Issues

-

Related Objectives

7. Strengthen and make better use of sound evidence on links between housing investment and economic/social development in the Western Isles to inform policy development

5.5

THEME D

Warm Homes

Emerging Challenges

How do we...

- Tackle Fuel Poverty in the Western Isles
- Improve Energy Efficiency of houses in the Western Isles
- Reduce levels of BTS housing and meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard

National Issues

- Eradicate Fuel Poverty
- Reduce the number of households with poor energy efficiency
- Reduce the number of houses Below the Tolerable Standard
- Delivering the Scottish Social Housing Standard and the Scottish Housing Quality Standard

Related Objectives

8. Ensure that at least 70% of the social rented stock achieves the Scottish Social Housing Standard by 2009
9. Improve stock condition in the private sector by 2009
10. Reduce fuel poverty by 50% by 2009

5.6

THEME E

Social Inclusion

Challenges

How do we...

- Reduce the incidence of Homelessness
- Meet the accommodation and housing support needs of homeless households
- Ensure an adequate supply of suitable accommodation and housing support
- Provide services for Varying Needs clients throughout the Islands
- Meet the aspirations of the elderly population to continue living in their own communities in good housing conditions and with appropriate support for as long as possible

National Issues

Tackling Homelessness

The provision of housing and good quality housing support services that reflect the requirements of persons in need of community care or with other special needs, to allow as many households as possible to live independently in the community

Related Objectives

1. Increase the supply of affordable housing by at least 350 units by 2009
11. Provide appropriate housing related solutions to prevent homelessness
12. Increase assistance to all households who become homeless by the introduction of a range of new initiatives by 2009
13. Provide additional and more responsive housing related services to enable vulnerable people to remain in the community
14. Increase the proportion of older people assisted by housing and related services to maintain their independence in their own home or community

The Objectives and the Action plan

This section also sets out an Action Plan which articulates the activities that will be progressed, (and by whom), to deliver our objectives and identifies the timeframes for delivery. Our objectives and actions have been developed through a series of option appraisal exercises and consultation processes. More details about why and how these objectives and actions were selected and other actions were rejected can be found in the accompanying documentation.

The strategic objectives for the housing strategy have been prepared using the guidance available from the Scottish Executive and are consistent with the assessment of the range of housing problems that we face in the Western Isles. They are Specific, Measurable, Agreed, Realistic and indicate their Timeframe.

Objective 1: Increase the supply of affordable housing by at least 350 units by 2009

(Theme A - Housing Supply)

Action	Success / Outcome	Lead	Other Partners	Resources
1. Maintain or enhance current CS Development Programme	Increased target number of affordable units secured Most new units constructed in areas of greatest demand e.g. the Stornoway area Around 10 of the 60 units per annum are for LCHO Larger sites identified within adopted Local Plan by 2007	CBHA/HHP	CS	CS Development Funding CS Community Regeneration Fund
2. Social landlords buy existing properties and recycle as affordable housing for sale or rent	A small number of units purchased that relieve pressure in specific settlements	CBHA/HHP	CS	CS Development Funding HHP own funds/ private finance LA funding
3. Make more effective use of the existing "mainstream" social rented stock.	Speed up re-letting times Reduction in the number of refusals Review Tenant Incentive schemes by 2006 to reduce under-occupation	LA Housing/ HHP		Staff time
4. Seek Transfer of the Management of Development Funding (TMDF)	LHS assessed as at least "good" by 2005 Transfer of TMDF secured by 2007	LA Sust Comms	CS	LA administrative costs CS transfer administrative support
5. Provide serviced plots for sale in rural areas	Increase effective supply through self build in settlements with sustained demand Serviced plots part of wider strategy to regenerate communities Larger sites identified within adopted Local Plan by 2007	LA Sust Comms & Housing	CS HIE WIE	PSHG CS Development Funding
6. Evaluation of existing LCHO by 2006	Research findings inform future use of funding to support additional affordable housing for sale	LA Sust Comms CS		LA funds CS local research funds

1. Note some of the actions listed under other objectives will contribute to delivery of this objective

Objective 2: Bring back into use 15 empty homes to provide affordable accommodation in Greater Stornoway Area by 2009

(Theme A - Housing Supply)

Action	Success / Outcome	Lead	Other Partners	Resources
1. Redundant or derelict private housing redeveloped by housing associations for affordable housing for sale or rent	Up to 5 empty properties/ derelict sites redeveloped by TIG by 2009	TIG	CS LA Sust Comms Individual Owners	Development Funding Programme PSHG Community Regeneration Fund
2. Increase empty properties owners awareness of responsibilities & assistance that may be available to assist them meet these.	Material for owners prepared and distributed by 2005 Higher levels of investment in private housing stock by property owners as measured by SHCS	LA Sust Comms	CAB TIG Community Councils Grazings Committees	LA revenue funding to produce material
3. Target grant aid to owners of empty property. This will include investigating the potential scope for Comhairle to devise private property leasing scheme for social renting purposes for flats above shops and /or walk in condition properties	Up to 10 owners assisted through PSHG to bring property back into use Investigation completed and decision whether to pursue with developing LA private leasing or lead tenancy initiative reached by 2005	LA Sust Comms	TIG CS Chamber of Commerce	PSHG LA Staff resources

Objective 3: As a matter of priority for the Comhairle to secure access to land for housing

(Theme A - Housing Supply)

Action	Success / Outcome	Lead	Other Partners	Resources
1. Examine options in relation to making crofting land available to non crofting households for building houses	LA & Crofters Commission explore better managed release of crofting agricultural land to provide new housing by end 2005 Shortlist of potential sites identified by 2006 to support new housing	LA Sust Comms Crofters commission	WIE/ HIE Community Land owners CS Township committees	Sust Comms Staff time
2. Work with the Township Committees to identify plots capable of supporting new housing	10 Plots identified within the boundaries of existing townships (including areas of common grazings) by 2007 Larger sites identified within Development Plan by 2007	LA Sust Comms	WIE /HIE CS Community Land owners Township committees	Sust Comms Staff time
3. LA secures land and provides serviced plots within townships to facilitate self build	6 Serviced plots within the boundaries of existing townships by 2007 Dwellings built on serviced plots provide long term affordable housing Larger site identified within adopted local plan by 2007	LA Sust Comms	WIE /HIE CS Community Land owners Township committees	PSHG funds CS funds WIE funds
4. Secure improved funding package (e.g. provide top up grants through the Comhairle and/or revamped RHOGS) to support self build to offset higher local building costs	Investigate potential scope for LA top-up funding by 2006 CS accepts RHOGs funding criteria be modified to be complementary to CBGLS by 2006 10 homes constructed to meet long term housing needs of occupants by 2009	LA Sust Comms	WIE/ HIE CS Community Landlords TIG Township committees	CS funds LA funds potentially

Objective 4: Support the inward migration of an average of 30 households on average per annum
 (Theme B Economic Regeneration)

Action	Success / Outcome	Lead	Other Partners	Resources
1. Provide 20 serviced plots for sale in the Greater Stornoway Area by 2009	Sites available for purchase by households returning or relocating to Isles	LA Sust Comms	CS HIE WIE	PSHG CS Development Funding CS Community Regeneration Fund
2. Develop a Comhairle owned or identified strategic land bank capable of delivering possibly 100 residential properties by 2009 in areas of greatest need	Identified suitable volumes of land already in public ownership that can be transferred into residential land bank Identify land currently in private ownership suitable for zoning through the Local Planning process for residential purposes Larger sites identified within updated Local Plan by 2007	LA Sust Comms & Housing	TIG Stornoway Trust Health Board	LA owned land Other public sector land LA capital programme CS Development Funding Community Regeneration Fund PSHG

Objective 5: Secure at least 5 additional full time job or training opportunities for jobseekers per annum in the construction sector
(Theme B - Economic Regeneration)

Action	Success / Outcome	Lead	Other Partners	Resources
1. Support the Western Isles Construction Forum that meets regularly to discuss local construction issues	<p>Construction Forum chaired and run by construction industry by 2009</p> <p>Reviewed requirement for some form of accreditation scheme by 2007</p> <p>Local Construction sector believes itself well informed about forward residential investment plans</p> <p>Local construction sector gear up to meet forward investment expenditure plans</p>	Private Builders And Consultants	<p>LA Sust Comms</p> <p>TIG</p> <p>WIE</p>	LA staff time
2. Comhairle look to increase the number of building trade related apprentices taken on through its existing Apprenticeship scheme	<p>Increase number of self-employed skilled tradespersons resident on Islands by 2009</p> <p>Establishment of enhanced modern apprenticeship scheme for skilled labour in the local construction industry by 2006</p>	LA – DSO	<p>WIE</p> <p>Lews Castle College</p> <p>Construction industry</p>	LA Staff Time
3. HHP ensures that within its building contract documentation that contractors provide opportunities for apprentices to secure “on the job” training and work experience.	<p>Requirement that HHP forward investment programmes provides a vehicle for securing training and employment opportunities is built in to the Stock Transfer Framework Document</p> <p>HHP achieve contractual obligations</p>	LA Sust Comms	<p>HHP</p> <p>Local construction Industry</p>	HHP staff time

Objective 6: Increase private accommodation targeted at younger economically active households in Greater Stornoway by 50 units as part of a wider area regeneration strategy by 2008
(Theme B - Economic Regeneration)

Action	Success / Outcome	Lead	Other Partners	Resources
1. Ensure accommodation proposals form part of overall Stornoway Regeneration process for revitalising the town.	Proposals adopted as part of Local Plan by 2007 Stornoway Regeneration process identifies accommodation proposals as a key component of its strategy by 2005	LA Sust Comms	CP Forum CPSRAPG	LA staff time
2. Provide GRO Grants to support new private housing (note that GRO units are also included in objective 1 total target)	40 GRO funded units are purchased predominately by those in target population group by 2008	TIG	LA CS Private Developer	CS development programme
3. Support the conversion of appropriate commercial property to residential use	Small number of conversions achieved as suitable opportunities appear Units are occupied predominately by those in target population group by 2009	LA Sust Comms	LA TIG Private Developer	PSHG LA Capital Programme
4. Pilot a mid rent or market rent initiative	Mid rent pilot funding secured by 2007 Mid rent pilot developed 2008 (6 units) Tenanted by incoming households/ workers	HHP/TIG		HHP / TIG own capital funds Self financing through rent revenue Community Regeneration Fund

Objective 7: Strengthen and make better use of sound evidence on links between housing investment and economic/ social development in the Western Isles to inform policy development
(Theme C - Community Regeneration)

Action	Success / Outcome	Lead	Other Partners	Resources
1. Update the Tighean Innse Gall study on empty properties with results configured to 13 sustainable community areas	<p>Study completed by early 2005</p> <p>Findings feed into other CP strategic formulation processes</p> <p>Used as basis for establishing a monitoring framework for empty property strategy</p> <p>Feed into regularly review of housing need, starting with LHS 2005 Update</p>	LA Sust Comms	<p>TIG</p> <p>CP Economic Forum</p> <p>CS</p>	<p>LA revenue fund (to be identified)</p> <p>CS research</p> <p>PSHG</p>
2. LA Housing Application form re-designed to capture data, such as incomes, to assess housing need utilising DTLR model as Scottish Executive recommends.	<p>Revised Form in use by end 2004</p> <p>Feed into regularly review of housing need, starting with LHS 2005 Update</p>	LA Sust Comms	HHP	<p>LA Staff time</p> <p>Funds to modify ICT</p>
3. Survey businesses expressing interest and /or recently locating in the Isles to establish the housing issues influencing their relocation decisions	<p>Study completed by 2005</p> <p>Findings feed into other CP strategic formulation processes</p> <p>Inform discussions of further information work on housing and economic links and further policy initiatives required to support inward migration</p>	WIE/HIE	<p>LA Sust Comms</p> <p>CS</p>	<p>HIE/ WIE funding</p> <p>CS research</p>

Objective 8: At least 70% of the social rented stock achieves the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2009

(Theme D - Warm Homes)

Action	Success / Outcome	Lead	Other Partners	Resources
1. Standard Delivery Plan prepared by April 2005	Standard Delivery Plan accepted by Scottish Executive by 2005	Tenants (Decision regards community ownership)	Scottish Executive Communities Scotland	Community Ownership Programme. Private Finance (HHP)
2. Implementation of Delivery Plan in line with its critical plan	A minimum of 70% attains standard High levels of tenant satisfaction with housing quality standards	LA Housing /HHP	RSLs	Rental Income
3. Carry out review of the RSL Allocation Policy and implement a CHR	New Allocation Policy and CHR by April 2005	LA Housing/HHP	RSLs Communities Scotland	Rental Income SE funding
4. Protocol developed for anti social behaviour and tenancy support worker provision	Anti Social Behaviour Policy and Tenancy Support Service by April 2005	LA Housing	RSLs, Police NHS Western Isles, NCH Scotland, Family Mediation Service, CAB, Advocacy Western Isles	Rental Income SE funding
5. Implement Village Voice Scheme with WI Residents Forum and TPAS	Village Voice scheme fully in place by April 2006	LA Housing/WIRF	RSLs Community Councils	Rental Income SE funding
6. Develop a Customer Service Management strategy with one stop shops and enhance revenue collection options	Customer Services Management strategy implemented by July 2006	LA Housing	RSLs	Rental Income and Specific Grants

Objective 9: Improve stock condition in the private sector by 2009

(Theme D - Warm Homes)

Action	Success / Outcome	Lead	Other Partners	Resources
1. Maintain investment at current levels to tackle BTS	Sustained reduction in occupied BTS houses over LHS Plan period PSHG grant targeted to houses in poorest condition	LA Sust Comms	TIG Care and Repair	PSHG Private household contribution
2. Develop a public awareness campaign to influence individual and company property owners' repair, energy efficiency and maintenance behaviour	Material for owners prepared and distributed by 2005 Higher levels of investment in private housing stock by property owners as measured by SHCS Overall quality of private housing improves against SHQS	LA Sust Comms	CAB TIG Com Scot (for SHCS) Health Facilities	LA revenue funding to produce material
3. Eliminate lead piping in private homes in the WI by 2009	Establish the priorities and grant criteria by July 2004 Eliminate lead pipes from the drinking water supply 20 houses treated per year No lead water supply piping in private homes in the WI by 2009	LA Sust Comms	Scottish Water	PSHG
4. Rural Sewerage Initiative Enable a co-ordinated partnership project with SEPA and Scottish Water to provide improved sewerage provision in rural Western Isles	Initiative established by September 2004 Start one scheme by January 2005 8 households have improved sewage provision by 2007	LA Sust Comms SEPA, Scottish Water	Private house owners	PSHG SEPA and Scottish Water resources Private household contribution
5. Septic tank upgrading and / or replacement	Established the priorities and grant criteria by July 2004 Enabled 25 households of new or existing houses to improve the foul water services of their house to comply with current regulations by 2007	LA Sust Comms	Private house owners	PSHG Private household contribution
6. Assist at least 10 occupants of Residential Caravan mobile homes to improve their living conditions	Established priorities and grant criteria by September 2004 Then aim to average 2 caravan improvements per quarter after that and 10 Grant awards by end 2007	LA Sust Comms		PSHG Private household contribution
7. Private water supply initiative to improve quality of water	Establish the priorities and grant criteria by September 2004 8 houses to have improved water supplies by end 2007	LA Sust Comms	Scottish Water	PSHG Private household contribution
8. Housing Design Guide used to influence housing quality	Construction forum perceive Guide to be a valuable tool for informing construction work by 2006 Reviewed within Development Plan by 2009	LA Sust Comms	Construction Industry Forum	Staff time

Objective 10: Reduce fuel poverty by 50% by 2009

(Theme D – Warm Homes)

Action	Success / Outcome	Lead	Other Partners	Resources
1. Improve measurement of Fuel Poverty by 2006	Enhanced evidence base for targeting action to address fuel poverty Evidence used to inform wider health and care strategies	LA Sust Comms	TIG Health HHP	PSHG CS funding
2. Target or prioritise PSHG towards measures to enhance NHER rating of older private properties	Improvement of all stock against SHQS	LA Sust Comms	TIG HHP EAGA	PSHG
3. Increase the take up of state benefits plus energy efficiency grants amongst vulnerable groups	CAB report increase in number of eligible households claiming benefits LA officers encourage applicants to get benefit eligibility assessment from CAB or Benefits Agency	LA Housing	TIG CAB HHP Benefits Agency	LA staff time
4. Pilot renewable energy initiative by 2008	Renewable energy heating systems installed in 6 units by 2005 and evaluated by end 2007 Replicated across tenures if pilot evaluation demonstrates added value attained.	TIG	HIE CS	HIE CS development funding LA capital programme
5. Virtually all occupied social rented stock attains an average NHER of 5 by 2009.	The target proportion of social rented stock to attain this NHER standard set by LA in 2005 By 2009 the proportion of social rented stock attaining NHER accords with LA target Improvement of all stock against SHQS	LA Housing /HHP	TIG	HHP funds Private finance

Objective11: Provide appropriate housing related solutions to prevent homelessness

(Theme E - Social Inclusion)

Action	Success / Outcome	Lead	Other Partners	Resources
1. Improve Information and Advice provision to households at risk of homelessness	<p>Agency agreement with CAB to provide information and advice across the Western Isles by 2005</p> <p>All school leavers given housing and homelessness information by end 2005</p>	<p>LA Housing/ HHP</p> <p>LA Housing/ HHP</p>	<p>CAB</p> <p>Careers Scotland</p>	<p>SE Homelessness funding</p> <p>LA staff time</p>
2. Complete implementation of rent deposit scheme by end 2004	<p>Rent deposit scheme in place and promoted</p> <p>15 households assisted through the rent deposit scheme by 2006</p>	<p>LA Housing/ HHP</p>	<p>Scottish Churches Housing Agency</p>	<p>SE Homelessness funding</p> <p>LA staff time</p>
3. Rent a room scoping study	<p>Study completed and decision whether to promote “ Rent a Room “ completed by 2006</p> <p>Depending on study outcomes, provision of advice and information pack for home owners on “rent a room” tax break by 2007</p> <p>Promotional material circulated to libraries, GP surgeries and CAB</p>	<p>LA Housing/ HHP</p>	<p>CAB</p> <p>Private owners</p>	<p>SE Homelessness funding</p>

Objective 12: Increase assistance to all households who become homeless by the introduction of a range of new initiatives by 2009

(Theme E - Social Inclusion)

Action	Success / Outcome	Lead	Other Partners	Resources
1. Provide Foyer accommodation for vulnerable young people by 2006	10 units accommodation provided by 2006 High levels of tenant satisfaction with provision and support provided Review of achievements by Foyer Management Group by 2007	Foyer Project	LA housing and social work TIG	Com Scot development funding SE homelessness funding
2. Provide 20 "starter" partially furnished tenancies by 2006	20 starter packs provided to non priority homeless households and others at risk of homelessness because they lack the means to secure furnishings by 2006 High levels of tenant satisfaction with provision of furnished tenancies Tenants report that the provision of furniture has made a real difference to their ability to take up and sustain their tenancy	LA Housing/ HHP		SE homelessness funding
3. Investigate feasibility and funding for provision of hostel type provision	Undertake feasibility study and assessment of suitable models of housing provision by 2005 Assuming study demonstrates some form of hostel provision is feasible, funding bid prepared by end 2005	LA Housing	HHP	SE homelessness funding/ Regeneration funding
4. Develop youth housing strategy by 2005	Strategy developed with other agencies by end 2005 Improved access to a wider range of accommodation options for younger households, including care leavers	LA Housing	Foyer Project NCH	SE homelessness funding

Objective 13: Provide additional and more responsive housing related services to enable vulnerable people to remain in the community

(Theme E - Social Inclusion)

Action	Success / Outcome	Lead	Other Partners	Resources
1. Carry out community care housing and related services needs assessment during 2004	Completed community care housing needs assessment provides knowledge base for planning housing and related services for vulnerable people. Enhanced understanding of the need for crisis provision for vulnerable people, including younger people	LA Housing and Social Work	CS	LA general fund CS research
2. Housing staff seek support and approval for planning decisions relating to vulnerable households from existing joint forums, including Joint Future Implementation Group	Developed vulnerable people housing action plan by end 2004 including timetabled action plan for improving accommodation and housing related service provision A more co-ordinated approach to the planning and provision of housing and care/ support services attained	LA Housing & Social Work / Joint Future Implementation Group	CS TIG	LA & NHS staff time
3. Single shared assessment arrangements for vulnerable people, including those with complex needs, takes account of housing, adaptations and /or tenancy support needs	Training to familiarise staff in housing with the single shared assessment process completed by 2005. Simplified and quicker assessment process that has reduced duplication and improved communication between housing, social service and health staff	LA Housing & Social Work/ Joint Future Implementation Group	LA + NHS & HHP staff Care and Repair	Staff time & IT costs
4. Develop Care and Repair role to include services to broader range of vulnerable client groups (update in 2005 LHS)	Small Repairs Service extended to people outwith current elderly client group by 2006 Secured agreement with Care And Repair to provide Home Safety Checks service to non elderly vulnerable people by 2006	LA Sust Comms	Care and Repair CS	PSHG
5. Provide appropriate permanent social housing with care package to young adults leaving Care	Sufficient housing and responsive support network available to meet through care /after care responsibilities Reduction in the number of young adults leaving care that are unable to maintain their tenancy	LA Social Work and Housing	HHP TIG NCH	LA staff time CS
6. Establish tenancy support scheme to assist vulnerable households retain their social rented tenancy.	Provision of housing support officer to support homeless and other vulnerable people to move into and maintain their social rented housing tenancy.	LA Housing	LA Social Work Voluntary sector	SE Homelessness funding

Objective 14: Increase the proportion of older people assisted by housing and related services to maintain their independence in their own home or community
(Theme E - Social Inclusion)

Action	Success / Outcome	Lead	Other Partners	Resources
1. Encourage new housing to be built to "lifetime homes standard" wherever possible by 2009	Formal adoption of standard by Comhairle as a condition of grant for to support construction on serviced sites Promotional material circulated to libraries, architectural/surveying firms and CAB Standards incorporated into the Design guide by 2004	LA Sust Comms	TIG HHP Construction forum	CS
2. Encourage improvements to existing housing to incorporate barrier-free standards where practical and possible	Promotional material circulated to libraries, architectural/surveying firms and CAB	LA Sust Comms		
3. Target and prioritise funding towards aids and adaptations for disabled persons.	Increased number of clients assisted for a given sum of funding from 2005	LA Sust Comms	TIG (Care and Repair)	PSHG
4. Reconfiguration of existing sheltered housing and Care Units in the social rented sector	Review sheltered housing and care units service by 2005 and develop options for alternative care models Development plan for re-directing existing capital and revenue sources and securing additional resources by 2006	LA Socialwork & Joint Future Implementation Group	CS HHP NHS	LA staff time CS NHS
5. Expansion of Care and Repair's small repair service to include home safety initiative.	Record number of houses visited and reduction of injuries from hazards in the home amongst older people	LA Sust Comms	Care and Repair NHS	PSHG SE

SECTION 4

6 Resources to Deliver the Strategy

6.1 Introduction

Our Housing Strategy needs to be ambitious if we are to support the transformation of the Western Isles economy and enhance the housing conditions and circumstances of residents. But the delivery of our strategy also depends on the availability of resources from a wide range of sources and securing “best value” from these resources. To turn our objectives and actionplan into results, it is critical that we identify and maximise the use of all available resources that will be committed by various organisations at both local and national level. These resources include funding streams, capital assets and the skills and expertise of staff.

It is not yet possible to produce a comprehensive resource plan for the coming 5 years. There is an absence of indicative allocations of funding from the Scottish Executive in a number of key areas, particularly in the future funding on Homelessness, Supporting People, the Private Sector Housing Grant and the Regeneration Fund.

This Local Housing Strategy represents an early opportunity to set out our major investment priorities for the next 5 years and our provisional estimates of expenditure associated with these priorities.

6.2 Investment Priorities

Our investment priorities for the next 5 years will be:

- Social housing attains the Scottish Social Housing Standard and working towards implementing the Western Isles Housing Quality Standard
- Adapt housing across all tenures to meet the needs of older and other vulnerable people
- Ensure good quality warm private housing by continuing priority with Private Sector Housing Grant
- Boost supply of housing sites in areas where this will help sustain communities and aid economic renewal by land banking
- Respond to unmet need for housing for varying needs
- Respond to the support needs of vulnerable households, including homeless people

6.3 Resource Planning: Assumptions, Uncertainties and Risks

Indicative allocations for most funding streams rarely extend beyond two or three years. Forward planning inevitably requires assumptions about future funding requirements and funding levels to be made. There are currently some major uncertainties that have prevented us from preparing a comprehensive set of resource planning assumptions. Of particular significance are the following:

- The overall level of housing investment over the next 5 years will largely depend on our stock transferring to the Hebridean Housing Partnership. The proposed transfer of our housing stock in 2005 is intended to generate a substantial programme of investment over the next 5 to 10 years. The HHP will produce its Business Plan in the summer of 2004 and after the result of the tenants ballot is known, it will be possible to complete a detailed assessment of the adequacy of projected resource levels relative to resource requirements.
- We are still waiting clarification from the Scottish Executive about possible future regeneration funding that will be linked to our Community Ownership plans. This potential new resource has therefore been excluded from our current provisional estimates of expenditure.
- Ongoing or soon to be commissioned research will have a major impact on our resource planning assumptions in relation to stock condition and meeting the needs of vulnerable people.

The following paragraphs sets out the level of anticipated funding available from the main investment programmes and our provisional assessment of how these are likely to be allocated or distributed against our 6 investment priorities over the next 5 years, where possible.

6.4 Landlord Capital Expenditure

At present we anticipate our own stock capital expenditure will be in the order of £1.94m for 2004/5 and 2005/6. We expect to invest around £0.19m on conversions and adaptations to our own stock to meet the changing needs of our older and disabled tenants in 2004/5 and 2005/6. The remaining £1.75m will be directed towards attaining the Scottish Social Housing Standard. Capital investment beyond 2005/6 will be appraised once the HHP Business Plan has been received and the results of the tenants' ballot are known.

One of the benefits of Community Ownership is the ability to secure the capital investment needed to bring all social housing up to modern standards as quickly as possible while maintaining rents at an affordable level. Our strategic objective that "At least 70% of the social rented stock achieves the Scottish Social Housing Standard" is predicated on our stock transfer proposals. If the transfer to HHP does not proceed this objective will not be met.

Given our current level of outstanding debt on the HRA and the impact that additional borrowing would have on increasing rent levels, the prudential regime does not provide any additional funding for the Western Isles.

Housing Associations are also required to submit Delivery Plans for achieving the Scottish Social Housing Standard by April 2005. Virtually all the housing association stock is less than ten years old and generally of a high standard and therefore it is not anticipated that there will be any major difficulties in securing the necessary finance.

Private Sector Housing Grant

Our PSHG allocation for 2003/04 was £3.397m. Our indicative allocation for the current and following financial year is £3.7734 m. This comprises a baseline allocation of £3.6384m (equivalent to 7.4% of the total PSHG pot for Scotland) and an indicative bid allocation of £0.135m. Following extensive investigation, we submitted a bid of £0.655m but our actual allocation has yet to be confirmed. Moreover, no indication of our allocation beyond 2005/06 has, or can be given by the Scottish Executive. As a result, forward planning beyond that time has to be assumed

Last year 266 Improvement, Repair and Adaptation grants were allocated through PSHG, with Western Isles Care and Repair being involved in around 112 of those cases. PSHG funding will continue to be used to assist owners to carry out improvements and repairs. Our intention for 2004/5 and 2005/6 is to allocate £2.6m each year towards the core housing grant work. This will contribute to our investment priority of ensuring good quality and warm private housing. The provision of adaptations is through either Adaptations Grants for extensive works or through Small Adaptations Grants for works costing less than £500. A provisional budget has not yet been set for major adaptation works but a provisional budget of £50k has been agreed for 2004/05 for Small Adaptations awards.

Adaptation Grant awards can sometimes require expenditure in excess of the prescribed grant limit of £20,000. We will therefore continue to work with the private sector, TIG and Communities Scotland to ensure that new housing is designed in a manner that allows properties to be easily and cost effectively adapted for disabled occupants at a later date.

The acquisition and provision of serviced sites to allow others to build housing will be a developing role to be undertaken once the results of the PSHG bid is known

We would also like to increase the levels of resources directed at tackling housing related causes of fuel poverty in the private sector. Our PSHG "bid" element has therefore given top priority to actions to support our strategic objective "to reduce Fuel Poverty by 50%". Our PSHG "bid" element also includes projects included in our Action Plan under strategic objective 8 - improve stock condition in the private sector by 2008.

We also wish to improve our ability to assess and satisfy ourselves that there is long term sustained demand for investment in private sector stock. The results of the Private Sector House Condition Survey will therefore be crucial in the assessment of our long term strategy on private sector housing.

6.5 Crofters' Building Grants and Loans Scheme (CBGLS)

On average the Western Isles receive around half the annual CBGLS funds each year. On this basis we assume that future investment will be in the order of £1.7m per annum. CBGLS funds have been allocated to boosting supply as most of his investment is now used to secure new homes and in recent years an average of 45 homes have been built with this assistance.

The Crofter Building Grant and Loan Scheme is administered by the Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department (SEERAD). Historically it has provided a cost effective means of supporting the construction of new houses and improvements to existing houses on crofting land. Current grants and loan levels are £11,500 and £17,500 respectively and have remained unchanged since 1991. These rates will be updated later this year when modifications to the scheme are announced. However, there is scope to improve the effectiveness of this grant scheme and we will continue to make the case for its enhancement to the Crofters Commission and various Scottish Executive departments.

This funding resource will be reviewed in the 2005 update of the LHS.

6.6 Development Programme

We have assumed that the current Development Programme (including Wider Action) administered by Communities Scotland will continue at current levels. The average annual investment will therefore be in the region of £3M per year. Of this we anticipate:

£2.7M will be used to support activities associated with boosting supply in areas where this will help sustain communities and economic renewal.

Some £0.15M will be used to respond to unmet need for specialist housing. This assumption will be revisited later in the year once the findings from the Community Care Housing Needs Assessment, the Sheltered Housing Review, and the Home Care Service Review are available. This will enable us to properly assess the need for new specialist housing provision and to ensure that any future capital spending is co-ordinated with revenue funds from the Supporting People and other budgets.

Most of the remaining funding will continue to be allocated to meet the running costs of Care and Repair and have therefore been allocated to supporting vulnerable households.

In addition, on the basis of current investment patterns, we have assumed that we have assumed that the Development Programme will be accompanied by around £0.6m top up funding each year. We have assumed that 90% will be used to boost supply and the remaining will be used for specialist housing.

6.7 Homelessness Implementation

Over £0.3m has been allocated to the Western Isles per year over the next two years to support the implementation of the Homelessness Taskforce recommendations and the accompanying legislative changes. Over both years we have assumed that an estimated

£0.250m will be used to respond to unmet need for specialist housing and the remaining £0.06m will be used to respond to support needs of homelessness people

The Homelessness Implementation fund is a time-limited funding pot and there has been no announcement to date that it will continue in any form. We have therefore not made any projections beyond 2005/6. It should also be noted that there is no provision in current budgets to meet ongoing revenue needs.

6.8 Supporting People

Supporting People was introduced as the main funding mechanism for housing support services in April 2003. It replaced a number of funding streams for housing support including housing benefit. It is already evident from the first year of operation that our static allocation of under £0.427m for 2004/5 is insufficient to meet existing levels of need let alone meet likely new needs arising over the next 5 years due to:

- A growing number of older frail persons in private housing requiring some support
- Anticipated improvements in identifying and assessing housing support needs as result of the single shared assessment
- Increased duties, under the Homeless etc. (Scotland) Act, to provide accommodation and support services alongside the anticipated ending of the homelessness implementation fund

It has been indicated that there will be no increase in the Supporting People budget for the foreseeable future. We have therefore assumed that funding remains constant for the next 5 years. Although we will look for possible options to reprioritise available resources, in practice we will need to find an alternative funding source if we to be able to increase provision of floating support to people in their own home.

It is essential that additional funding is made available so that we can meet our Local Housing Strategy objectives 13 and 14.

6.9 Identifying External Risks

Aside from uncertainties about future funding streams and the risk this poses for delivery of our strategic objectives and Actionplan, there is also a risk that the economic transformation being pursued through the "Creating Communities of the Future" proceeds more slowly than expected. For instance, the UK or global economic slowdown or recession would slow the rate of transformation. Alternatively, a reversal in UK Government's civil service job dispersal policy may result in lower levels of new public sector jobs appearing in the Western Isles than anticipated.

These external risk factors are not within our power to control. However, we need to ensure that we can react promptly and manage the flow of grant aided new housing construction accordingly to avoid potential problems of low demand emerging. Regular

communication and dialogue with the Local Economic Forum (LEF), Western Isles Enterprise (WIE) and ourselves will be vital to ensuring that we are able to respond promptly to change external conditions.

6.10 Other Resourcing and Capacity Issues

In addition to funding uncertainties, there are currently some organisational and staffing issues that require further investigation in the year ahead:

- Assuming it proceeds, the transfer of our stock to the HHP will necessitate internal restructuring of the Housing Service.
- We are considering assuming responsibility from 2007 for the management and administration of the Development Programme currently administered by Communities Scotland.

We therefore intend to review the possible options for developing a Strategic Housing Planning and Investment function in the coming months. This exercise will include a review of the staffing levels, skills and other resources required to support the implementation of our Local Housing Strategy and ensure effective management of the programme.

In addition, we need to further investigate how best to use or dispose of our own sites in a way that contributes to the implementation of our proposed land-banking priority but also meets “Best Value” requirements.

As noted in Chapter 2, there is some uncertainty about building the capacity of the building industry to respond to the anticipated major expansion of new building and improvements that will arise from implementation of our Local Housing Strategy. One of our strategic objectives is therefore to ensure that all funding streams open up new training and work opportunities. We have also sought additional funding through the PSHG “bid” element to support further development of our existing Apprenticeship Scheme.

6.11 Summary

Table 3 below details our anticipated resources to date and over the lifetime of this strategy. It will be necessary to review and amend these tables in the near future once a more informed picture of the resources required to meet our objectives and the levels of resources likely to be available become clearer.

Resource	2004/05 £000s	2005/06 £000s	2006/07 £000s	2007/08 £000s	2008/0 £000s	2009/10 £000s
LA – HRA capital Investment (incl. capital receipts)	£1,940	£1,900	£1,900*	£1,900*	£1,900*	£1,900*
Private Sector Housing Grant	£4,000	£3,800	£3,600*	£3,600*	£3,600*	£3,600*
CS Development Programme (incl. Wider Role)	£2,300	£2,300*	£2,300*	£2,300*	£2,300*	£2,300*
CBGLS	£1,145*	£1,145*	£1,145*	£1,145*	£1,145*	£1,145*
RSL private sector Funding	£600	£600*	£600*	£600*	£600*	£600*
SE Homelessness Funding	£313	£313				
Supporting People	£426	£426	£426	£426	£426	£426
TOTAL	£10,724	£10,524*	£9,971*	£9,971*	£9,971*	£9,971*

Table 3: Resources

* Indicates that the funding figure shown is assumed for LHS purposes

7. Monitoring and Evaluating the Strategy

7.1 Purpose

Our Monitoring and Evaluation framework will assist us to measure and report on progress against the objectives set out in the Strategy. This framework, which is detailed below, will allow us to:

- Regularly monitor and report on the progress of the Comhairle and our partners over the next 5 years in completing our agreed actions using a set of specified targets and milestones
- Evaluate the impact our actions have had on achieving our objectives and desired outcomes.

Our monitoring and evaluation framework comprises of:

- Targets and milestones that will allow us to regularly monitor if we are implementing our actions as intended
- Outcome indicators that will allow us to assess if we are being successful in bringing about the change or outcome we want
- Overall outcomes - as the achievement of most objectives will depend on a combination of actions, we have set out a core set of outcome indicators for each objective. Ultimately, it will be progress against these outcome indicators by which the overall success of our Strategy will be assessed.

7.2 Responsibilities for Reviewing and Reporting Progress

The Housing Strategy Working Group will be responsible for regularly reviewing implementation of the LHS action plan and for preparing the following:

- Annual Review and mid year progress reports to Comhairle's Housing Committee
- Annual Progress Report for wide circulation to our Partners and Stakeholders
- Six-monthly LHS briefings for Community Planning Partnership and its Local Economic Forum and Community Well Being Forum.

As well as reviewing our progress using the monitoring and evaluation framework detailed below, we will undertake research and engage in detailed consultation with the community. This will allow us to examine the extent to which we are achieving our desired outcomes - especially in the case of objectives which are difficult to specify in quantitative terms or are long term in nature.

Objective 1: Increase the supply of affordable housing by at least 350 units by 2009

Action	Targets and Milestones	Outcome indicators	Information Source
1.1 Maintain or enhance current CS Development Programme	By 2006, at least 10 CS funded units per annum are LCHO Larger sites adopted in Local Plans produced from 2007 onwards	At least 80% of approved units located in greater Stornoway area A minimum of 200 units approved by 2008	Communities Scotland ADP/TRS figures Communities Scotland ADP/TRS figures Communities Scotland TRS figures LA records Communities Scotland TRS figures
1.2 Social landlords buy existing properties and recycle as affordable housing	LA + CS agree sum of monies available to support open market purchase each year	Continuing demand in areas where new grant aided housing constructed	CS - TRS figures Letter of Agreement Housing Market Assessment 2008/9
1.3 More effective use of existing social rented stock.	Year on year increase in the number of re-lettings within 28 working days Reduction in annual number of refusals averaged over a three year period Review of Tenant Incentive schemes by 2006	Reduction in Housing List to Applicant ratios	LA/HHP records LA/HHP records LA/HHP records
1.4 Seek TMDF in April 2006 or 2007	LHS assessed as 'good' by 2005 Options for administering development funding by 2006	Transfer of TMDF secured by 2007	CS Letter Report presented To Committee
1.5 Provide serviced plots for sale in rural areas	Secure Land to facilitate at least 16 serviced plots by 2007		LA records
1.6 Evaluation of existing LCHO by 2006	Research completed by 2006 Working group to develop detailed spatial funding priorities in light of research findings established by 2006 LCHO indicative programme for 2007/8 to 2009/10 agreed by December 2006		Consultants Report LA/HHP records CS/LA records: Letter of 'in principle' agreement
Overall Outcomes	Increase supply of affordable housing by at least 300 units by 2009	Reduction in Housing Applicant to letting ratios, particularly in Greater Stornoway Fewer people living in unsuitable housing by 2009	LA/HHP allocation records Housing Needs Assessment Report

Objective 2: Bring back into use 15 empty homes to provide affordable accommodation in Greater Stornoway Area by 2009

Action	Targets and Milestones	Outcome indicators	Information Source
2.1 Redundant or derelict private housing redeveloped by housing associations for affordable housing for sale or rent	Empty/Derelict properties to be redeveloped identified by 2006	Up to 3 empty or derelict properties redeveloped in greater Stornoway by TIG by 2009	Communities Scotland TRS figures
2.2 Increase empty properties owners awareness of responsibilities & assistance that may be available to assist them meet these.	Awareness raising material distributed through libraries, doctors' surgeries and other community facilities by 2005 Annual in-house review of feedback from response slips and focus groups	Real increase in housing investment by owner occupiers between 2002 and 2009	LA records LA records SCHS/LCHS Private Sector Study 2009
2.3 Target grant aid to owners of empty property including investigating potential scope for Comhairle to devise private property leasing scheme for social renting purposes for flats above shops and /or walk in condition properties	Procedures for allocating PSHG to bring property back into use by 2005/6 Decision whether to pursue LA private leasing or lead tenancy reached by 2005	Up to 10 owners assisted through PSHG to bring property back into use	LA records LA Board/Committee Paper PSHG administrative records
Overall Outcomes		Up to 15 empty properties brought back into residential use Increase in proportion of private housing in greater Stornoway meeting SHQS Reduction in private BTS housing in greater Stornoway Fewer people living in unsuitable housing by 2009	LA : Council tax /other local records SCHS/LCHS Private Sector Study Housing Needs Assessment Report

Objective 3: As a matter of priority secure access to land for additional housing

Action	Targets and Milestones	Outcome indicators	Information Source
3.1 Examine options in relation to making crofting land available to non crofting households for building houses	LA & Crofters Commission explore better managed release of crofting agricultural land to provide new housing by end 2005 Shortlist of potential sites identified by 2006 to support new housing		LA records – minutes/correspondence Report to Community Planning Well Being Forum
3.2 Work with the Township Committees to identify plots capable of supporting new housing	10 Plots identified within the boundaries of existing townships (including areas of common grazings) by 2007 Larger sites identified within adopted Local Plan by 2007		LA records Development/Local Plans
3.3 LA secures land and provides serviced plots within townships to facilitate self build	6 Serviced plots within the boundaries of existing townships by 2007 Larger site identified within adopted local plan by 2007	Dwellings built on serviced plots provide long term affordable housing	LA records LA records Local Plan
3.4 Secure improved funding package (e.g. provide top up grants through the Comhairle and/or revamped RHOGS) to support self build to offset higher local building costs	Investigate potential scope for LA top-up funding by 2006 CS accepts RHOGs funding criteria be modified to be complementary to CBGLS by 2006	10 homes constructed to meet long term housing needs of occupants by 2009	Report to LEF/Well Being Forum LA records – Letter of confirmation Communities Scotland TRS records
Overall Outcomes		Increase in the supply of affordable housing Reduction in the average age profile of crofting townships Sustain demand for schools	LA records GRO population estimates (postcode sector) LA Education records

Objective 4: Support the inward migration of an annual average of 30 households

Action	Targets and Milestones	Outcome indicators	Information Source
4.1 Provide 20 serviced plots for sale in the Greater Stornoway Area by 2009	Provision of at least 10 sites in greater Stornoway by December 2008 Sites in locations attractive to households returning or relocating to isles	Provision of a total of 20 serviced plots for sale in greater Stornoway by end of 2009	Report summarising the characteristics of those enquiring/purchasing sites LA planning records LA planning records
4.2 Develop a Comhairle owned or identified strategic land bank capable of delivering possibly 100 residential properties by 2009 in areas of greatest need	Identified suitable volumes of land already in public ownership that can be transferred into residential land bank by 2005 Larger sites identified within updated Local Plan from 2007	Identify land suitable for zoning through the Local Planning process for residential purposes by 2007	LA housing/planning records LA planning records Local Plan Documents
Overall Outcomes	Evidence that inward migration has increased	At least 80% of assisted households are inward migrants Survey of purchasers of serviced plots suggests that 30 inward migrants assisted per annum by 2007 Employers report easing of recruitment problems Reduction in number of economically active in-migrants seeking social rented housing	GRO/CHI index Local Survey General consultation with local employers via CP Local Economic Forum LA/HP Management information on allocations

Objective 5: Secure at least five additional full-time job or training opportunities for jobseekers per annum in the construction sector

Action	Targets and Milestones	Outcome indicators	Information Source
5.1 Support the Western Isles Construction Forum that meets regularly to discuss local construction issues	Construction Forum chaired and run by construction industry by 2009 Reviewed requirement for some form of accreditation scheme by 2007	Local Construction sector believes itself well informed about forward residential investment plans Local construction sector self reports that it is geared up to meet forward investment expenditure plans by 2002	Survey of construction Sector LA records/report to Well Being Forum Construction Sector Focus Group Construction Sector Focus Group
5.2 Comhairle look to increase the number of building trade related apprentices taken on through its existing Apprenticeship scheme	Establishment of enhanced modern apprenticeship scheme for skilled labour in the local construction industry by 2006	Increase number of self-employed skilled tradespersons resident on Islands by 2009	WIE/LA Survey shows increase above 2004 baseline figure
5.3 HHP ensures that within its building contract documentation that contractors provide opportunities for apprentices to secure "on the job" training and work experience.	HHP Contracts include suitable provision for training & employment by 2005 At least 1 'on the job training/work experience' placement by 2007		ITT and Associated Tender Documentation HHP Records
Overall Outcomes	By 2009 there is at least five more full time jobs or training opportunities than in 2004	Additional posts self funded through social housing investment HHP 'supported' 'on the job experience' positively perceived by those on placement Construction Sector report easing of recruitment difficulties	Feedback from Placement Persons Feedback from Construction Forum

Objective 6: Increase private accommodation targeted at younger economically active households in Greater Stornoway by 50 units as part of a wider area regeneration strategy by 2008

Action	Targets and Milestones	Outcome indicators	Information Source
6.1 Ensure accommodation proposals form part of overall Stornoway Regeneration process for revitalising the town.	Proposals adopted as part of Local Plan by 2007 Stornoway Regeneration process identifies accommodation proposals as a key component of its strategy by 2005		Local Plan Document Stornoway Regeneration Documentation
6.2 Provide GRO Grants to support new private housing	40 GRO developed by 2008 Introduced arrangements to track resales and character of subsequent purchasers up to 2015 by April 2007	At least 70% first purchasers are younger economically active households	Communities Scotland TRS statistics GRORE Forms/Data
6.3 Support the conversion of appropriate commercial property to residential use		Up to 5 commercial properties (including flats above shops) converted by 2009 Units are occupied predominately by those in target population group by 2009	
6.4 Pilot a mid rent or market rent initiative	Mid rent pilot funding secured by 2007 Review potential scope to expand mid rent provision by 2009	6 Mid rent pilot units developed 2008 Tenanted by incoming households/ workers	Comhairle SCORE/GRORE or equivalent survey CR/TRS Records LA Committee paper LHS 2009
Overall Outcomes	50 private units developed with minimal grant input by 2009	Local Economic Forum report provision having positive impact Reduction in number of people living in unsuitable housing	Communities Scotland TRS records Local Economic Forum minutes Housing Needs Assessment

Objective 7: Strengthen and make better use of sound evidence on links between housing investment and economic/ social development in the Western Isles to inform policy development

Action	Targets and Milestones	Outcome indicators	Information Source
7.1 Update the Tighean Innse Gall study on empty properties with results configured to 13 sustainable community areas	Study completed by early 2005: - Findings feed into other CP strategic formulation processes Used as basis for establishing a monitoring framework for empty property strategy Feed into regular review of housing need, starting with LHS 2005 Update		LA Records Consultants Report LHS Update
7.2 LA Housing Application form re-designed to capture data, such as incomes, to assess housing need utilising DTLR model as Scottish Executive recommends.	Revised Form in use by end 2004 Feed into regular review of housing need, starting with LHS 2005 Update		LA Records LHS Update
7.3 Survey businesses expressing interest and /or recently locating in the Isles to establish the housing issues influencing their relocation decisions	Study completed by 2005: - Findings feed into other CP strategic formulation processes Inform discussions of further work on housing and economic links and further policy initiatives required to support inward migration		Consultants Report LA Records
Overall Outcomes	More comprehensive LHSA completed	LHSA used to inform both LHS and Local Economic Forum Strategy decision making	LHSA Assessment Report

Objective 8: At least 70% of the social rented stock achieves the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2009

Action	Targets and Milestones	Outcome indicators	Information Source
8.1 Standard Delivery Plan prepared by April 2005	Standard Delivery Plan accepted by Scottish Executive by summer 2005		Scottish Executive/Communities Scotland Letter
8.2 Implementation of Delivery Plan in line with its critical plan	At least 85% of target dates detailed in delivery plan for achievement of works are achieved		HHP Records
8.3 Carry out review of the RSL Allocation Policy and implement a CHR	New Allocation Policy and CHR by April 2005	Less than 25% of social rented tenants live in housing below SHQS or WHQ Standard by 2009	LHCS or other data detailed in the Delivery Plan
8.4 Protocol developed for anti social behaviour and tenancy support worker provision	Anti Social Behaviour Policy and Tenancy Support Service by April 2005		LA Housing or HHP Policy list
8.5 Implement Village Voice Scheme with WI Residents Forum and TPAS	Village Voice scheme fully in place by April 2006		LA/ HHP records
8.6 Develop a Customer Services Management strategy with one stop shops and enhance revenue collection options	Customer Services Management strategy implemented by July 2006		LA/ HHP records
Overall Outcomes	A minimum of 70% attains standard	High levels of tenant satisfaction with housing quality standards Less than 5% of social rented tenants without full central heating/insulation	Comhairle/HHP Tenant Survey

Objective 9: Improve stock condition in the private sector by 2009

Action	Targets and Milestones	Outcome indicators	Information Source
9.1 Maintain investment at current levels to tackle BTS	Establish baseline profile of private sector disrepair, particularly in priority regeneration areas, against SHQS	At least 80 BTS properties demolished At least 80 properties failing existing BTS improved	Consultants Report LA records
9.2 Develop a public awareness campaign to influence individual and company property owners' repair, energy efficiency and maintenance behaviour	Material for owners distributed by 2005	Increase in the overall level of investment by owner occupiers Increase in the volume of existing private properties attaining SHQS	LA Records
			SCHS/LHCS 2004 and 2008 SCHS/LHCS 2004 and 2008
9.3 Eliminate lead piping in private homes in the WI by 2009	Establish priorities and grant criteria by July 2004	At least 40 houses treated by 2006	LA records
9.4 Rural Sewerage Initiative Enable a co-ordinated partnership project with SEPA and Scottish Water to provide improved sewerage provision in rural Western Isles	Establish initiative by 3 September 2004 Start one scheme by January 2005	8 Households have improved sewage provision by 2007	LA records
9.5 Septic tank upgrading and / or replacement	Establish priorities and grant criteria by summer 2004	At least 50 houses treated by 2006	LA records
9.6 Assist at least 10 occupants of Residential Caravan mobile homes to improve their living conditions	Established priorities and grant criteria by 2004	10 Grant awards by end 2007	LA records
			LA records
9.7 Private water supply initiative to improve quality of water	Establish the priorities and grant criteria by September 2004	8 houses to have improved water supplies by end 2007	
9.8 Housing Design Guide used to influence housing quality	Reviewed within Development Plan by 2009	Construction forum perceive Guide to be a valuable tool for informing construction work by 2006	LA records
			Construction Forum
Overall Outcome		Fewer private sector households living in BTS properties by 2009	SHCS/LHCS
		Increase in occupied private properties achieving SHQS by 2009	SHCS/LHCS
		Reduction in occupied private housing requiring urgent repair	SHCS/LHCS
		Elimination of lead piping	SHCS/LHCS

Objective 10: Reduce fuel poverty by 50% by 2009

Action	Targets and Milestones	Outcome indicators	Information Source
10.1 Improve measurement of Fuel Poverty by 2006	Enhanced evidence base for targeting action to address fuel poverty Evidence used to inform wider health and care strategies by 2007		LA records
10.2 Target or prioritise PSHG towards measures to enhance NHER rating of older private properties	15 households receive PSHG specifically to improve thermal efficiency/heating system of property	Improvement of all private stock against SHQS 30% of houses taken out of Fuel Poverty by 2006	
10.3 Increase the take up of state benefits plus energy efficiency grants amongst vulnerable groups	LA officers encourage applicants to get benefit eligibility assessment from CAB or Benefits Agency	CAB report increase in number of eligible households claiming benefits	
10.4 Pilot renewable energy initiative by 2008	Renewable energy heating systems installed in 6 units by 2005 and evaluated by end 2007 Impact of Pilot evaluated by end of 2007	Expand the installation of renewable energy heating system to other tenures if pilot evaluation demonstrates cost effective results	
10.5 Capital investment in social rented housing targeted at improving energy efficiency and heating systems by 2009	Local authority establish target for the proportion of all occupied social rented stock to attain NHER of 5+ by 2005	By 2009 virtually all housing stock attains NHER of 5 (in line with LA target)	SHCS
Overall Outcome		Reduction in the number of all properties with NHER of 2 or less Increase in the total number of occupied properties with NHER of 5+ 30% reduction in the number of households across all tenures defined as fuel poor	SCHS/LHCS SCHS/LHCS SCHS

Objective 11: Provide appropriate housing related solutions to prevent homelessness

Action	Targets and Milestones	Outcome indicators	Information Source
11.1 Improve Information and Advice provision to households at risk of homelessness	Agency agreement with CAB to provide information and advice across the Western Isles by 2005 All school leavers given housing and homelessness information by end 2005	Positive feedback from school leavers on material	LA records LA records
11.2 Complete implementation of rent deposit scheme by end 2004	Rent deposit scheme in place and promoted	15 households assisted through the rent deposit scheme by 2006	LA records LA records
11.3 Rent a room scoping study	Study completed and decision whether to promote "Rent a Room" completed by 2006 Depending on study outcomes, provision of advice and information pack for home owners on "rent a room" tax break by 2007 Promotional material circulated to libraries, GP surgeries and CAB		LA records LA records LA records
Overall Outcomes		Reduction in rate of increase of homeless presentations Reduction in proportion of young people aged 16-18 year olds presenting as homeless	Homeless records/GRO population estimates Homeless records/GRO population estimates

Objective 12: Increase assistance to all households who become homeless by the introduction of a range of new initiatives by 2009

Action	Targets and Milestones	Outcome indicators	Information Source
12.1 Provide Foyer accommodation for vulnerable young people by 2006	10 units accommodation provided by 2006 High levels of tenant satisfaction with provision and support provided	Review of achievements by Foyer Management Group by 2007	LA records Residents Survey Residents Survey
12.2 Provide 20 "starter" partially furnished tenancies by 2006	20 starter packs provided to non priority homeless households and others at risk of homelessness because they lack the means to secure furnishings by 2006	High levels of tenant satisfaction with provision of furnished tenancies Tenants report that the provision of furniture has made a real difference to their ability to take up and sustain their tenancy	LA records Residents Survey Residents Survey
12.3 Investigate feasibility and funding for provision of hostel type provision	Undertake feasibility study and assessment of suitable models of housing provision by 2005	Assuming study demonstrates some form of hostel provision is feasible, funding bid prepared by end 2005	LA records LA records
12.4 Develop youth housing strategy by 2005	Strategy developed with other agencies by end 2005	Improved access to a wider range of accommodation options for younger households, including care leavers	LA records LA records
Overall Outcomes		Reduction in number of homeless households in temporary accommodation Reduction in repeat homelessness LA achieve requirements detailed in 'throughcare' and 'aftercare' regulations	Homelessness records Homelessness records LA records

Objective 13: Provide additional and more responsive housing related services to enable vulnerable people to remain in the community

Action	Targets and Milestones	Outcome indicators	Information Source
13.1 Carry out community care housing and related services needs assessment during 2004	Completed community care housing needs assessment by autumn 2004	Enhanced understanding of the need for crisis provision for vulnerable people, including younger people	Consultants report
13.2 Housing staff seek support and approval for planning decisions relating to vulnerable households from existing joint forums, including Joint Future Implementation Group	Developed vulnerable people housing strategy by end 2004	A more co-ordinated approach to the planning and provision of housing and care/ support services attained	LA records Key Partners 'Working Together Survey'
13.3 Single shared assessment arrangements for vulnerable people, including those with complex needs, takes account of housing, adaptations and /or tenancy support needs	Training to familiarise staff in housing with the single shared assessment process completed by 2005. Simplified and quicker assessment process that has reduced duplication and improved communication between housing, social service and health staff		LA records Key Partners 'Working Together Survey'
13.4 Develop Care and Repair role to include services to broader range of vulnerable client groups (update in 2005 LHS)	Small Repairs Service extended to people outwith current elderly client group by 2006 Secured agreement with Care And Repair to provide Home Safety Checks service to non elderly vulnerable people by 2006		LA records LA records
13.5 Provide appropriate permanent social housing with care package to young adults leaving Care	Sufficient housing and responsive support network available to meet through care /after care responsibilities	Reduction in the number of young adults leaving care that are unable to maintain their tenancy	LA records Housing Management turnover/reletting data (LA or HHP)
13.6 Establish tenancy support scheme to assist vulnerable households retain their social rented tenancy.	Provision of housing support officer to support homeless and other vulnerable people to move into and maintain their social rented housing tenancy.		LA records
Overall Outcomes		Increase in the number of households benefiting from care & repair services Reduction in vulnerable households becoming at risk of homelessness	TIG care & repair records Homelessness Statistics Feedback

Objective 14: Increase the proportion of older people assisted by housing and related services to maintain their independence in their own home or community

Action	Targets and Milestones	Outcome indicators	Information Source
14.1 Encourage new housing to be built to "lifetime homes standard" wherever possible by 2009	Formal adoption of standard by Comhairle as a condition of grant to support construction on serviced sites		LA records
	Promotional material circulated to libraries, architectural/ surveying firms and CAB	Positive feedback from Construction Forum	Construction Forum minutes
	Standards incorporated into the Design guide by 2004	Construction Forum report/perceived increase in work to existing properties towards obtaining barrier free by 2009	LA records
14.2 Encourage improvements to existing housing to incorporate barrier-free standards where practical and possible	Promotional material circulated to libraries, architectural/ surveying firms and CAB	At least 150 clients assisted by 2006	Construction Forum minutes
		At least 350 clients assisted by 2009	LA records
14.3 Target and prioritise funding towards aids and adaptations for disabled persons.	Increased number of clients assisted within approved resources from 2005		LA records
14.4 Reconfiguration of existing sheltered housing and Care Units in the social rented sector	Review sheltered housing and care units service by 2005 and develop options for alternative care models Development plan for re-directing existing capital and revenue sources and securing additional resources by 2006		LA records
			LA records
14.5 Expansion of Care and Repair's small repair service to include home safety initiative.	Undertake risk assessment of vulnerable clients' homes and take action where appropriate	200+ older and other vulnerable clients assisted by end of 2009	LA records
Overall Outcomes		Increase in the number of households benefiting from the care & repair service	TIG care & repair records
		Increase in the number of individuals to remain in own home	LA records

Appendix A: Summary of Related Local Policy Documents

As highlighted throughout this LHS, housing is central to the delivery of the strategic objectives of a range of services. Equally, the activities of other services and organisations will be critical to the successful implementation of the Local Housing Strategy. Brief details of the most directly relevant plans and strategies are therefore summarised below.

The Western Isles Community Plan

Local authorities were given lead responsibility for establishing a Community Planning process involving a wide range of partners. A Community Planning Partnership has been established and has developed the over arching framework within which all other strategy and planning work, including the Local housing strategy Operates.

The Western Isles Community Plan is currently at consultative draft stage. The plan contains a vision for the islands agreed by over 20 bodies in the private, public, voluntary and community sector and has identified 4 priorities for action:

- The Economy - Through working in partnership we will strive to create a sustainable diverse economy where everyone has the opportunity to undertake satisfying work.
- Community Well Being The aim is to achieve the best possible health and well being for everyone in the Western Isles.
- Our Culture and Heritage - The aim is to preserve, enhance and promote the culture and heritage of the islands and ensure that opportunities for culture, leisure and recreation are readily available to all.
- Lifelong Learning - The aim is to ensure everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential through community participation and learning

Corporate Strategy

The Comhairle has developed its Corporate Strategy in line with the agreed vision and priorities of the Western Isles Community Plan and has adopted its 4 strategic themes. The key priorities set out in the Corporate Strategy that are of greatest significance for this Local Housing Strategy are:

- Use “Creating Communities of the Future” to drive our economic development priorities to stabilise the rural economy and reinforce growth around Stornoway
- Securing housing investment to support economic development in the Western Isles and specifically to achieve stability in the rural economy and deal with growth around Stornoway
- Enabling people to live in a warm, well maintained home and promoting high quality design and specification of houses and their components
- Ensuring that we engage in meaningful consultation and involve the community, service users and tenants on a consistent and on going basis
- Encouraging community management and efficient use of services and development of community facilities
- Encouraging community ownership of assets

- Use the Structure Plan and unified Local Plan to define a sustainable framework for future development
- Ensure that all development in the Western Isles is based on the principle of sustainability
- Reducing financial exclusion by establishing a Western Isles Credit Union and maximising benefit uptake
- Promoting services that support people with disabilities or who experience disadvantage
- Taking health issues into account when developing policies
- Supporting the economic, social and cultural base of the islands from employment including training, skilled trades and apprenticeships
- Support the development of people and skills through the promotion of apprenticeships
- Promoting community safety in partnership with our community planning partners
- Developing a proactive approach to home safety for vulnerable groups

Structure Plan

The Western Isles Structure Plan was approved by Scottish Ministers and became operational on 15th December 2003. The Structure Plan provides the context for all Comhairle policy and strategy work.

The key aim of the Structure Plan is *“to provide a framework for sustaining and developing communities throughout the Western Isles”*. This is to be achieved by policies which: promote sustainability and quality of life; encourage population retention and in-migration; and which fundamentally help support those who wish to live, work and invest in the Islands.

It summarises the key policies of relevance to the Western Isles Local Housing Strategy (LHS). Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar is currently working towards the production of a single Western Isles Local Plan. It is therefore the approved Structure Plan, which is taken as the main focus of advice for land use planning policy for the LHS.

Supporting People

The first Western Isles Supporting People Strategy was submitted to Communities Scotland in April 2003, and updated in October 2003.

The Strategy reflects the principle of Care at Home, which underpins the Community Care agenda of Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar, and highlights the specific local characteristics relating to population structure, demographics, housing tenure and geography which influence the development and delivery of support services in the Islands.

The document clearly identified the links to, and is consistent with, the aims of related Comhairle strategies and plans such as: the Homelessness Strategy; Community Care Plan; Community Plan and Children’s Services Plan.

The Comhairle recognises that to date the strategy is lacking in data regarding client groups and therefore had no validated baseline information on which to carry out a needs assessment of future support service demand.

This is now being addressed as part of a comprehensive Community Care Housing Needs Assessment (currently under commission) and a substantially updated Strategy will be submitted in Autumn 2004 following the completion of that work.

Homelessness Strategy

The Western Isles Homelessness Strategy that covers the three-year period 2003-2006 was submitted to the Scottish Executive by 31st March 2003. The strategy was informed by an assessment of local homelessness that involved research investigating the extent, nature and causes of homelessness, existing homeless services and identification of gaps in service delivery. The research was accompanied by extensive consultation with local agencies and homeless service users.

Health and Homelessness Strategies

The Western Isles Health and Homelessness Action Plan 2002-2005 was developed by an inter-agency group accountable to the Western Isles Community Planning Partnership, and was revised in November 2003. Different Lead Agencies are responsible for delivering individual elements of this Strategy and this is emphasised and reinforced in the Western Isles NHS Board's Local Health Plan, the Health Inequality Strategy, the Community Planning Partnership's Joint Health Improvement Plan, and the Comhairle's Homelessness Strategy.

The Plan seeks to establish a health promotion approach to assist individuals at all points on the homelessness spectrum and identifies four areas of work to be undertaken:

- To carry out needs assessment and service activity exercises that identify the major issues and show gaps in knowledge and service provision. The service activity exercise will also identify the barriers to the accessing of appropriate healthcare.
- To ensure that the strategies and plans of all partners reflect the needs of the homeless
- To provide training on health and homelessness issues to staff in a variety of agencies and organisations
- To implement service improvements/developments that will meet the specific health and healthcare needs of those experiencing or at risk of homelessness

HECA Strategy (Home Energy Conservation Act, 1995)

The initial HECA report and Strategy established a baseline of energy efficiency of the housing stock in the Western Isles as at 1 April 1997. It set out a range of proposals to improve the energy efficiency of housing while conceding that there were still significant housing repair issues to be resolved across the housing stock in the islands. Improved heating systems, insulation and draught stripping were the main elements in the report to improve energy efficiency, together with advice and information targeted at a range of audiences.

Tenant Participation Strategy

The aim of Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar's Tenant Participation Strategy is to empower tenants to take an active role, long or short term, in the design and delivery of their housing and associated services. The strategy recognises that for tenants to be empowered they must have knowledge, information, skills, authority and choice.

The Strategy emphasises our commitment to encourage tenants to develop the capacity to influence the decision making process, and the choice of influence on both an individual or collective level. It also highlights our commitment to encouraging a culture of mutual respect between elected members, staff and tenants. The Tenant Participation Strategy encourages equal opportunities by ensuring that tenants are not excluded from actively participating on the basis of limited mobility; age; political opinion; race; colour; gender; visual or hearing impairment.

Hebridean Housing Partnership Business Plan

The Hebridean Housing Partnership is in the process of pulling together its Business Plan for submission to the Comhairle and the Scottish Executive, with the first draft being ready at the end of June 2004.

The Business Plan will cover a thirty-year period outlining the Partnership's investment plan for the stock being transferred from the Comhairle.

Appendix B: Contacts for Other Local Planning Processes /Documents

Housing Strategy	Matt Bruce <i>e-mail: mbruce@cne-siar.gov.uk</i> <i>tel: 01851 709 361</i>
Development Plans	Keith Bray <i>e-mail: kbray@cne-siar.gov.uk</i> <i>tel: 01851 709 544</i>
Economic Development Framework	Calum Iain MacIver <i>e-mail: calum.maciver@cne-siar.gov.uk</i> <i>tel: 01851 709 594</i>
Community Plan	Derek McKim <i>e-mail: dmckim@cne-siar.gov.uk</i> <i>tel: 01851 709 270</i>
Supporting People programme	Isobel Mackenzie <i>e-mail: isobel-mackenzie@cne-siar.gov.uk</i> <i>tel: 01851 705312</i>
Homelessness Strategy	Lorraine Graham <i>e-mail: l.graham@cne-siar.gov.uk</i> <i>tel: 01851 709 374</i>
Managing Comhairle housing	Tony Pendle <i>e-mail: tpendle@cne-siar.gov.uk</i> <i>tel: 01851 709 512</i>
Private Sector renewal & provision of disabled adaptations grants	Andrew White <i>e-mail: awhite@cne-siar.gov.uk</i> <i>tel: 01851 709 322</i>
Communities Scotland Development Funding Grant programme	David Nicol <i>e-mail: nicold@communitiesscotland.gov.uk</i> <i>tel: 01463 711272</i>
Hebridean Housing Partnership	Angus Lamont <i>e-mail: alamont@cne-siar.gov.uk</i> <i>tel: 01851 707153</i>
Tighean Innse Gall	Linda Haig <i>e-mail: linda@tighean.co.uk</i> <i>tel: 01851 706121</i>

Appendix C: Glossary

Acceptable Behaviour Contracts - a contract between an individual and various support agencies which stipulates a standard of behaviour required if a tenancy is to continue

Affordable Housing - housing in any tenure that is of reasonable quality and affordable to those on modest incomes

Allocation Policy - policy which explains how a Local Authority or Registered Social Landlord will allocate properties in their ownership

Anti-Social Behaviour Order- a legal order served on an individual or family which specifies actions which are prohibited .A breach of the order can result in imprisonment

Best Value - statutory duty to provide higher quality and more responsive public services

BTS - Below Tolerable Standard, a national measure of house condition determined in law

CAB - Citizens Advice Bureau

Care and Repair Project - project funded jointly by the Comhairle and Communities Scotland to assist elderly and vulnerable home owners repair and maintain their homes and access grant funding

CBGLS - Crofter Builder Grant and Loan Scheme, administered by SEERAD

Comhairle - Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar (formerly called Western Isles Council)

Community Care - Services delivered in the community to vulnerable individuals (e.g. Elderly, Physically Disabled, Homeless)

CBHA - Community Based H.A's - small Housing Associations situated throughout the Western Isles, purchasing financial and development services from TIG and housing management and repair services from the Comhairle and run by local management committees

CS - Communities Scotland - formerly Scottish Homes, now a Scottish Executive Agency dealing with housing and regeneration issues, and with a monitoring role over the activities of Registered Social Landlords

Community Planning Partnership - grouping of local agencies tasked with developing a strategy to improve the social, environmental, and economic well-being of the community

Development Funding - funds currently allocated by Communities Scotland and disbursed to RSLs, private developers and individuals to progress new-build and refurbishment programmes

Equal Opportunities - Government policy to ensure that everyone is treated equally and is not discriminated or prejudiced against as a result of their ethnic origin, disability, sexuality, religion, gender or age

Foyer Project - newly established project to provide integrated access to accommodation, training and employment opportunities, life-skills and health information for vulnerable young people between 16 and 25 years, who do not come under Care Leavers legislation. Initially based in Stornoway, the project will be extended throughout the Islands in coming years.

Fragile Communities - remote, rural communities that are lacking in economic and social opportunities and are consequently experiencing population loss

Fuel Poverty - term to describe situation where a household spends more than 10% of disposable income to adequately heat their home

General Fund - the Comhairle's funding for its Capital Programme

GRO - grant provided by Communities Scotland to encourage developers to provide houses either for rent or ownership

HAG - Housing Association Grant allocated by Communities Scotland as development funding to enable new build and refurbishment of houses

HRA - Housing Revenue Account, the ring-fenced budget that covers all the Comhairle's housing management related services. Funded from rent receipts and Housing Support Grant

Hebridean Housing Partnership - a community owned not for profit housing association set up by Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar, which will take over the Comhairle's housing following stock transfer

HIE - Highland and Islands Enterprise

Homelessness Task Force – core group of Comhairle staff established to develop, monitor and implement the Homelessness Strategy for the Western Isles

Homelessness Strategy Network Group - stakeholder group of local agencies which will work with the Task Force to implement and develop the strategy

Joint Future - Scottish Executive initiative to improve partnership working and service delivery in Community Care by Local Authorities and Health Boards through shared agendas and pooled budgets

LCHO - Low Cost Home Ownership e.g. a grant assisted system allowing applicants to become first time buyers

Lews Castle College – Independently run facility based in Stornoway, with satellite sites throughout the Islands. Provides further education syllabus and is also the Western Isles Campus of the University of the Highlands and Islands

LHS - Local Housing Strategy

Local House Condition Survey - survey of the condition of housing stock in the Western Isles measured against national standards

National House Condition Survey - survey of housing stock across all tenures throughout Scotland measured against national quality standards

NHER - National Home Energy Rating, a measure of insulation quality and cost of heating

Non-HRA - expenditure which is housing related e.g. homelessness, housing strategy, but not directly attributable to the housing stock, and which is paid for through General Fund

Pressured Area Status – description of an area of social housing where all tenancies taken up after this Status is confirmed are excluded from Right To Buy legislation for a period of five years. All existing tenants in that area would however continue to have the Right To Buy

PSHG - Private Sector Housing Grant –funding allocated by the Scottish Executive through Communities Scotland to the Comhairle to enable works in the private sector, for example by assisting owner-occupiers to carry out improvement, repair or adaptations to their properties

RESIDENTS' FORUM - umbrella group representing residents groups throughout the Islands

RHOG - Rural Home Ownership Grant funded by Communities Scotland and distributed in the Western Isles by TIG to assist individual home-building or renovation projects

RSL - Registered Social Landlord—a non-profit making landlord, registered with and monitored by Communities Scotland

RTB - Right To Buy - legal right of most Local Authority and some Housing Association tenants to buy their home at a discounted price subject to meeting qualifying criteria

Sasines - national register of land and property transactions in Scotland

Scottish Housing Quality Standard – proposed minimum standard of physical house condition to be met throughout Scotland

SEERAD - Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department

Sheltered Housing - housing for older people characterised by the provision of warden services

Stock Transfer - process of transferring ownership of the Comhairle's housing stock to the Hebridean Housing Partnership following a positive tenant ballot. Ballot scheduled for November 2004

Single Shared Assessment – part of the Joint Future Agenda, aimed at minimising the number of professional assessments required to develop a complex care package and thereby reducing stress on clients. Information gathered by Lead Assessor will be shared with other agencies as appropriate.

Social Inclusion - all-encompassing term to describe the wide range of activities which help disadvantaged people access all available services and opportunities to achieve their maximum potential and independence, and enables them to take an active role in society

Social Rented Housing - rented accommodation provided by Councils and Housing Associations

Stornoway Trust - the community based organisation that is the largest landowner in the Greater Stornoway area

TIG - Tighean Innse Gall—the Western Isles Housing Agency, provides agency services for Communities Scotland, financial and development services to the community based housing associations, delivers the Care and Repair Scheme on behalf of the Comhairle, runs the Energy Advisory Service for the Western Isles and delivers related initiatives. TIG is also involved in partnership working in connection with the development of Western Isles Foyer and Hebridean Housing Partnership

TPAS – the Tenant Participation and Advice Service, a national organisation that advises tenants groups

VOIDS - untenanted properties

WIHQs - WESTERN ISLES HOUSING QUALITY STANDARD - the standard, which the houses transferred to Hebridean Housing Partnership, will attain within 10years .In local terms the Quality Standard incorporates features of the Scottish Housing Quality Standard but with certain enhancements to reflect tenant choice and local circumstances

WIE – Western Isles Enterprise, the local delivery agent of HIE

WIRF – Western Isles Residents Forum, the umbrella group representing residents groups throughout the Islands

Appendix D: Commissioned Research to support LHS Development and List of Supporting Documents

Western Isles Local Housing Strategy	April 2004
Securing the Future report	September 2003
Western Isles draft Objectives and options	Jan 2004
Western Isles LHS Objectives workshop report	Feb 2004
Seminars and Workshops report	March 2004
Glasgow University housing system analysis report	April 2004
Preparing for consultation	TIG 2002
CNES Housing Plan	2000 - 03
CNES accounts	2002
Community Plan	2003
CNES Structure Plan + final modifications	2003
Corporate Strategy	2003
Western Isles Creating Communities of the Future	2002
Broadbay local plan	2003
Energy Innovation Zone vision	2001
Western Isles Community Economic Dev. Partnership	2001-2003
CNES external funding strategy	2001
CNES area development support	1999
NHP Option Appraisal report - DTZ	2001
NHP Housing Needs report - DTZ	2001
CNES Valuation Report - DTZ	2003
CNES Tenants Aspiration Survey - DTZ	2001
CNES Social Housing Stock Condition Survey - JMP	2003
CNES Affordability Study – Arneil Johnson	2004 – to follow
CNES Private Sector House Condition Survey – TIG/ JMP	2004 – to follow
CNES Joint Future Framework Document	2003
CNES Childrens Service Plan	2000
Homelessness Strategy	2003
Supporting People Strategy	Sept 2003
Western Isles Tenant Participation Strategy	2003
CNES Allocations Data	2003/04
CNES Homeless Statistics	2003/04
CNES Report to Housing Committee “HECA and Fuel Poverty”	2004
CNES Report to Housing Committee “Private Sector Grant and Funding Bids”	2004
Private House Sales - First MacPherson research report	Feb 2004
Action 35 report	2003
CBGLS New house expenditure for Western Isles	2001-2004
CBGLS report by Chapman Hendy	1997-1998
Western Isles Foyer Business Plan	2003
TIG Business Plan	2004
NHS Western Isles Health and Homelessness Action Plan	2002/05
Communities Scotland Housing Market Context Statement	2003