

MORAY'S LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY – SUMMARY VERSION

(to be 'crystal marked')

This is the first Local Housing Strategy to be produced by the Council. Its purpose is to set out how we intend to tackle housing problems within Moray. It will be in place for five years from 2004-2009. We will publish a progress report each year.

What is the Local Housing Strategy?

The strategy is a planning document. It sets out what needs to be done to alleviate the housing problems in Moray, the resources that are needed and the time in which the various tasks need to be completed. The overall aim of the strategy is:

To ensure that good quality, affordable housing is available to meet the needs of people living in or requiring housing in Moray.

The strategy is concerned with the whole of Moray and is relevant to all types of housing – not just Council housing. Although the Council has produced it, it is a result of working together with other housing providers, services within the Council, agencies such as NHS Grampian and the public.

Housing Problems in Moray

The main problems in Moray are:

- A lack of affordable housing – longstanding, and considered to be the main reason behind Moray's homelessness problems
- High levels of fuel poverty – the joint second highest in mainland Scotland
- High levels of disrepair in the private sector – because of the large proportion of older houses
- A growing elderly population with housing and support needs.

How the strategy was developed

The Moray strategy was part of a pilot project (trial run) along with Aberdeenshire Council and Aberdeen City Council. All three authorities have made their strategies similar in that they group their housing problems into four themes. This allows the authorities to work together if they find they share the same problems.

There are four themes within the strategy:

Access to housing – We need to ensure that people can have access to the types of house that best suits their needs. This includes actions to:

- Address homelessness
- Provide information and advice
- Ensure that the best use is made of existing private sector, Council and Housing Association stock
- Ensure that nobody is discriminated against
- Ensure that there is suitable accommodation and support for gypsy/traveller communities.

Quality of Housing – We need to ensure that the quality of housing in Moray is of the highest standard. This includes actions to:

- Address Fuel Poverty
- Ensure that all Council and Housing Association houses comply with the Housing Quality Standard
- Address problems of poor housing quality in the private sector
- Address the particular problems with the number of older people in poor quality housing.

Community Care – We need to ensure that we can provide suitable housing and support services to promote independent living within the community for those with particular needs. This includes actions to:

- Provide suitable types of housing for the growing numbers of elderly people
- Provide sufficient housing and support for people of all ages.
- Build houses that can change as the person's health or social circumstances change
- Ensure that there is enough housing for those with particular mental or physical needs.

Sustainable Communities and Social Inclusion - We recognise that housing is not just about providing a building. Houses and people make up communities and we need to ensure that housing plays its part in building safe and thriving communities. This includes actions to:

- Provide enough affordable housing and encouraging mixed communities.
- Contribute to rural areas by providing housing so that people will move and stay – keeping the area vibrant
- Promote social justice by ensuring that fuel poverty is tackled so everybody, regardless of income or location can afford to live in a warm home.

The full strategy explains these themes and actions in more detail and provides the background as to why these particular actions were chosen.

How will the work be done?

The strategy sets out an ambitious programme. All people involved in housing and other agencies will need to work together to address the housing need in Moray.

To carry out the work in the strategy, we require resources – land, people and money. The strategy provides more details of the amount of investment that we need.

Measuring Our Progress

There are two ways in which progress will be measured.

1. We have created a timetable where all the actions in the strategy are to happen. This timetable will be reviewed every year to show the actions that have happened and those that have not.
2. We have developed a set of 'outcome measures' that will gauge the improvement to the quality of life for people and communities. Not all of these measures have been developed yet. However, this will happen as the strategy develops. Reporting on these measures will take place every two years.

This version of the strategy is available in various languages, on tape and Braille on request. It is also available to download from www.moray.org

If you would like a copy of the strategy in one of these formats or if you would like to speak to somebody about the strategy, then please contact:

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