

**THE MORAY COUNCIL
LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY UPDATE**

August 2007

CONTENTS

Introduction	Page 2
Section 1 - Summary of Progress 2006/07	Page 3
Summary of progress against the action plan	Page 3
Update on resources	Page 8
Updated action plan for 2006/07	Page 11
Section 2 - Development of the 2007/08 action plan	Page 22
Section 3 - New action plan	Page 25

INTRODUCTION

This is the third annual update of the Local Housing Strategy (LHS). The 2007 update is presented in the same format as the 2005 and the 2006 updates.

During the past year there has been considerable pressure on the strategic housing functions of the Moray Council, due to the Housing Strategy Officer post being vacant for the entire year and another key managerial vacancy for most of the year. Attempts to fill the Strategy post were unsuccessful. As a result, a reorganisation of posts has taken place that will slightly increase the staff time resources for strategy work.

The update is in three parts:

Section 1 – provides information to the strategy partners and the general public about the work that has been done during the past year. This includes completing any outstanding actions from 2005/2006 in addition to the work carried out during 2006/07.

Sections 2 & 3 – present a revised action plan that takes account of the changing political and social environment and the achievements with the LHS of the previous year.

SECTION 1 - SUMMARY OF PROGRESS

1.1 SUMMARY OF PROGRESS AGAINST THE 2006/07 ACTION PLAN

This section considers progress and performance against the strategic objectives listed below. Rather than commenting on each action, there is a summary of progress on a number of key actions. The tables provide an indication of how many of the actions are on target and how many are being progressed but not completed to date.

The full updated action plan for 2006/07 is at the end of the summary.

ACCESS TO HOUSING

Strategic Objective 1

To widen and facilitate access to housing in Moray by making the housing system work more effectively


Strategic Objective 2

To prevent and alleviate Homelessness

Strategic Objective 3

To guarantee equality of access to housing opportunities in Moray with respect to age, gender, ethnicity and disability

12 Actions were identified in the 2006/07 Plan.

			No. of actions
Actions	✓	Target met	5
		Work in progress	4
	✗	To be actioned	3

Actions Achieved:

- Homelessness Action Plan revised in light of the mid-term review of the Homelessness Strategy and paying attention to the 2009 to 2012 targets.
- The Housing Options Guide was updated.
- The Housing website has been updated.
- We have maintained Moray Council representation on the Moray Youthstart Board at both Officer and Elected Member level.
- Affordable housing continuing to be secured for young people.

Significant progress with ongoing actions:

- Good progress has been made with the Common Housing Register. Although the target date for implementation has been slightly delayed until April 2008 this is as a consequence of the complexity of the work.
- Expenditure on young persons housing support has been maintained. Further work needs to be done on how to meet the increased support needs of young people. A

Theme group of the Homelessness Strategy has been established to look at meeting the housing and support needs of young homeless people. The Council is also initiating a review of housing support.

- Although a Private Rented Sector Strategy statement has not been produced, significant progress has been made with this sector. A private sector leasing scheme has been finalised and the Moray Keyfund has secured accommodation for 26 people.
- Work has been carried out to implement the outcome of the working group reviewing housing and support needs for Gypsies/Travellers in Moray. Over 50 sites have been investigated but it has not yet been possible to develop firm proposals. The Council has funded postgraduate research work being undertaken with Gypsies/Travellers. Consideration is being given to commissioning research with Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Councils into the housing and support needs of Gypsies/Travellers.

What still needs to happen?

- The Council has not yet implemented actions arising from the housing experience of minority ethnic communities research. An action plan will be drawn up from this and our recent research on migrant workers. **(This relates to 2 actions.)**
- Further work needs to be undertaken to identify joint training opportunities across housing providers. This was to be taken forward through the Moray Social Housing Forum. Unfortunately, both scheduled meetings had to be cancelled due to the number of apologies received. The importance of attendance has been raised with housing providers. A successful meeting took place recently with an agreement that Housing Associations would identify areas for joint training.

QUALITY OF HOUSING




Strategic Objective 4

To improve and maintain the quality of existing housing in Moray, including energy efficiency to HECA requirements

Strategic Objective 5

To seek to improve the quality of new build housing in Moray across all tenures and to encourage housing that is built to Lifetime Homes standard and environmentally friendly principles

15 Actions were identified in the 2006/07 Plan

			No. of actions
Actions		Target met	8
		Work in progress	4
		To be actioned	3

Actions Achieved:

- The Council not only piloted solar panels but also air and ground source heating systems. Further opportunities to install “green technology” will be sought, not only to

reduce the environmental impact but also to help us achieve aims within the Fuel Poverty Strategy.

- The actions within the HECA strategy were carried out.
- The Care and Repair scheme has been expanded to include disabled adaptations, which enables more vulnerable people to receive advice and assistance with repairs.
- Scottish Executive funding achieved a pilot Telecare scheme in Speyside which will help the Council and NHSG evaluate the usefulness of certain types of SMART technology.
- The Standard Delivery Plan has informed the investment strategy for the Council housing stock. The milestone identified for March 2007 in relation to the percentage of Council stock achieving the SHQS has been exceeded.
- The Council has decided against carrying out a private sector stock condition survey meantime. This was because a survey would not contain specific information that would allow us to target particular houses or areas.
- The Council gave £30,000 funding to SCARF during 2005/06.
- The Housing Service was involved in the drafting of the Development Plan Review and was consulted on the draft version.

Significant progress with ongoing actions:

- Significant work has been done on the fifth HECA progress report, but it cannot be completed until figures are obtained from the Scottish Executive.
- Building commenced on a new amenity housing project in Forres for 18 properties to a Lifetime Homes Standard, funded from the Development Programme. As a result the LHS will surpass its target of ten houses to the standard. **(This is two actions.)**
- A potential project for sustainable housing being built along with social rented housing is being developed by Langstane Housing and Down to Earth (a sustainable self-build housing association).

What still needs to happen?

- The outstanding work relates to three actions connected to the commencement of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006: a BTS action plan, developing a scheme of assistance, and identifying housing renewal areas. The Scottish Executive has not yet issued Guidance for implementation of the Act. Preliminary work had been undertaken and the actions are now reflected in the Actions for 2007/08.

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY CARE


Strategic Objective 6

Maximise the choice of housing, support and care combinations for all special needs groups and in particular to enable all those wishing to stay at home to do so with the appropriate support where practicable

Strategic Objective 7

To meet requirements for special needs housing within communities for those not wishing or able to remain in their own home but who wish to remain in their community

10 Actions were identified in the 2006/07 Plan

			No. of actions
Actions	✓	Target met	3
		Work in progress	4
	✗	To be actioned	3

Actions Achieved:

- Lifetime Homes have been promoted in discussions with Communities Scotland and Housing Associations.
- A specialist housing development for adults with learning disabilities at Waulkmill, Elgin was completed.
- A partnership approach has been adopted when providing large or specialist developments, which is best illustrated at Waulkmill, Elgin where 101 houses have been provided including 6 special needs houses and one specialist unit.

Significant progress with ongoing actions:

- The Supporting People Strategy is being implemented. The Strategy was based on the assumption that there would be a small increase in the budget. Due to the significant budgetary cuts there will be a reassessment of strategic priorities.
- Supporting People Reviews have been carried out. There is still considerable budgetary pressure on Housing Support Services funded by Supporting People. The Council has experienced an 18% reduction in its budget over the last three years. Significant savings were identified through the review progress. The Moray Council agreed to fund £0.44m of Supporting People services through Community Care budgets.
- The referral process between Occupational Therapy and Housing has been monitored and informally reviewed.
- The strategic review of sheltered housing has been scoped and commissioned.

What still needs to happen?

- The Council has not completed an action plan following the research into information and advice services for those with physical and sensory disabilities (**which relates to 2 actions**).
- Last year's Action Plan stated that information from the Housing Needs Research was to be used to influence the style and location of future special needs housing. The nature of the information in the study means that although it gives pointers to size and broad location of future special needs housing it does not give indications of style.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

Strategic Objective 8.

Maximise the investment in and the provision of affordable housing to meet the housing need requirement in Moray

Strategic Objective 9

To help create and sustain neighbourhoods that are safe, socially mixed and supportive

Strategic Objective 10

To support and encourage wider role activities which contribute to social inclusion and community regeneration


Strategic Objective 11

To eradicate fuel poverty from all vulnerable groups by 2016

Strategic Objective 12

To provide maximum opportunities for tenant participation and empowerment throughout the social rented sector

23 actions were identified in the 2006/07 Action Plan.

		No. of actions	
Actions	✓	Target met	11
		Work in progress	8
	✗	to be actioned	4

Actions Achieved:

- The housing needs study was undertaken and completed in April 2007. **(This relates to 2 actions.)**
- A successful Tenant Conference, largely organised by the Moray Core Tenant group, was held in October 2006.
- Joint appraisal of RSLs' SDFPs has been taking place with Communities Scotland.
- Bulk procurement has been pursued, where appropriate, through Devanha and through the Moray Volume Procurement Initiative.
- Progress on the Strategic Housing Investment Framework has been monitored and training undertaken on the Strategic Housing Investment Plan.
- We have continued to implement the anti-social behaviour strategy.
- There has been housing and tenant representation at neighbourhood forums.
- The Fuel Poverty Strategy was reviewed and an updated action plan produced. **(This relates to 2 actions.)**
- Communities Scotland and the Moray Council facilitated the acquisition from Defence Estates of 68 properties for rent and 9 properties for low cost sale. Communities Scotland and Council funding enabled acquisition.

Significant progress with ongoing actions:

- The Communities Scotland outturn on expenditure for housing investment for 2006/07 was the highest level ever for Moray at £11.262m. The number of completions during the year was 87, with a further 68 houses acquired from Defence Estates. In addition, the Moray Council purchased 9 houses from the onward sale at below market prices.
- Progress achieved in the implementation of the Council's Tenant Participation Strategy 2003/06 was reported to the Council's Community Services Committee in September 2006. As part of the process of reviewing the strategy, TPAS provided a

report identifying good practice and recommendations for future development of a revised Tenant Participation Strategy for the Council. A consultative draft Tenant Participation Strategy to cover the period 2007/11 is currently being prepared. There is increasing involvement of Moray Tenant Core Group members in regional and national tenant participation activities. **(This relates to 2 actions.)**

- The Council attended the Cairngorms Housing Group and is now represented on the Cairngorms Housing Strategy Delivery Group. The Council is assisting in implementing the action plan arising from the housing research into landowners. **(This relates to 2 actions.)**
- The Council and partner agencies have a NEET action plan in place for young people not in education, employment or training. The Strategy is due to be finalised in September.
- Most of the actions in the Fuel Poverty Strategy have been carried out.
- Further work needs to be done to establish employment opportunities through the Wider Role of RSLs and Communities Scotland. It is hoped to progress a significant number of apprenticeships through Devanha.

What still needs to happen?

- We still have to implement the recommendations of the research into the housing needs of migrant workers, which was published in July 2007. **(This relates to 2 actions.)**
- Work on the midterm review of the LHS was not progressed, due to staffing shortages. This action will be continued, but amended to reflect that we will be reviewing the LHS to inform the new 2009 Strategy. **(This relates to 2 actions.)**

1.2 UPDATE ON RESOURCES

This section provides information about the main priorities for investment identified in the LHS.

"Increase the provision of affordable housing"

Major financial risk - that investment levels are £2m or less.

Moray continues to receive increased amounts of investment for new affordable housing. The initial allocation for 2005/06 was £6.705m. The final outturn was £11.262m.

The annual development programme for 2007/08 is £9.525m. The Moray Council's Council tax discount income on second homes, estimated at £0.463m for 2007/08, is also available, but there are commitments from it to a Housing Association development in Forres to assist in abnormal environmental works costs.

Due to the Comprehensive Spending Review, to be completed later in 2007, there is currently no indication of likely resources available beyond March 2008. Proposals for a Strategic Housing Investment Framework suggest that the basis of resource allocation decisions is likely to change from 2009/10, but no further details are available since the consultation exercise carried out by Communities Scotland during 2006.

"Improving quality in the private sector"
Major financial risk - PSHG levels decrease.

The Council spent its grant allocation for 2006/07. The final outturn of £1.540m included an additional £0.276m allocation. This again demonstrates the ability of the Council to expend increased resources.

The allocation for 2007/08 has decreased slightly at £1.219m. As yet, there is no indication of allocations for 2008/09 and beyond. This makes this year's budget difficult to manage as grant recipients have 12 months to carry out the work and it is not possible to accurately predict when expenditure will take place. The uncertainty over longer term funding means that detailed planning for the implementation of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 is difficult.

The Council has an excellent track record in spending PSHG. Expenditure is always close to the budget and opportunities for additional funding taken up and spent. During 2006/07 an additional allocation of £0.2m was received and spent on disabled adaptations. This supports the anecdotal evidence that with the demographic changes and the increasing provision of services to maintain people within their own homes and communities, the need for adaptations is increasing. The Council has not undertaken any promotional activity in relation to Grants. Therefore, this suggests that there could be a significant hidden need for additional expenditure.

"Investing in Social Housing"
Major financial risk - stock cannot remain in council ownership and attain the SHQS

Moray submitted its Standard Delivery Plan (SDP) to Communities Scotland. Communities Scotland indicated its acceptance of the SDP during 2006/07. The Plan demonstrates that the Council can attain the Standard, while restricting rent rises to RPI +1%. The Council will base all subsequent investment programmes on its Business Plan and the Standard Delivery Plan. As at March 2007, the Council has exceeded the milestone identified in its SDP for SHQS compliance.

Discussion with RSL colleagues indicates that there are no major problems in attaining the standard. Any failures tend to be single-element failures. Due to the national/Grampian-wide status of the RSLs (with the exception of MHP), it is not possible to separate out their stock in Moray, so an accurate picture cannot be obtained. MHP stock is set to attain the standard.

"Meeting Community Care Needs"
Major financial risk - decrease in the Supporting People budget

The budget has been reduced by 18% (25% in real terms) over the past 3 years. Service reviews have been undertaken and have concentrated on cash savings. £0.44m of Supporting People services have been transferred to the Community Care Budget but further savings have to be identified this year. Long term planning is complicated as there is no indication as to what future funding will be.

Work will be undertaken to determine strategic priorities. A meeting of key managers within the Community Services Department has been arranged to scope the work required. External consultants have been commissioned to review sheltered housing. This will look at the present and likely future need and demand for sheltered housing, and the suitability of the current stock both in the short and long term.

"Eradicating Fuel Poverty"

Major financial risk - change in the level of key welfare benefits in households

The main risk to the Council's aim of eradicating fuel poverty was a decrease in household income. Since the 2005/06 LHS Update there have been significant price increases for domestic fuel, which if maintained will mean that fuel poverty will increase unless there is a significant increase in incomes or fuel efficiency.

The Council also obtained a grant of £0.032m towards a total installation cost of £0.053m for 2 Air Source Heat Pumps and 2 Ground Source Heat Pumps. Although these systems do achieve significant savings in fuel costs the high capital costs mean that any large scale in them could not be incorporated within the Standard Delivery Plan.

UPDATE OF ACTION PLAN 2006/07

Strategic Objective 1 To widen and facilitate access to housing in Moray by making the housing system work more effectively		Responsibility (lead partners in bold)	Progress achieved 2006/07
1.1 Maintain information of housing options across all providers.	1.1.1 Update Housing Options Guide on an annual basis.	TMC Housing Services, all other housing providers	New Housing Options guide was available ahead of schedule in August 2006.
	1.1.2 Update housing service website.	TMC IT/Housing Services	The website has been updated as and when required
1.2 Develop a Common Housing Register by 2007.	1.2.1 Develop a joint register with Aberdeenshire.	TMC Housing Services, RSLs, TMC IT Services	The complexity of the development process has resulted in a great deal of additional work being needed. The target date is now likely to be April 2008
1.3 Develop a Private Rented Sector Strategy approach.	1.3.1 Publish the Council's intended strategic approach to the sector.	TMC Housing Services, SLA	Although a private rented strategy has not been completed we have established a private sector leasing scheme and the Moray Keyfund to widen access to private rented accommodation.
1.4 Establish closer working practices and training opportunities across all housing providers.	1.4.1 Pursue joint training opportunities.	The Moray Social Housing Forum	The Moray Social Housing Forum did not meet during the year. Two scheduled meetings had to be cancelled because of the number of apologies from other landlords. We assess our training courses to see if they would be suitable for other providers.

Strategic Objective 2 Prevent and Alleviate Homelessness		Responsibility	Progress achieved 2006/07
2.1 Implement the revised Moray Homelessness Strategy 2003-2008.	2.2.1 revise the action plan as a result of the mid term review and consultation with providers and service users.	Multi-agency Homelessness Strategy Group, Homelessness Project Group	Revised plan October 2006.

Strategic Objective 3 To guarantee equality of access to housing opportunities in Moray with respect to age, gender, ethnicity and disability		Responsibility	Progress achieved 2006/07
3.1 Implement actions from the research into the housing experience of minority ethnic communities.	3.1.1 Pursue joint training to raise awareness amongst all housing providers. 3.1.1 Establish methods for communicating with individuals from minority ethnic backgrounds.	TMC Housing, RSLs, and all Community Planning partners	These actions are to be continued to next year
3.2 Continue the review of accommodation and support provided for Gypsies/ Travellers in Moray.	3.2.1 Implement outcome of working group's findings.	Gypsy Travellers Multi-agency group, Gypsy Travellers working group.	Work was undertaken to identify and provide dispersed sites in Moray. 50 potential sites were identified. Progress was reported to Community Services Committee in October 2006. When further investigation into 5 sites was agreed.

Strategic Objective 3 To guarantee equality of access to housing opportunities in Moray with respect to age, gender, ethnicity and disability		Responsibility	Progress achieved 2006/07
3.3 Ensure provision of intensive levels of support and housing to vulnerable young people subject to social exclusion.	3.3.1 Continue to secure affordable housing for young people – objective 8 Local Housing Strategy.	Housing Strategy Group	The specific housing for young people is continuing to be provided. Additional accommodation is provided through the allocations process
	3.3.2 Ensure continued TMC Housing Services representation on Moray Youthstart Board.	Moray Youth start, TMC Housing Services	The Housing Programmes Manager is on the Board of Moray Youthstart
	3.3.3 Give consideration of how to meet the need for significantly increased support identified in the Housing Needs Study.	Homelessness Strategy Group	This is being considered by the Homelessness Strategy Young Persons Theme Group.

Strategic Objective 4 To improve and maintain the quality of existing housing in Moray, including energy efficiency to HECA requirements		Responsibility	Progress achieved 2006/07
4.1 Consider carrying out a private sector stock condition survey.	4.1.1 Decide on whether to carry out research. 4.1.2 Identify any potential housing renewal areas. 4.1.3 Create a BTS action plan.	TMC Housing Services, Housing Strategy Group.	The Council decided not to carry out a survey, as any survey would not indicate the location of stock problems. Delay in starting this due to delay in Scottish Executive Guidance This will be dealt with as part of the Housing Act Implementation Plan.
4.2 Establish a Scheme of Assistance.	4.2.1 Develop a scheme in accordance with guidance from the Scottish Executive.	TMC Housing Services.	This has been delayed awaiting final guidance From the Executive
4.3 Review the Moray Council's Care and Repair Scheme.	4.3.1 Conduct an annual review as per the Service Level Agreement.	TMC Housing Services, Castlehill HA.	Annual review taken place. The scheme has been very successful and has been extended to cover disability adaptations.

Strategic Objective 4 To improve and maintain the quality of existing housing in Moray, including energy efficiency to HECA requirements		Responsibility	Progress achieved 2006/07
4.4 Improve energy efficiency across all tenures by a further 8% by 2007.	4.4.1 Continue to fund SCARF.	TMC Housing Services, SCARF	SCARF funded by £0.030m
	4.4.2 Carry out actions within HECA strategy.	TMC Housing Services, SCARF	Completed
	4.4.3 Provide final Monitoring Report to Communities Scotland.	TMC Housing Services	Awaiting spreadsheet from the Scottish Executive to complete final monitoring. The submission date is Jan 08.
	4.4.4 If pilot of solar panels is successful then expand the scheme.	TMC Housing Services	Pilot completed. Ground and Air Source Heat Pumps also piloted.
4.5 Ensure that Council and RSL properties maintain the Scottish Housing Quality Standard.	4.5.1 Continue to use the Standard Delivery Plan to base all future investment programmes.	TMC Housing Services, RSLs	TMC properties are ahead of schedule to all meet the SHQS. 62.59% compliance as at 1/4/07

Strategic Objective 5. To seek to improve the quality of new build housing in Moray across all tenures and to encourage housing that is built to Lifetime Homes standard and environmentally friendly principles		Responsibility	Progress achieved 2006/07
5.1 Monitor and Review Planning policies related to design, layout, architecture and open space.	5.1.1 Input to the revision of policies as part of the Development Plan review.	TMC Planning and Housing Services	February 2007.

Strategic Objective 5. To seek to improve the quality of new build housing in Moray across all tenures and to encourage housing that is built to Lifetime Homes standard and environmentally friendly principles		Responsibility	Progress achieved 2006/07
5.2 Working with RSLs, Communities Scotland and developers to produce 10 Lifetime Homes over the five-year period.	5.2.1 Use the development programme process. 5.2.2 Incorporate within any bulk procurement arrangement.	TMC Housing Services, Communities Scotland, RSLs, housing developers	The target for Lifetime homes will be exceeded during the course of the LHS. Increasing the supply of Lifetime Homes will be an ongoing action.
5.3 Investigate the potential of new technology.	5.3.1 Identify the potential uses for SMART technology and telecare in older person/special needs housing. 5.3.2 Identify one potential project for sustainable housing.	TMC Housing Services, OT services, Older Person's strategy group TMC Housing Services, Communities Scotland, RSLs, housing developers	Funding of £0.121m obtained. Langstane seeking to identify site for a joint project with self build housing association

Strategic Objective 6 Maximise the choice of housing, support and care combinations for all special needs groups and in particular to enable all those wishing to stay at home to do so with the appropriate support where practicable		Responsibility	Progress achieved 2006/07
6.1 Implement the Supporting People Strategy 2003- 2008.	6.1.1 See actions in Supporting People Strategy.	Supporting People Core Group, Service Providers, Service Users, TMC Housing services	All services apart from Sheltered Housing have been reviewed
6.2 Ensure the best use of adaptations in the public and private sector.	6.2.1 Review the referral protocol between housing services and occupational therapy.	TMC Housing and OT services	The current situation is working well. It will continue to be monitored

Strategic Objective 6 Maximise the choice of housing, support and care combinations for all special needs groups and in particular to enable all those wishing to stay at home to do so with the appropriate support where practicable		Responsibility	Progress achieved 2006/07
6.3 Development of housing information and advice services for those physical and sensory with disabilities.	6.3.1 Develop an action plan from the research. 6.3.2 Implement the action plan.	LHS implementation group	To be carried out in 2007/08.
6.4 Implement the outcomes of the Supporting People reviews.	6.4.1 Action Plan needed after review completion.	Supporting People Core and Officers Groups	Reviews are completed. A strategic review will be carried out in 07/08.
6.5 Complete the strategic review of sheltered housing.	6.5.1 Develop an action plan from the results of the review.	Sheltered housing review group	The review has been delayed and will report in 2007/08. An action plan will be developed thereafter.

Strategic Objective 7 To meet requirements for special needs housing within communities for those not wishing or able to remain in their own home but who wish to remain in their community		Responsibility	Progress achieved 2006/07
7.1 Ensure that maximum use is made of funding resources.	7.1.1 Identify potential projects through the housing needs research. 7.1.2 Adopt a partnership approach to providing large or specialist developments	TMC Housing Services, Moray Community Health & Social Care Partnership, Communities Scotland	The Housing Needs research was completed in April 07. It is currently being considered in depth with some actions identified in the 2007/08 Action Plan. Specialist developments are progressed in Partnership.

Strategic Objective 7 To meet requirements for special needs housing within communities for those not wishing or able to remain in their own home but who wish to remain in their community		Responsibility	Progress achieved 2006/07
7.2 Ensure that information from housing needs research is fed into the Communities Scotland/RSL SDPF process.	7.2.1 Ensure that there is at least one specialist housing project per annum in the development programme. 7.2.2 Promote the use of Lifetime Homes.	TMC Housing Services, Moray Community Health & Social Care Partnership, Communities Scotland, RSLs	One specialist house built in Waulkmill Elgin. 18 Lifetime Homes achieved in Forres. This will continue to be an ongoing action.

Strategic Objective 8. Maximise the investment in and the provision of affordable housing to meet the housing need requirement in Moray		Responsibility	Progress achieved 2006/07
8.1 Continue to work in partnership with Communities Scotland and RSLs to deliver 161 units of affordable housing per annum.	8.1.1 Develop joint appraisal of RSLs' SDFPs. 8.1.2 Pursue bulk procurement where appropriate. 8.1.2 Monitor progress on the Strategic Housing Investment Framework.	TMC Housing Services and Communities Scotland Communities Scotland, TMC Housing Services, RSLs, Housing developers	Tripartite meeting held during 2006/07 Bulk procurement has been achieved through the Moray Volume Procurement Initiative. Substantial work undertaken during the year in developing DEVANHA Progress on the Strategic Housing Investment Framework was monitored throughout the year.
8.2 Update the Housing Needs Study.	8.2.1 Carry out field work during autumn/winter 2006. 8.2.2 Final report March 2007.	Housing Strategy Group, Communities Scotland	Final Report received April 07.

Strategic Objective 8. Maximise the investment in and the provision of affordable housing to meet the housing need requirement in Moray		Responsibility	Progress achieved 2006/07
8.3 Implement the findings from the research into the housing needs of migrant workers.	8.3.1 Carry out field work during autumn 2005. 8.3.2 Final report during 2006.	Housing Strategy Group, Communities Scotland	Study published July 07
8.4 Continue to participate in the development of the Cairngorms Housing Strategy.	8.4.1 Attend the Cairngorms Housing Implementation Group. 8.4.2 Implement the action plan arising from the Cairngorms housing research into landowners.	Cairngorms Park Authority, TMC Housing, Communities Scotland	The Strategy Group was attended by The Moray Council and Communities Scotland. Work undertaken in preparation for implementation.
8.5 Carry out a half-term review of the LHS.	8.5.1 Use the findings of the housing needs study to inform the review. 8.5.2 Carry out wider community consultation through the neighbourhood area forums.	TMC Housing Services, LHS implementation group	Due to pressures of work and staffing shortages it was decided to concentrate on implementing the LHS rather than undertaking a midterm review.

Strategic Objective 9 To help create and sustain neighbourhoods that are safe, socially mixed and supportive		Responsibility	Progress achieved 2006/07
9.1 Identify the main causes of anti social behaviour and promote effective and practical solutions to significantly reduce anti social behaviour.	9.1.1 Continue to implement the anti-social behaviour strategy.	TMC Housing, Grampian Police, RSLs	Strategy being implemented.

Strategic Objective 9 To help create and sustain neighbourhoods that are safe, socially mixed and supportive		Responsibility	Progress achieved 2006/07
9.2 Develop methods of evaluating the effectiveness of housing policies and management in promoting social inclusion.	9.2.1 Develop targets.	Moray Social Housing Forum	As the Social Housing Forum did not meet during the year these actions will be continued.
	9.2.2 Use the data from the Neighbourhood Statistics Study to inform practice.	Moray Social Housing Forum	

Strategic Objective 10 To support and encourage wider role activities which contribute to social inclusion and community regeneration		Responsibility	Progress achieved 2006/07
10.1 Ensure housing representation at the local neighbourhood forums.	10.1.1 TMC representation at all 8 neighbourhood forums.	Community planning partnership, RSLs	Housing Officers are part of the local professional network. Tenants groups are represented at Neighbourhood forums.
10.2 To encourage employment opportunities as part of the wider role programme.	10.2.1 Investigate all employment opportunities through the joint SDFP appraisal process. 10.2.2 Raise the issue through the Community Planning Partnership theme group "Investing in Children and Young People".	RSLs, Moray College, Moray Youthstart, Communities Scotland TMC Housing, Community Planning Partnership	Employment opportunities being developed by DEVANHA

Strategic Objective 11 To eradicate fuel poverty from all vulnerable groups by 2016		Responsibility	Progress achieved 2006/07
11.1 Implement the Fuel Poverty Strategy.	11.1.1 Review in November 2005. 11.1.2 Publish updated action plan.	Fuel Poverty Strategy Working Group.	The Fuel Poverty Strategy was reviewed and an updated action plan produced.
11.2 Continue with measures under the HECA strategy.	11.2.1 Publish final HECA report in 2007.	TMC Housing Services.	Work has been undertaken on the final report. It is to be submitted in January 2008

Strategic Objective 12 To provide maximum opportunities for tenant participation and empowerment throughout the social rented sector		Responsibility	Progress achieved 2006/07
12.1 Implement monitor and review the tenant participation strategy annually.	12.1.1 Carry out a review of existing strategy. 12.1.2 Develop revised strategy for 2007/08.	TMC Housing Service, TMC Tenants, Elected members.	The existing strategy was reviewed in September 2006. Consultation on revised draft to be carried out in August/September 2007.
12.2 Promote co-operation between all social landlords to encourage tenant participation.	12.2.1 Arrange tenant conference.	TMC and RSL tenants, TMC Housing Service.	Tenant Conference took place October 2006 Tenants of RSLs were invited.

SECTION 2 - DEVELOPMENT OF THE 2007/08 ACTION PLAN

This section provides the 'bridge' between the last action plan in the LHS and the new action plan proposed for 2007/08.

Firstly, the Council's Housing Needs Study, completed earlier this year, clearly indicates that the shortage of affordable housing in Moray is increasing from the level identified in the earlier study carried out in 2001.

Secondly, the 2012 target for the abolition of priority need in homelessness (with the requirement to achieve progress by 2009) will place even further pressure on the availability of affordable housing and housing support services.

Finally, the requirement to submit a Strategic Housing Investment Plan by 30 November 2007 will necessitate an enhanced role for the Council in planning and agreeing future housing investment priorities with RSLs.

ACCESS TO HOUSING

The Cairngorms National Park Authority and Communities Scotland are commissioning a project to bring empty properties back into use, funded through the Rural Empty Property Grant and working on a Lead Tenancy basis. There is potential for 5 properties in Moray to be brought back into use. The Moray Council supports this project, which will provide a useful indication of whether the scheme would be successful in other rural areas of Moray.

The sale of houses in the first Homestake scheme in Moray is currently taking place. Analysis of the purchasers' circumstances will be undertaken to consider the level of housing need that has been met. This will influence the percentage of Homestake properties in new affordable housing developments.

An Open Market Pilot Homestake Scheme is to be introduced throughout Grampian towards the end of 2007. Consideration will be given to whether or not there should be a Low Cost Home Ownership "waiting list".

During 2007/08 the Council will be deciding how to reach the interim Homelessness target in 2009. This will have wider implications for the operation of the Council's Allocation Policy.

QUALITY OF HOUSING

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 received Royal Assent in January 2006, although detailed guidance is still awaited. The Council has started the process to enable implementation of the Act.

The Council will continue to look for opportunities to fund new energy efficient schemes.

The new Structure Plan has been approved. A public enquiry is to take place into the Local Plan in November 2007. It could be operated as a "consideration" in relation to Planning applications after that date.

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY CARE

The Council increased its subsidy of Supporting People and savings have been made. Although all services provided are priorities, the balance of expenditure reflects historical spending. The Council has plans to carry out a more strategic review of its Supporting People funding.

Increased demands on housing support services are likely as a result of the interim Homelessness target for 2009.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

The continuing key priority is to increase the investment in affordable housing, emphasised by the Housing Needs Study 2007. This indicates there is a need to increase housing investment, with the annual requirement needed to alleviate housing need now being 219 houses per annum for five years (the comparative figure was 161 in 2001). Analysis of the results should assist in prioritising location of and size of houses.

Without a significant increase in the supply of affordable housing, the Homelessness 2012 target will mean that, in future, a large majority of affordable housing allocations will be to Homeless households. This will have implications for the Council's objectives through Community Planning for the achievement of balanced communities.

The Strategic Housing Investment Framework will influence future allocations. The preparation of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan is, therefore, one of the Council's key tasks this year.

Issues arising from The Housing Needs Study will be identified and actions timetabled in 2007/08. Some work identified will take place during the year.

Land supply continues to be an issue for the Council, as developers own most of the developable land. Although there has been limited landbanking, the majority of new affordable housing sites will have to be obtained through Developer Contributions. As a result of the housing needs study, The Council intends to review its Supplementary Planning Guidance on Affordable Housing.

The Council continues to discuss any potential disposals of surplus DHE housing with Defence Estates. At present, it is unclear whether there are likely to be further opportunities in the short term to enable RSLs to acquire surplus properties.

The Council was granted Pressured Area Status for part of the Council area in March 2006. Although the number of properties 'saved' is low, the Council is keen to use all available methods to increase and safeguard the supply of affordable housing. Further consideration will be given to applying for Pressured Area Status in other parts of Moray in light of the HNS study.

The draft of the new Tenant Participation Strategy is being finalised. Consultation is to be carried out on the draft prior to the Council agreeing a final strategy.

The Moray Council reviewed its Committee structure in May 2007. Housing now reports to the Policy Committee, which has a large agenda. In order to facilitate meaningful tenant participation in the Committee structure, consultation is taking place on the proposal for a Housing Sub-Committee to deal with the Council's landlord business.

The Moray Council has prioritised its housing policies and functions for Equalities Impact Assessments. Work is being undertaken to improve the methodology. The high priority assessments will take place this year. These are: Allocations, Evictions, Gas Safety Policy, Gypsies/Travellers, Homelessness (including temporary accommodation), and the Welfare Rights Service.

SECTION 3

NEW ACTION PLAN 2007/08

Strategic Objective 1 To widen and facilitate access to housing in Moray by making the housing system work more effectively		Responsibility (lead partners in bold)	Timescales
1.1 Maintain information of housing options across all providers.	1.1.1 Update Housing Options Guide on an annual basis.	TMC Housing Services, all other housing providers	New Housing Options guide to be available for September 2007.
	1.1.2 Update housing service website.	TMC IT/Housing Services	As required.
1.2 Develop a Common Housing Register by 2007.	1.2.1 Develop a joint register with Aberdeenshire.	TMC Housing Services, RSLs, TMC IT Services	November 2007.
	1.2.2 Consider a Low Cost Home Ownership Waiting list		March 2008
1.3 Develop a Private Rented Sector Strategy approach.	1.3.1 Publish the Council's intended strategic approach to the sector.	TMC Housing Services, SLA	December 2007.
1.4 Establish closer working practices and training opportunities across all housing providers.	1.4.1 Pursue joint training opportunities.	The Moray Social Housing Forum	Sharing of training plans. Ongoing.
1.5 Support Empty Homes Project in Cairngorms area of Moray	1.5.1 Implement the project	TMC Housing Services, Communities Scotland, Cairngorms National Park Authority, Housing Associations	Work has commenced. This is an ongoing action.

Strategic Objective 2 Prevent and Alleviate Homelessness		Responsibility	Timescales
2.1 Establish the 4 Homelessness Strategy Theme Groups	2.1.1 Organise membership and meetings	Homelessness Strategy Group	2 Theme groups already operating. October 2007 is the target date for the other 2.
2.2 Implement the new actions for 2007/08 of the Moray Homelessness Strategy	2.2.1 Monitor the implementation	Multi-agency Homelessness Strategy Group, Homelessness Project Group	This is an ongoing action, which is detailed in the Homelessness Strategy Update.

Strategic Objective 3 To guarantee equality of access to housing opportunities in Moray with respect to age, gender, ethnicity and disability		Responsibility	Timescales
3.1 Implement actions from the research into the housing experience of minority ethnic communities.	3.1.1 Pursue joint training to raise awareness amongst all housing providers.	TMC Housing, RSLs, and all Community Planning partners	Develop action plan by December 2007.
	3.1.2 Establish methods for communicating with individuals from minority ethnic backgrounds.		As above
3.2 Continue the review of accommodation and support provided for travellers in Moray.	3.2.2 Implement outcome of working group's findings.	Gypsy Travellers Multi-agency group, Gypsy Travellers working group.	March 2008.
	3.2.3 Consider participation in joint research	TMC, Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire	August 2007

Strategic Objective 3 To guarantee equality of access to housing opportunities in Moray with respect to age, gender, ethnicity and disability		Responsibility	Timescales
3.3 Ensure provision of intensive levels of support and housing to vulnerable young people subject to social exclusion.	3.3.4 Continue to secure affordable housing for young people – objective 8 Local Housing Strategy.	Housing Strategy Group, Moray Youth start, TMC Housing Services	Ongoing.
	3.3.5 Ensure continued TMC Housing Services representation on Moray Youthstart Board.	Moray Youth start, TMC Housing Services	Housing services currently represented. To continue
	3.3.6 Give consideration of how to meet the need for significantly increased support identified in the Housing Needs Study.	Homelessness Young Persons Theme Group	Detailed discussion by Nov 07
3.4 Carry out priority equality impact assessments	3.4.1 Timetable key policies and functions	TMC	September 2007
	3.4.2 Assess key policies and functions	TMC Housing Services	March 2008

Strategic Objective 4 To improve and maintain the quality of existing housing in Moray, including energy efficiency to HECA requirements		Responsibility	Timescales
4.1 Deal with poor housing conditions	4.1.4 Identify any potential housing renewal areas.	TMC Housing Services, Housing Strategy Group.	Ongoing.
	4.1.5 Create a BTS action plan.		March 08

Strategic Objective 4 To improve and maintain the quality of existing housing in Moray, including energy efficiency to HECA requirements		Responsibility	Timescales
4.2 Establish a Scheme of Assistance.	4.2.1 Develop a scheme in accordance with guidance from the Scottish Executive.	TMC Housing Services.	April 2008.
4.3 Review the Moray Council's Care and Repair Scheme.	4.3.1 Conduct an annual review as per the Service Level Agreement.	TMC Housing Services, Castlehill HA.	Annually.
4.4 Improve energy efficiency across all tenures by a further 8% by 2007 (we are awaiting figures from the Scottish Executive before we know whether or not we have reached the target).	4.4.1 Continue to fund SCARF	TMC Housing Services, SCARF	Ongoing.
	4.4.2 Continue to promote energy efficiency as detailed in the HECA strategy.	TMC Housing Services, SCARF	Ongoing.
	4.4.3 Provide final Monitoring Report to Communities Scotland.	TMC Housing Services	Jan 08.
	4.4.4 If pilot of solar panels is successful then expand the scheme.	TMC Housing Services	Ongoing commitment to look for opportunities for energy saving schemes.
4.5 Ensure that Council and RSL properties maintain the Scottish Housing Quality Standard.	4.5.1 Continue to use the Standard Delivery Plan to base all future investment programmes.	TMC Housing Services, RSLs	Ongoing.
	4.5.2 Review milestones. Awaiting Communities Scotland Guidance on reporting.	TMC Housing Services, RSLs	Ongoing

Strategic Objective 5. To seek to improve the quality of new build housing in Moray across all tenures and to encourage housing that is built to Lifetime Homes standard and environmentally friendly principles		Responsibility	Timescales
5.1 Implement new Development Plan	5.1.1 Implement the new structure plan 5.1.2 Await the outcome of the public enquiry into the local plan	TMC Planning and Housing Services	Ongoing. November 2008
5.2 Working with RSLs, Communities Scotland and developers to produce additional Lifetime Homes over the rest of the strategy.	5.2.1 Use the development programme process. 5.2.2 Incorporate within any bulk procurement arrangement.	TMC Housing Services, Communities Scotland, RSLs, housing developers	Ongoing. Ongoing.
5.3 Investigate the potential of new technology.	5.3.1 Evaluate the pilot Telecare project 5.3.2 Identify one potential project for sustainable housing.	TMC Housing Services, OT services, Older Person's strategy group TMC Housing Services, Communities Scotland, RSLs, housing developers	April 2008. Ongoing.

Strategic Objective 6 Maximise the choice of housing, support and care combinations for all special needs groups and in particular to enable all those wishing to stay at home to do so with the appropriate support where practicable		Responsibility	Timescales
6.1 Implement the Supporting People Strategy 2003- 2008.	6.1.1 See actions in Supporting People Strategy.	Supporting People Core Group, Service Providers, Service Users, TMC Housing services	A Strategic review of the use of Supporting People funding will be carried out. A project plan for this should be available in Sep 07.
6.2 Ensure the best use of adaptations in the public and private sector.	6.2.1 Review the referral protocol between housing services and occupational therapy.	TMC Housing and OT services	The current arrangements will continue to be monitored

Strategic Objective 6 Maximise the choice of housing, support and care combinations for all special needs groups and in particular to enable all those wishing to stay at home to do so with the appropriate support where practicable		Responsibility	Timescales
6.3 Development of housing information and advice services for those physical and sensory with disabilities.	6.3.1 Develop an action plan from the research. 6.3.2 Implement the action plan.	LHS implementation group	December 2007.
6.4 Implement the outcomes of the Supporting People reviews.	6.4.1 Action Plan needed after review completion.	Supporting People Core and Officers Groups	Ongoing.
6.5 Complete the strategic review of sheltered housing.	6.5.1 Develop an action plan from the results of the review.	Sheltered housing review group	December 2006.
Strategic Objective 7 To meet requirements for special needs housing within communities for those not wishing or able to remain in their own home but who wish to remain in their community		Responsibility	Timescales
7.1 Ensure that maximum use is made of funding resources.	7.1.1 Identify potential projects through the housing needs research.	TMC Housing Services, Moray Community Health & Social Care Partnership, Communities Scotland	The housing needs research will give indications of potential projects
	7.1.3 Adopt a partnership approach to providing large or specialist developments	TMC Housing Services, Moray Community Health & Social Care Partnership, Communities Scotland	Ongoing
7.2 Ensure that information from housing needs research is fed into the Communities Scotland/RSL SDPF process.	7.2.3 Ensure that there is at least one specialist housing project per annum in the development programme.	TMC Housing Services, Moray Community Health & Social Care Partnership, Communities Scotland, RSLs	Ongoing.
	7.2.4 Promote the use of Lifetime Homes.		Ongoing

Strategic Objective 8. Maximise the investment in and the provision of affordable housing to meet the housing need requirement in Moray		Responsibility	Timescales
8.1 Continue to work in partnership with Communities Scotland and RSLs to deliver 161 units of affordable housing per annum.	8.1.3 Develop joint appraisal of RSLs' SDFPs.	TMC Housing Services and Communities Scotland	Ongoing.
	8.1.2 Pursue bulk procurement where appropriate.	Communities Scotland, TMC Housing Services, RSLs, Housing developers	Ongoing. This is being done through DEVANHA but other initiatives are possible.
	8.1.4 Monitor progress on the Strategic Housing Investment Framework.	Communities Scotland, TMC Housing Services, RSLs, Housing developers	SHIP to be submitted Nov 07
	8.1.5 Evaluate the first Homestake project.		Nov 07
	8.1.6 Establish an open market Homestake pilot	Communities Scotland, TMC Housing Services, RSLs, Communities Scotland, TMC, Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire	Start date dependent on national agreement. Probably Nov/Dec 07
8.2 Consider the outcome of the Housing Needs Study	8.2.1 Set the target for new affordable homes.	Housing Strategy Group, Communities Scotland	October 2007
	8.2.2 Review the affordable housing guidance	TMC, Developers, RSLs	December 2007.
8.3 Implement the findings from the research into the housing needs of migrant workers.	8.3.1 Develop Action Plan	Housing Strategy Group, Communities Scotland	December 2007

Strategic Objective 8. Maximise the investment in and the provision of affordable housing to meet the housing need requirement in Moray		Responsibility	Timescales
8.4 Continue to participate in the development of the Cairngorms Housing Strategy.	8.4.1 Attend the Cairngorms Housing Delivery Group.	Cairngorms Park Authority, TMC Housing, Communities Scotland	Ongoing.
	8.4.2 Implement the action plan arising from the Cairngorms housing research into landowners.		Work in progress
8.5 Prepare for the new LHS	8.5.1 Agree approach at LHS Strategy Group	All stakeholders	September 07
	8.5.2 Report to Committee		October 07
8.6 Prepare the Strategic Housing Investment Plan	8.6.1 Attend training	TMC	Training attended in July 07
	8.6.2 Meetings to discuss the plan	TMC, RSLs	Aug 07
	8.6.3 Submit the Plan	TMC	November 07

Strategic Objective 9 To help create and sustain neighbourhoods that are safe, socially mixed and supportive		Responsibility	Timescales
9.1 Identify the main causes of anti social behaviour and promote effective and practical solutions to significantly reduce anti social behaviour.	2.1.1 Continue to implement the anti-social behaviour strategy.	TMC Housing, Grampian Police, RSLs	Ongoing.
9.2 Develop methods of evaluating the effectiveness of housing policies and management in promoting social inclusion.	9.2.1 Develop targets.	Moray Social Housing Forum	Ongoing.
	9.2.2 Use the data from the Neighbourhood Statistics Study to inform practice.	Moray Social Housing Forum	Ongoing.

Strategic Objective 10 To support and encourage wider role activities which contribute to social inclusion and community regeneration		Responsibility	Timescales
10.1 Ensure housing representation at the local neighbourhood forums.	10.1.1 TMC and tenant representation at all 8 neighbourhood forums.	Community planning partnership, RSLs	Attendance ongoing
10.2 To encourage employment opportunities as part of the wider role programme.	10.2.1 Investigate all employment opportunities through the joint SDFP appraisal process.	RSLs, Moray College, Moray Youthstart, Communities Scotland, TMC Housing, Community Planning Partnership	Ongoing
Strategic Objective 11 To eradicate fuel poverty from all vulnerable groups by 2016		Responsibility	Timescales
11.1 Implement the Fuel Poverty Strategy.	11.1.1 Publish updated action plan.	Fuel Poverty Strategy Working Group	By Dec 07
11.2 Continue with measures under the HECA strategy.	11.2.1 Publish final HECA report in 2008.	TMC Housing Services.	Jan 2008.
Strategic Objective 12 To provide maximum opportunities for tenant participation and empowerment throughout the social rented sector		Responsibility	Timescales
12.1 Implement monitor and review the tenant participation strategy annually.	12.1.1 Develop draft strategy for 2007 to 2011.	TMC Housing Service, TMC Tenants, Elected members.	July 2007
	12.1.2 Consult.		August/September 2007
	12.1.3 Finalise new strategy.		October 2007
12.2 Promote co-operation between all social landlords to encourage tenant participation.	12.2.1 Arrange annual tenant conference.	TMC and RSL tenants, TMC Housing Service.	September 2007