Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2027- 2032

1. Introduction

1.1 The Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) sets out the strategic approach by Aberdeenshire Council and its partners to delivering affordable housing in accordance with the Local Housing Strategy.

1.2 In line with Scottish Government guidance issued 19 June 2026, this SHIP 2027 - 2032 sets out the strategic investment priorities for affordable housing over the five year period to achieve the outcomes as set out in the Local Housing Strategy. It also informs Scottish Government housing investment decisions including the Strategic Local Programme Agreement and Affordable Housing Supply Programme.

1.3 Essentially this SHIP

- Sets out investment priorities for affordable housing
- Demonstrates how these will be delivered
- Identifies the resources required to deliver these priorities
- Enables the involvement of key partners

1.4 Aberdeenshire Council and Aberdeen City Council work closely together to support the Aberdeen City Region Deal agreed with the Scottish and UK Governments. Both Strategic Housing Investment Plans are closely monitored to maximise the potential investment into the North East of Scotland.

1.5 This SHIP will enable the delivery of high quality and energy efficient homes including specialist housing provision with appropriate support, as well as assist in reducing fuel poverty and carbon emissions whilst adopting place making principles.

It will also enable choice of tenure. Furthermore, it will aid house building across the Aberdeenshire area by supporting investment and creating employment in the house building sector and assist with initiatives such as modern apprenticeships. It also supports and contributes towards the delivery of the Scottish Government's Housing to 2040 vision.

2. Strategic Context

2.1 Local Housing Strategy (LHS)

The Local Housing Strategy 2024 -2029 sets out Aberdeenshire Council's key strategic housing priorities and outcomes and was approved by Communities Committee 5th September 2024. The SHIP is informed by the LHS and will contribute to the delivery of the Council Plan and the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan through a place-making approach as part of the wider Local Place Planning. Affordable housing cuts across the three key themes of Aberdeenshire Council's Strategic Priorities:-

A Sustainable Economy **Connected Communities** **Living Well Locally**

2.1.1 The LHS is monitored and reviewed annually to ensure that it responds to changing pressures and new opportunities as set out below with the three outcomes which relate directly to this SHIP are:-

2.1.2 **LHS 2024-2029 Priority - Affordable Housing - Increase supply of housing in Aberdeenshire**

2.1.3 Increasing the supply of affordable housing will primarily take the form of new build units. However, partners will also seek to maximise delivery through the acquisition of 'second hand' stock and also seek to bring empty properties back into use through the rehabilitation of properties where sustainable and financially viable. There are several factors which will determine the suitability of properties, both for acquisition and empty homes, to ensure that they meet wider long term strategic aims, and these include housing need; costs; financial viability across the short to long term; and maintenance and management considerations.

2.1.4 The Housing Need and Demand Assessment 2023 and Aberdeenshire Council's waiting list 2026 demonstrate housing need across Aberdeenshire. Housing data over a five year period such as waiting lists, housing stock and relets, are also analysed to highlight any settlements with increased pressure. A Housing Demand Score for each settlement was calculated by taking average waiting list demand over the last 5 years and dividing this by turnover. This allows demand to be expressed and calculated as a proportion of turnover to generate a Housing Demand Score whereby settlements are then

ranked based on their Housing Demand Score. This enables settlements to be compared and ranked by relative affordable housing pressure. Table 1 shows the settlements with the highest Housing Demand Scores, grouped by the Housing Market Areas identified in the Housing Need and Demand Assessment 2023. These scores help identify where affordable housing pressure is most acute when demand is compared with available supply and are reflected in the SHIP programme. However, affordable housing delivery will not be limited to the settlements listed in Table 1. Opportunities outwith these towns will be actively pursued to meet identified local housing need as appropriate, with housing development also contributing to a wider range of strategic priorities in Aberdeenshire such as town centre regeneration, rural sustainment and strategic growth.

Table 1 - Top 25 Most Pressured Settlements in Aberdeenshire

Appendix 1

Settlement	Area	AHMA - Aberdeen Housing Market Area/ RHMA - Rural Housing Market - RHMA	Housing Demand Score
Inverurie	Garioch	AHMA	7700
Stonehaven	Kincardine & Mearns	AHMA	4429
Peterhead	Buchan	RHMA	3872
Portlethen	Kincardine & Mearns	AHMA	3653
Fraserburgh	Banff & Buchan	RHMA	3152
Banchory	Marr	AHMA	2532
Westhill	Garioch	AHMA	2374
Ellon	Formartine	AHMA	2308
Huntly	Marr	RHMA	1480
Banff	Banff & Buchan	RHMA	1402
Turriff	Formartine	RHMA	1325
Kemnay	Garioch	AHMA	1310
Laurencekirk	Kincardine & Mearns	RHMA	1036
Mintlaw	Buchan	RHMA	848
Oldmeldrum	Formartine	AHMA	688
Newtonhill	Kincardine & Mearns	AHMA	667
Ballater	Marr	RHMA	664
Alford	Marr	RHMA	654
Kintore	Garioch	AHMA	566
Macduff	Banff & Buchan	RHMA	561
Aboyne	Marr	RHMA	516
Balmedie	Formartine	AHMA	515
Insch	Garioch	RHMA	498
Portsoy	Banff & Buchan	RHMA	496
Newmachar	Garioch	AHMA	437

2.1.5 **Right House Sizes and Types in the Right Location –**
There continues to be significant pressure upon 1 bedroom units, larger 4 and 5 bedroom units along with particular needs housing stock. Latest analysis continues to suggest that in some locations there continues to be an oversupply of 2 bed properties, in particular flats in the northern most part of Aberdeenshire. This is reflected in homeless presentations with 64% of the open homeless cases as at end June 2026 requiring 1 bedroom properties. Furthermore, the Housing Need and Demand Assessment 2023 states that according to the 2018 household projections, there is a projected 11% rise in the number of single-person households over the next 10 years**.** Housing Online is Aberdeenshire Council's online portal which allows people to apply and register an interest on vacant properties using a Choice Based Lettings (CBL) system. Data from CBL shows areas of demand based on current turnover with results from 2025/26 further confirming the pressures on 1, 4, and 5 bedroom units. The turnover of 2 bedroom properties in north Aberdeenshire continues to be higher than the rest of Aberdeenshire combined. There continues to be a really low turnaround of 4 bedroom, mainstream properties – only 11 within the year. In terms of location the average number of bids across all property sizes is highest in Garioch.

2.1.6 Key workers are often considered as essential to providing services to the public and can include professions such as doctors, nurses, teachers, and police officers but can also extend to private sector businesses, and seasonal staff for example. It is also acknowledged that difficulties in the recruitment and retention of key workers can be detrimental to local economic growth and to service provision that is important to the wellbeing of local communities. In Aberdeenshire whilst there is the provision of mid-market rented accommodation through arms-length organisations of our housing association partners and Aberdeenshire Council – Create Homes, these properties are not specifically targeted at key workers but can be a useful resource for local key workers to access affordable accommodation close to their employment. Discussions will continue with partners, such as infrastructure providers and the NHS, to identify any specific requirements for key worker accommodation and where appropriate a key worker housing policy to complement our allocations policy will be developed and actions progressed to meet identified key worker housing need. Actions could include increasing housing stock by delivering the right size and type of housing in the right location whilst maximising available funding streams subject to appropriate approvals and financial viability, and or local lettings initiatives in relation to existing housing stock.

2.1.7 **LHS 2024-2029 Priority - Where Possible Homelessness is Prevented but where it can't be a Rapid Rehousing Approach is used to Resolve Cases -** Increasing the supply of affordable housing of an appropriate size and in the right locations will assist in meeting the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan's (RRTP) strategic aims of homeless prevention, identifying permanent settled solutions quickly, ensuring that stays in temporary accommodation are minimised and that appropriate support is provided to enable tenancies to be sustained and break the cycle of homelessness**.** The number of households presenting as homeless in 2025/26 increased by 6.1% on the previous year and this is reflected in an increase

in the number of households in temporary accommodation at the end of March 2026 however the average days to resolve a homeless cases across the local authority remained on average 58.23 days. This figure is higher for Formartine, Kincardine & Mearns and Marr. Whilst the original 5-year plan (2019-2024) has now expired, RRTP is fully embedded within operational procedures and practice. We continue to achieve the targets identified at the beginning of the RRTP journey and the challenge will be to maintain the levels of performance. Rapid rehousing activity continues to be monitored by way of an annual action plan and as part of the Local Housing Strategy and is reported to Communities Committee.

2.1.8 **LHS 2024-2029 Priority - Independent Living – Increase the supply of appropriate housing and support to ensure health and wellbeing across all of Aberdeenshire's Communities.**

The SHIP continues to support independent living with the delivery of projects for particular needs clients. Collaboration between Housing and Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership (AHSCP) colleagues enables individuals to live in the community with appropriate housing and support. Following on from the SHIP 2026-2031 two projects have completed at Ladysbridge (4 units) and Mintlaw (4 units) to meet the housing need of Learning Disability and Complex Care client groups. This evidence base will continue to shape and inform future new build projects subject to securing appropriate approvals and funding.

Work continues with AHSCP colleagues on evidencing housing requirements for particular needs clients - learning disability, complex care and mental health.

The Housing Requirements Planning Tool (HRPTK) indicates that there are 115 clients for learning disability and complex care, with 65 clients requiring 1 bedroomed properties and 50 for 2 bedroomed properties. There are 10 complex care clients currently housed 'Out of Area' who require overnight support. Of these clients 60 require individual units within an extra-care housing group setting with communal facilities, 51 require individual units in a group core and cluster setting and the remainder single units outwith a group setting. A total of 26 clients require adapted properties to meet their needs with 17 clients requiring fully wheelchair accessible properties. The areas identified as pressure points continue to be Peterhead, Inverurie and Ellon.

The HRPTK further identifies 48 clients living with mental health conditions/illness who require housing with all clients requiring 1 bedroomed properties. Currently there are 8 clients housed in a hospital setting, with 5 clients housed 'Out of Area' who require continued support. A total of 30 clients require a group core and cluster model with 23 of these clients in 4 in a block accommodation A total of 12 clients require individual units within extra-care housing group setting with communal

facilities and 6 require single units outwith a group setting. The areas identified as pressure points continue to be Fraserburgh, Alford, Ellon and Stonehaven.

The Mental Health & Learning Disability Housing Forum continues to identify as early as possible consideration of housing requirements to allow appropriate planning for both existing housing resources by Housing Options staff, as well as potential new build projects. And work continues with AHSCP partners to explore appropriate models of housing with both extra care housing and core and cluster developments identified as suitable and positive models which can provide appropriate housing, care and support.

2.1.9 **Particular Needs Housing**

To support the strategic priorities of the Local Housing Strategy and the Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan at least 15% of affordable new build development will be suitable for particular needs households enabling Independent Living and reducing inequalities.

As part of the target of 15% of all new affordable homes to be developed as Particular Needs housing, 10% of this number is required to be wheelchair accessible. Table 2 below shows the completions for the past 3 years.

Table 2 - Number of New Affordable Homes suitable for Particular Needs including Wheelchair Accessible

Year	All Affordable Units	Particular Needs Units	Wheelchair Accessible Units
2023/24	259 *Excludes the 51 Create Homes units	90 (35%)	26 (10%)
2024/25	180	58 (32%)	29 (16%)
2025/26	178	64 (36%)	30 (17%)

An indication of need for wheelchair accessible housing has been obtained through Aberdeenshire Council's housing waiting list and indicates approximately 89 applicants are currently waiting for wheelchair accessible properties. Horizon Housing's report '*Still minding the step?' A new estimation of the housing needs of wheelchair users, 2018, "massive shortfall"* suggests a methodology to estimate unmet need. Applying this methodology to provide a local estimate, as stated within the HNDA 2023, indicates that there are an estimated 761 households with an unmet need in Aberdeenshire.

Aberdeenshire Council supports the Scottish Government's approach as set out in the National Planning Framework 4 'NPF4 position statement' to work with planners and private developers to increase the delivery of all-tenure wheelchair accessible housing targets. Aberdeenshire Council through discussion with planners introduced an all-tenure target and in addition to 10% of all new build developed in the social housing sector, set a target to encourage 10% of all new housing developments in the private sector on developments of 20 or more units to be wheelchair accessible. However, challenges remain around implementation, recording and monitoring of this data. The new Local Development Plan for Aberdeenshire is currently being developed and as part of this process, the new LDP will adopt NPF4 to implement a policy to increase the delivery of wheelchair accessible housing across all tenures to meet unmet housing need. The outcome of the Scottish Government's Consultation on 'Enhancing the accessibility, adaptability and usability of Scotland's homes' will help shape and inform any future policy development with respect to ensuring health and wellbeing across our communities to enable independent living.

2.1.10 **Adaptations**

Adaptations play an important role in ensuring that people have housing that best suits their needs and allows them to maintain their independence and improve their wellbeing outcomes. Aberdeenshire Council Adaptations Group, which includes partners from Housing, Care & Repair, Registered Social Landlords, and Occupational Therapy Team Managers, continue to streamline and improve adaptations services and delivery, providing a person-centred and tenure-neutral approach in line with Scottish Government's guidance on Equipment and Adaptations. Table 3 below demonstrates the number of adaptations numbers during the last three years. The figures for 'Average Days to Complete' below for Local Authority Housing and 'Private Sector Housing' are based on completely different processes. The main difference between the two is that the Local Authority use their own contractors, drawing works from contracts already in place and have greater control over the delivery of these adaptations. Private Sector adaptations are delivered via grants with clients/owners retaining ownership of the process. They have greater choice around options to meet their needs, are required to sign up to obtaining estimates for each job and must choose their own contractors. The number of adaptations completed within the private sector has fallen due to changes to the criteria within the Council's Private Sector Housing Scheme of Assistance, as approved by Communities Committee on 13th February 2025, to refocus a reduced budget to the most urgent clients. In addition to this change, capacity of the Occupational Health team has reduced causing delays and limiting the number of assessments that can be carried out to determine adaptation provision. The rise in average days is attributed to several factors including an increase in complex cases and a temporary pause that was required when reviewing the Scheme of Assistance to prioritise support for those in most need.

Table 3 - Number of Adaptations and Average Number of Days between Assessment of Need and Completion of Adaptation by Housing Tenure

	Local Authority		Private Sector	
Year	**Number of Adaptations**	**Average days between assessment of need and completion**	**Number of Adaptations**	**Average days between assessment of need and completion**
2023/24	111	71	238	137
2024/25	102	79	154	154
2025/26	75	65	143	171

2.1.11 **Housing Support services**

Aberdeenshire Council's Disabled Persons Housing Service is provided by Houseability, who provide support and assistance for people with disabilities and those living with long-term conditions. Assistance is provided individually for each client's particular needs to reduce health inequalities by providing the required support to enable clients to have access to appropriate independent living options.

During 2025/26, Houseability had 166 enquiries and supported 90 clients with disabilities in finding suitable housing including 21 clients in hospital, helping to enable quicker hospital discharge. Houseability have noted over the course of the last few years that clients have increasingly more complex health issues and situations, aligning with the experiences of AHSCP and Housing Service Officers. This includes clients with multiple disabilities, family members who also have disabilities, and clients requesting advice on multiple services, such as housing options, rent issues, neighbour problems, and signposting to other agencies such as SCARF (an organisation which provides energy efficiency advice and information), Citizens Advice Bureau, Care & Repair, Voiceability, Money and Benefits Advice, Energy Saving Trust and Housing Options Scotland. Importantly, Houseability may likewise receive referrals from these organisations.

2.1.12 **LHS 2024-2029 Priority - Minority Ethnic Communities – Minority Ethnic Communities, including Gypsy/Travellers, will have access to appropriate land, housing and support encouraging social integration**.

Provision of well-maintained permanent and stopover sites that meet the needs of the Gypsy/Traveller community.

Aberdeenshire Council has a Gypsy/Traveller Sub-Committee consisting of Members, officers, and partners which meets twice a year. It is supported by the Gypsy/Traveller Officer Group which monitors and updates outcomes and actions in the Gypsy/Traveller Sub-Committee Action Plan. The outcomes in the Gypsy/Traveller Sub-Committee Action Plan reflect the themes in the Scottish Government Anti Racism Delivery Plan 2026-2030 which are:

- Theme 1: Overarching Work which relates to the whole Action Plan. Vision: Scotland in 2030 is a place where people are healthier, happier, and treated with respect, and where opportunities, wealth and power are spread more equally for people from all communities.
- Theme 2: Community Cohesion and Safety
- Theme 3: Participation and Representation
- Theme 5: Employability, Employment, and Income
- Theme 6: Health and Housing

A workshop consisting of Gypsy/Traveller Sub Committee members, members of the Gypsy/Traveller community and Gypsy/Traveller Officer Group representatives will be held in late 2026 to gather information and views on current and future site provision to develop Aberdeenshire Gypsy/Traveller Site Provision Strategy 2026-2031, informing future delivery. Local Development Plans (LDPs), through the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), should allocate land to ensure provision of accommodation for Gypsy/Travellers where there is identified need. NPF4 also supports development proposals for public, private, permanent and temporary Gypsy/Traveller sites on land not specifically allocated for this use in the LDP. In Aberdeenshire three potential sites are identified under the Local Development Plan (2023) Chapelton, Inverurie and Blackdog, but it is unlikely that these sites will be developed in the short term given that they are in private ownership. From April 2026, Scottish Government funding for Gypsy/Traveller accommodation sits within the Affordable Housing Supply Programme and subject to site identification and appropriate consents, approvals and funding, projects will be brought forward.

There are currently two Gypsy/Traveller Sites managed by Aberdeenshire Council:-

- Aikey Brae, Stopover Site at Maud, Peterhead has 10 pitches, each with an electric pillar and a chemical toilet. Water is available from communal standpipes/taps. The site is accessible throughout the year with the length of stay negotiable in discussion with the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer, who manages the site.

- Greenbanks Travellers Site in Banff has 20 stances each with an amenity chalet with access to electric, a separate toilet and walk in shower and plumbing for a washing machine. 20 stances are available for occupation from April to the end of October. Whilst Greenbanks is not a residential site,10 stances are available for occupation throughout the year.

Gypsy/Traveller Accommodation Types and Explanations - Gypsy/Traveller sites - interim site design guide: supplementary material was published by Scottish Government in April 2025, to drive a significant improvement in the quality of sites going forward. Updated Guidance is due to be issued imminently and Aberdeenshire Council will take account of this as required.

There is a range of private site provision throughout Aberdeenshire. The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer provides support to Gypsy/Travellers who would like to develop private sites, as well as support for those who wish to access housing services.

2.1.13 The Refugee Resettlement Team and partners have supported 1523 refugees and displaced persons to resettle in Aberdeenshire between February 2016 and July 2026. The Ukraine Moving On Housing Project has ensured that clients receive enhanced and tailored Housing Options support to transition from sponsor accommodation to their own sustainable tenancy - mostly within the private sector.

Aberdeenshire New Scots' Integration Strategy aim is to enable refugees to integrate from day of arrival, with social housing across both Aberdeenshire Council and Registered Social Landlords being utilised to provide permanency. There are now well-established New Scots communities in the Northeast of Scotland, settled and contributing to their new home and communities.

Aberdeenshire Council and partners are committed to resettling up to 30 families per year in Aberdeenshire, whilst delivering relevant housing outcomes as stated in the Aberdeenshire New Scots' Integration Strategy 2025+:

- Work with relevant partners, to identify the current and future housing needs of New Scots and barriers around housing for some groups, including those at risk of destitution who are not entitled to statutory housing or homelessness services

- Work with housing providers to ensure that our resettlement commitment is proportionate, deliverable and sustainable

- Further develop housing transition models, to ensure clients have appropriate support, pathways and housing in place during key transition periods as noted below:

    - Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (Looked After Children) positive and negative asylum decisions
    - Adult and family positive and negative asylum decisions
    - Ukraine Moving On Project
    - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Tenancy Sign up
    - Long term New Scots Tenancy Support

2.2 **Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017**

The Aberdeenshire Child Poverty Action Plan, a key priority of the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan, recognises the distinct challenges created by rurality, including higher living costs, transport barriers and access to services. Local data indicates that the Banff & Buchan and Buchan areas account for around 42% of children and young people living in poverty, and inequalities have widened for those who have a long-term illness or a disability, including children with additional support needs. Actions therefore focus on prevention and early intervention with family-informed approaches that address the root causes of poverty, particularly in rural areas, through income maximisation, employability support, tenancy sustainment, improved quality of life and measures to help families manage the impacts of poverty. Delivered in line with the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024, these measures help reduce inequalities and improve outcomes for children, young people and families across Aberdeenshire. The commitment in the SHIP to support independent living by ensuring that a minimum of 15% of new affordable homes are suitable for those with particular needs will contribute towards reducing these inequalities. The SHIP identifies up to 504 affordable homes to be developed in the settlements within these areas, of which 483 will be targeted for social rent. These properties will meet the energy efficiency standard for social housing and will complement the significant investment from the Council and local RSLs to meet the standard for their existing stock. Combined efforts across new build, fuel poverty and independent living will help to reduce costs and close the inequalities gap and improve the life chances for children and households living in poverty.

2.3 **Housing Need and Demand Assessment**

The Housing Need and Demand Assessment 2023 informs the Local Development Plan as well as the Local Housing Strategy. The assessment estimates the number of housing units required to meet housing need and demand in the future over a number of different scenarios across a 20-year period and forms the basis for setting the Housing Supply Target through the Local Housing Strategy process. In setting a housing supply target, local authorities must take account of a wide range of different factors including, but not limited to, economic and market indicators; build out rate of developers; previous levels of affordable housing delivery; and the availability of resources; all of which will likely have an impact upon the pace and scale of housing delivery. Based on the assessment and the factors above, the housing supply target agreed for affordable housing for Aberdeenshire is 250 units per year; 225 social rent and 25 intermediate.

2.4 **Housing Market**

2.4.1 Aberdeenshire Council shares the Aberdeen Housing Market Area with Aberdeen City. This area broadly extends around 20 miles from Aberdeen into Aberdeenshire and includes towns such as Ellon, Inverurie, Westhill and Portlethen, reflecting the interaction between the two areas. Whilst house prices in Aberdeenshire are still above the Scottish average, since 2016 this gap has been reducing and the average house price in Aberdeenshire was £197,722 in May 2026 down by -0.3% from May 2025. Across Scotland, the average house price rose by 4.4% over the same period to £195,543 (Registers of Scotland). In terms of the number of residential sales, recent data from ASPC showed that in the second quarter of 2026, 1,525 residential dwellings were transacted, a change of 35.3% compared to the previous quarter 2026 Q1 and a change of -2.4% compared to the same quarter a year ago 2025 Q2. Typically, the second quarter of the year is the most active, but this data might indicate that the local housing market is coping reasonably well in difficult times given the socio-economic and geopolitical environment (ASPC). In relation to the private rented sector, Citylets data for 2026 Q1 indicates that Aberdeen outperformed the Scottish average, although market conditions remain mixed, with longer letting periods and some rent reductions. While rents across Scotland fell by 0.4% year-on-year, Aberdeen recorded annual growth of 1.7%, with average monthly rent reaching £878 (Citylets).

2.4.2 With regards to the number of all tenure new build completions there has been a 6% decrease in Aberdeenshire over the period 2024-2025 (789) to 2025-2026 (741) compared to a 10% decrease in activity at a Scotland level (Scottish Government). Of particular note is that the number of new build starts from 2024/25 to 2025/26 at a Scotland level has reduced by 4% compared to an increase of 77% an Aberdeenshire level (894). Although the Bank of England reduced the base rate from 4% to 3.75% in December 2025 and held it at this level through the first half of 2026, inflationary pressures linked to geopolitical energy disruption mean markets expect rates to remain around this level or potentially rise. Interest rates therefore continue

to affect the cost and availability of borrowing, impacting the affordability and viability of construction projects. The Building Cost Information Service's latest All-in Tender Price Index (TPI) suggest tender prices have increased 3.2% to Q3 2026, up from 2.5% in Q3 2025. Contractors are continuing to hold their tender prices for 120 days and this tender validity period has been stable over the last 12 months, and would indicate a level of market stability, although this is at the higher pricing level. Generally, we are receiving higher numbers of tender returns for projects when open tendering through Public Contracts Scotland and contractors' appetite for submitting prices for projects is positive on small to medium sized projects. However, major construction projects with tier 1 contractors are more challenging and contractors are only looking for 2 stage tendering or framework awards as opposed to pricing on the open market. In Aberdeenshire there are a limited number of contractors in comparison to the Central Belt of Scotland, therefore, we may be susceptible to change if sizeable, more attractive projects are released into the market. There is also more interest from contractors around Aberdeenshire Council's potential programme of construction projects, which would suggest their order books may not be as full as previous years. The availability of building materials has been stable over the course of the last year with no major issues reported. Meantime there remains an ongoing skills and labour shortage within the construction industry and the availability of labour is still challenging. This experience seems to be consistent with previous years and has a direct impact on delivery and quality on sites.

2.4.3 A high proportion – around 74% - of current and future affordable housing development is or will be as a consequence of contributions from the private development industry to affordable housing through the Affordable Housing Policies of Aberdeenshire Council and the Cairngorms National Park Authority. Consequently, the SHIP 2027-2032 will be heavily influenced by the development industry's build-out rate, intrinsically linked to the performance of the economy and the local housing market. This current market trend will be monitored in terms of the potential impact on the deliverability and viability of affordable housing developments, across all tenures, particularly in terms of alignment with Scottish Government funding, with a view to optimising other delivery mechanisms to provide affordable housing.

3. Delivery

3.1 Affordable Housing Completions

During the period April 2025 to March 2026 a total of 159 units were completed for social rent; 73 units across the Council New Build programme and 86 units across our RSL partners New Build programme. This includes developments across Fraserburgh, Ladysbridge, Mintlaw, Peterhead, Westhill, Inverurie, Kemnay, Gourdon and Chapleton. Of the 159 units, 57 were suitable for particular needs of which 30 units were wheelchair accessible. Of these 159 units, 41 units were delivered in town centres and or brownfield sites in Westhill and Inverurie. There were also 12 properties purchased for social rent through the Council in Fraserburgh, New Deer, Rothienorman, Turriff, Newmachar, Inverurie, Stonehaven, Huntly, and

Banchory, with the properties in New Deer, Rothienorman, Newmachar & Stonehaven suitable for particular needs. There were also 4 units for mid-market rent at Tarves. Furthermore, there were also 3 Low Cost Shared Equity New Build units completed in South Ythsie, Kirkton of Maryculter and Alford all suitable for particular needs. Table 4 below details completions by provider, tenure and property size.

Table 4 - Number of Aberdeenshire Completions by Provider, Tenure and House Size during 2025/2026

Aberdeenshire 2025/26						
Provider/Tenure	**1 bed**	**2 bed**	**3 bed**	**4 bed**	**5 bed**	**Totals**
Aberdeenshire Council - social rent	**25**	**8**	**36**	**4**	**0**	**73**
Registered Social Landlord - social rent	**28**	**31**	**23**	**4**	**0**	**86**
Acquisition by Aberdeenshire Council - social rent	**6**	**5**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**12**
Acquisition by RSL - social rent	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Mid Market Rent - Create Homes	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Mid Market Rent - Registered Social Landlords	**0**	**0**	**4**	**0**	**0**	**4**
Shared Equity	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Low Cost Shared Equity - New Build	**0**	**1**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**3**
Total	**59**	**45**	**66**	**8**	**0**	**178**
	33%	**25%**	**37%**	**5%**	**0%**	**100%**

Meantime work has recently completed or currently on site for 124 social rent units of which 35 are being delivered through the Council's New Build programme, the remaining 89 through our RSL partners. This includes developments across the following locations: Fraserburgh, Chapleton, Ladysbridge, Oldmeldrum, Pitmedden, Tarves, Westhill, St Cyrus and Banchory. Of these 124 units, 38 are suitable for particular needs including 8 for wheelchair users. Two properties have also been purchased since April 2026 from the open market to be brought into Council stock in Kemnay and Ellon. Meantime, work continues on site for 41 Shared Equity units and 80 units for Mid-Market at Chapelton, by our RSL partner.

3.2 **SHIP Programme Priorities**

Aberdeenshire Council has developed a programme of affordable housing which provides a range of tenures from renting to home ownership, delivered by a range of partners including Registered Social Landlords, private developers and community groups, effectively seeking to maximise all available funding streams. This programme has been planned so that each development has been placed in the actual year that it could start if resources were available; developments are in the main within allocated sites within the Local Development Plan with the delivery programme a key tool in driving delivery and addressing any identified constraints within the context of a place making approach. Furthermore, the Affordable Housing Hub seeks to accelerate the delivery of affordable housing through a collaborative and dedicated approach to identifying and resolving any planning or delivery issues timeously. Within each year, the developments are prioritised as high, medium, and low in terms of addressing housing need as set out in Table 1 above. Potentially the SHIP could deliver 2276 new affordable homes, with around 613 suitable for Particular Needs (27%) of which 196 will be fully wheelchair accessible (9%). Around 1860 units will be for social rent (82%) with the remainder as either mid- market rent or some form of affordable home ownership. Of the 2276 units around 315 units will be delivered on either town centre and or brownfield sites. In terms of addressing the pressure points of 1 bed properties and larger family size properties of 4+ bedrooms, around 27% of social rent properties will be 1 bed properties and around 7% will be 4+ bedroom properties. A summary of the SHIP is outlined in Table 5 below.

3.3 **Affordable Housing Supply Programme**

In terms of the affordable housing supply programme the SHIP has been drafted in accordance with Scottish Government guidance. Site starts will be subject to the availability of funding from Scottish Government and Aberdeenshire Council's Housing Revenue Account plan as well as RSLs' business plans and are detailed below in Table 5, along with the Resource Planning Assumptions as advised by Scottish Government.

Table 5 - Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2027-2032 Potential Site Starts

Area 2027/28	**BB**	**B**	**F**	**G**	**KM**	**M**	**Aberdeenshire**	**Resource Planning Assumption**
Council - Social Rent/ SSEN	0	119	78	0	0	0	197	
RSL - Social Rent	62	58	73	225	222	87	727	
Create Homes Aberdeenshire - Mid Market Rent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

RSL - Mid Market Rent	0	0	0	21	89	27	137	
RSL Low Cost Shared Equity	0	0	0	0	41	9	50	
Aberdeenshire Low Cost Shared Equity	0	0	8	1	2	0	11	
Total	**62**	**177**	**159**	**247**	**354**	**123**	**1122**	**£28.612m**
Area 2028/29	**BB**	**B**	**F**	**G**	**KM**	**M**	**Aberdeenshire**	**Resource Planning Assumption**
Council - Social Rent	0	0	13	0	3	0	16	
RSL - Social Rent	0	6	102	60	52	55	269	
Create Homes Aberdeenshire - Mid Market Rent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
RSL - Mid Market Rent	0	0	4	0	18	0	22	
RSL Low Cost Shared Equity	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Aberdeenshire Low Cost Shared Equity	2	6	10	2	5	8	33	
Total	**2**	**12**	**129**	**62**	**78**	**63**	**346**	**£29.470m**
Area 2029/30	**BB**	**B**	**F**	**G**	**KM**	**M**	**Aberdeenshire**	**Resource Planning Assumption**
Council - Social Rent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
RSL - Social Rent	0	25	125	84	20	4	258	
Create Homes Aberdeenshire - Mid Market Rent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
RSL - Mid Market Rent	0	0	10	16	0	0	26	
RSL Low Cost Shared Equity	0	0	0	0	0	6	6	
Aberdeenshire Low Cost Shared Equity	0	0	18	8	9	0	35	
Total	**0**	**25**	**153**	**108**	**29**	**10**	**325**	**£30.355m**
Area 2030/31	**BB**	**B**	**F**	**G**	**KM**	**M**	**Aberdeenshire**	**Resource Planning Assumption**

Council - Social Rent	0	34	0	0	0	0	34	
RSL - Social Rent	0	99	0	30	64	0	193	
Create Homes Aberdeenshire - Mid Market Rent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
RSL - Mid Market Rent	0	0	0	37	20	0	57	
RSL Low Cost Shared Equity	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Aberdeenshire Low Cost Shared Equity	0	11	0	4	1	0	16	
Total	**0**	**144**	**0**	**71**	**85**	**0**	**300**	**To be advised**
Area 2031/32	**BB**	**B**	**F**	**G**	**KM**	**M**	**Aberdeenshire**	**Resource Planning Assumption**
Council - Social Rent	12	12	0	0	0	30	54	
RSL - Social Rent	0	60	0	46	0	0	106	
Create Homes Aberdeenshire - Mid Market Rent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
RSL - Mid Market Rent	0	0	0	10	0	0	10	
RSL Low Cost Shared Equity	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Aberdeenshire Low Cost Shared Equity	0	4	0	0	4	5	13	
Total	**12**	**76**	**0**	**56**	**4**	**35**	**183**	**To be advised**
Area 2027/32	**BB**	**B**	**F**	**G**	**KM**	**M**	**Aberdeenshire**	**Resource Planning Assumption**
Council - Social Rent/SSEN	12	165	91	0	3	30	301	
RSL - Social Rent	62	248	300	445	358	146	1559	
Create Homes Aberdeenshire - Mid Market Rent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
RSL - Mid Market Rent	0	0	14	84	127	27	252	
RSL Low Cost Shared Equity	0	0	0	0	41	15	56	
Aberdeenshire Low Cost Shared Equity	2	21	36	15	21	13	108	

Total	**76**	**434**	**441**	**544**	**550**	**231**	**2276**	**£88.437m**

3.4 The Council and Registered Social Landlords' new build programmes seek to maximise the delivery of affordable housing through all available funding streams. Partners will continue to investigate and implement new and innovative delivery mechanisms. A small number of landbank sites held by partners will be developed as appropriate; however, as noted previously, a significant proportion of current and future programmes will be as a consequence of the Affordable Housing Policies. As such, timing and alignment with Scottish Government funding will be fundamental to the effective planning and deliverability of our future programme. Affordable housing partners recognise the importance of optimising other delivery mechanisms to maximise land supply outwith the Affordable Housing Policies and as such work continues to identify and pursue other opportunities including a collaborative approach to the disposal of partners' land and assets and securing land and properties from the open market where appropriate and viable.

3.5 **Second Homes and Empty Homes**

Table 6 below shows the number and percentage of second and empty homes in Aberdeenshire, Scotland and in neighbouring councils Aberdeen City, Moray, Highland, Angus and Perth and Kinross. In Aberdeenshire, over the course of the last five years the number of second homes has reduced slightly from 1193 in 2020 to 1154 in 2025. In terms of empty homes, 2.3% of dwellings have been empty for a period of more than 6 months in Aberdeenshire, slightly down by 0.1% from last year, compared to a Scottish Average of 1.6% with Aberdeen City at 4.8% and Moray at 1.6% (NRS).

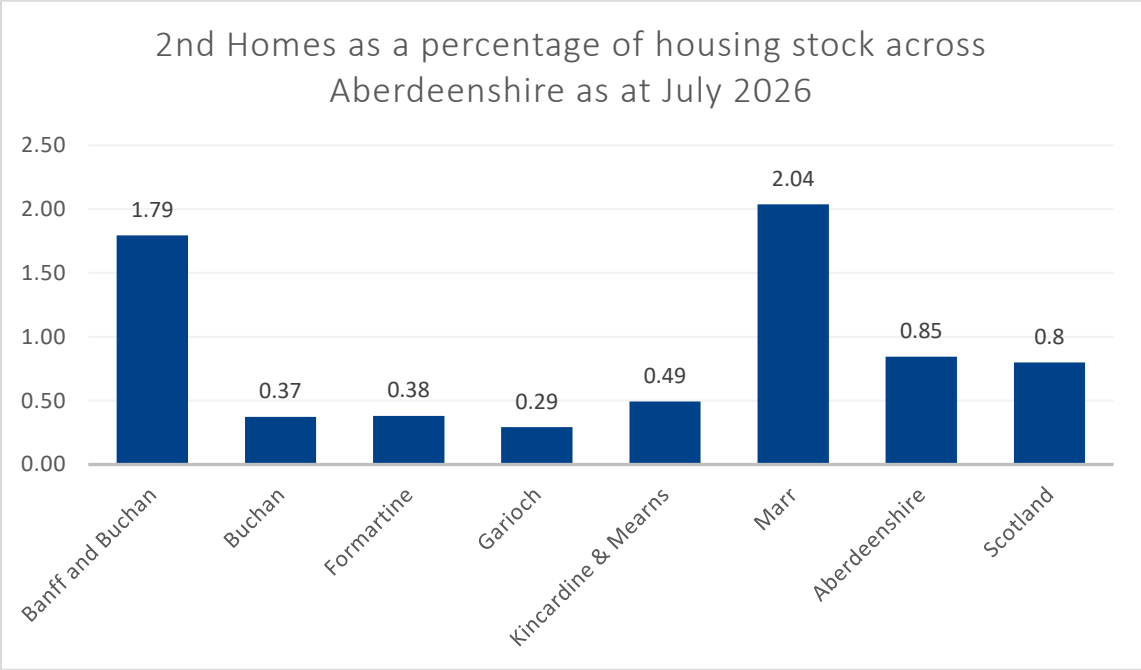
Table 6 - Number and Percentage of Second Homes and Empty Homes

Council	Number of 2nd homes	% of dwellings that are 2nd homes	Number of empty homes	% of dwellings that are empty
Aberdeenshire	1,154	0.9	2,896	2.3
Aberdeen City	420	0.3	6,124	4.8
Moray	701	1.5	765	1.6
Highland	3,386	2.7	3,969	3.2
Angus	280	0.5	1,383	2.4
Perth & Kinross	987	1.3	1,479	1.9

Scotland	20,927	0.8	44,453	1.6

Source: Households and Dwellings in Scotland, 2025 - National Records of Scotland (NRS) Long term empty properties in Aberdeenshire and Scotland (NRS Households and Dwellings in Scotland) published July 2026.

In terms of second homes the Scottish average percentage is 0.80% with Aberdeenshire's percentage at 0.90%. However, when looking at each administrative area within Aberdeenshire the percentages vary, with Banff and Buchan and Marr being 1.79% and 2.04% respectively, as demonstrated in the graph below.



Source: Aberdeenshire Council Tax data July 2026 and Households and Dwellings in Scotland, 2025 - National Records of Scotland (NRS)

Some areas have a higher than average proportion of second homes, often reflecting their role as popular tourist destinations. The impact of this varies by area, depending on local socio-economic factors, housing supply and affordability. In Marr, a predominantly rural area which includes the Royal Deeside towns of Ballater and Braemar, tourism is a significant

driver of the local economy. Local intelligence suggests that many residents work locally and prefer, or need, to remain within these communities rather than travel further afield. Employment is traditionally concentrated in hospitality, accommodation and retail, sectors which are often seasonal and lower paid. In the smaller villages across Marr, the limited availability of social rented housing, combined with restricted private housing options and costs above the Aberdeenshire average, can make it particularly difficult for some households to access suitable and affordable housing. As a result, private rented or owner-occupied homes, even where available, may be unaffordable for many local households.
In Banff and Buchan, a number of small coastal villages are also associated with tourism. However, the turnover of social rented stock in these communities is generally sufficient to meet much of the demand from households on the waiting list. Nonetheless, some households may still experience difficulty accessing suitable housing, particularly where lower than Aberdeenshire average private housing costs must be considered alongside lower than Aberdeenshire average household incomes.

Table 7 below provides a summary of the empty homes brought back into use as affordable housing in Aberdeenshire over the course of the last three years from 2023/24 to 2025/26.

Table 7 - Empty Homes Projects 2023/24—2025/26 by funding, length of time empty and tenure

23/24 Empty Property details				**Funding Source/Amount**					
No of empty properties	**Length of time empty**	**Total No of completed properties**	**Tenure**	**SGovt Grant**	**HRA/RSL**	**Developer Obligations**	**2nd Homes Council Tax**	**General Fund**	**Total Funding**
3	<6 months	3	social rent	£172,000	£186,373	£0	£0	£0	£358,373
1	6-12 months	1	social rent	£65,000	£113,972	£0	£0	£0	£178,972
3	1-2 years	3	social rent	£172,000	£214,064	£4,586	£0	£0	£390,650
2	2-5 years	14	social rent	1,575,000	£1,223,364	£8,781	£160,000	£564,000	£3,531,145
1	5-10 years	6	social rent	£621,000	£474,241	£129,301	£108,000	£175,000	£1,507,542

10		**27**		**£2,605,000**	**£2,212,014**	**£142,668**	**£268,000**	**£739,000**	**£5,966,682**

24/25 Empty Property details				**Funding Source/Amount**					
No of empty properties	**Length of time empty**	**Total No of completed properties**	**Tenure**	**SGovt Grant**	**HRA/RSL**	**Developer Obligations**	**2nd Homes Council Tax**	**General Fund**	**Total Funding**
2	1-2 years	2	social rent	£130,000	£79,757	£0	£0	£0	£209,757
4	2-5 years	34	social rent	£2,979,000	£2,409,777	£403,269	£727,000	£315,000	£6,834,046
6		**36**		**£3,109,000**	**£2,489,534**	**£403,269**	**£727,000**	**£315,000**	**£7,043,803**

25/26 Empty Property details				**Funding Source/Amount**					
No of empty properties	**Length of time empty**	**Total No of completed properties**	**Tenure**	**SGovt Grant**	**HRA/RSL**	**Developer Obligations**	**2nd Homes Council Tax**	**General Fund**	**Total Funding**
1	6-12 months	1	social rent	£65,000	£0	£25,140	£0	£0	£90,140
1	1-2 years	1	social rent	£65,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£65,000
2	2-5 years	2	1 social rent 1 LCSE	£65,000	£56,522	£120,000 *	£0	£0	£241,522
4		**4**		**£195,000**	**£56,522**	**£145,140 ***	**£0**	**£0**	**£396,662**

23/26 Empty Property details	**Funding Source/Amount**

No of empty properties	Length of time empty	Total No of completed properties	Tenure	SGovt Grant	HRA/RSL	Developer Obligations	2nd Homes Council Tax	General Fund	Total Funding
20	**<6 mths=3 6-12 mths=2 1-2 yrs=6 2-5 yrs=8 5-10 yrs=1 >10 yrs=0**	**67**	**Social rent=66 LCSE=1**	**£5,909,000**	**£4,758,070**	**£691,077 ***	**£995,000**	**£1,054,000**	**£13,407,147**
* This includes private finance of £96,470									

The Empty Homes Framework developed by the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership (SEHP) is embedded in our commitment to bring empty homes back into use through our Local Housing Strategy. As part of this approach to bringing empty properties back into during 2025/26, 4 new affordable homes were delivered as a result of bringing back empty properties into use:-

- 3 empty homes were bought from the open market by Aberdeenshire Council in Rothienorman, Huntly, and Newmachar for social rent of which 2 are suitable for particular needs households
- 1 empty building was converted into flats by a private developer in Alford, of which 1 flat was delivered as Low Cost Shared Equity, and is suitable for particular needs households.

We continue to encourage and support empty homeowners through our dedicated Empty homes - Aberdeenshire Council service to provide individualised advice and information to owners to help to bring their empty property back into use. During 2025-2026, 139 enquiries were received at emptyhomes@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Advice, information and signposting was provided as follows:-

- 76 funding and financial related queries – of which 58 requested assistance with reduce rated VAT
- 28 queries re buying and or selling. 8 were provided information with regards to making properties more marketable and alternative routes for selling such as auction houses for example. 15 were given advice on finding an empty property to renovate as well as 5 general enquiries regarding our empty property Matchmaker Scheme
- 2 general enquiries regarding empty properties

- 14 queries regarding Council Tax charging
- 4 enquiries regarding renovation and maintenance with information given on merchant's discount schemes, energy efficiency schemes as well as renewable technology options
- 1 enquiry re private sector renting including rights and responsibilities of both landlords and tenants, landlord registration and information such as tenancy deposit scheme
- 14 reporting an empty property

During 2025-2026, 33 applications were made to Aberdeenshire Council's empty property Matchmaker Scheme from owners/sellers looking to sell their empty property. In the same period, 47 interested buyers registered an application form to go on the scheme. From all applications registered, 20 potential matches were made and details passed on to each party to progress. Some properties have had several matches and to date there has been one successful match for a property in Peterhead which progressed to a sale in June 2025. The property was eligible for reduce rated VAT on works to the property to bring it back into use which the new owner benefitted from. Of the remaining potential matches, some are still in discussions whilst others have not provided an update.

Over the course of 2025-2026, contact was made with the liable parties of 2287 empty homes in April and 2174 in October by email. As a result, 8 have advised that their property is now occupied, 20 advised it has been sold, 26 advised property is up for sale, 5 are privately rented out with 2 intending to rent out, and 6 are undergoing renovation.

The following support and advice was issued:-

- funding and financial matters - 13
- rental advice - 4
- renovations advice - 1
- buying and selling advice - 7
- general advice - 2

Recently, the targeted emails have contained a link to a survey which seeks to gain an improved understanding of the needs of empty home owners and their views as to what support is required to bring their empty home back into use. Next steps will be to carry out an analysis of the responses received. Since July 2026, a temporary part time officer has been recruited, funded by Second Homes Council Tax and the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership, as part of a collaborative approach to support and drive forward Empty Homes actions.

Council Tax data demonstrates that Aberdeenshire Council have 2608 empty properties as at 27th April 2026, which is slightly down from 2785 last year as at 20th May 2025. Work continues to map empty homes with a view to informing strategic planning and targeting of actions to ensure all empty home owners in Aberdeenshire are aware of the Empty Homes Service and the practical support and assistance available.

During 2025/26, £2.124 million was generated through Council Tax revenues from reduced discounts on Second Homes and Long Term Empty Properties and this is ringfenced for affordable housing purposes in line with Scottish Government guidance. £25,000 of Second Homes Council Tax was spent to support the delivery of 16 council homes in Fraserburgh during 2025/2026. This funding stream continues to enable and support the Council's New Build programme and is fully committed to the Council's New Build programme in order to optimise capacity to increase the supply of affordable housing across both the short and longer term. Approximately £11.2m has been allocated in principle to future projects to deliver 165 units across six sites over the next four years subject to securing the appropriate consents and approvals.

Income from the council tax 100% levy on empty homes, introduced in April 2014, and second homes, introduced in April 2024, is not ringfenced for affordable housing purposes, including bringing empty homes back into use, and is allocated to support the Council's wider plans and activities. This approach also applies to the increase in the levy from 100% to 200%, which took place from September 2026.

3.6 **Developer Obligations**

During 2025/2026 there were 178 new supply affordable housing completions in Aberdeenshire as detailed in Table 9 below.

Table 9 - Number of Aberdeenshire Completions 2025/2026 supported by the Affordable Housing Policies

Number of Completions	S75	Non S75	Total
Scottish Government Funding	**84**	**94**	**178**
Without Scottish Government Funding	**0**	**0**	**0**
Total	**84**	**94**	**178**

Of these completions, 84 (47%) were delivered through S75 - Affordable Housing Policies - land and/or commuted sums, with all of these units also supported by Scottish Government funding through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme.

The remaining 94 units were not delivered through the Affordable Housing Policies but did receive Scottish Government funding.

As set out the Affordable Housing Policies, commuted payments are in exceptional circumstances received in lieu of on-site affordable housing provision. Table 10 below sets out Developer Obligations Commuted Payments as at July 2026.

Table 10 - Developer Obligations Commuted Payments As At July 2026

Academy Catchment	Paid In 25/26 (£)	Expended 25/26 (£)	Balance as at July 2026 (£)	Committed as at July 2026 (£)
Aboyne	26,000	0	185,662	70,000
Alford	9,598	0	103,845	0
Banchory	29,722	59,985	123,370	0
Banff	1,382	0	152,100	0
Ellon	0	0	127,808	0
Fraserburgh	2,912	0	52,959	0
Huntly	0	0	12,542	0
Inverurie	7,442	98,709	0	0
Kemnay	0	0	0	0
Mackie (Stonehaven)	32,917	75,160	7,862	0
Mearns (Laurencekirk)	7,492	0	32,006	0
Oldmeldrum	41,591	0	114,338	0
Mintlaw	27,516	0	250,497	0
Peterhead	0	0	3,680	0
Portlethen	0	0	0	0
Turriff	5,500	0	19,715	0
Westhill	6,504	0	24,689	0
Other Towns/Areas	9,675	18,313	5,402	0
LCHO Resales	225,875	115,160	2,312,079	884,840
LCHO Staircasing	0	0	216,499	0

Aberdeenshire Total	434,126	367,327	3,745,053	954,840

During 2025/26, £367,327 of this funding stream has assisted in the acquisition of 7 purchases from the open market to be brought into use as social rent as part of the Council's stock.

Commuted payments are actively managed and monitored by officers to identify opportunities and ensure the funds are used within appropriate timescales to support affordable housing activity, in line with the priorities set out below:

1) Council New Build Programme.
2) Enabling Registered Social Landlord development programme.
3) Enabling empty properties to be brought back into use.
4) Enabling delivery of affordable housing through private estates and community groups.
5) Purchase of open market housing for use as affordable housing; either for mainstream or temporary accommodation subject to identified housing need.
6) Particular needs adaptations.

3.7 **Delivery Models**

Aberdeenshire Council and its partners will continue to work with Scottish Government to support the delivery of the Housing to 2040 vision by exploring new delivery models for affordable housing. Partners are currently exploring a delivery model with SSEN Transmission to deliver new homes as part of its Pathway to 2030 programme – a £20bn investment to upgrade the transmission network in the north of Scotland in support of energy security and national net zero ambitions. Workers' accommodation will be required to deliver the proposed projects and SSEN Transmission is aiming to create a legacy in the communities that will host its workforce by delivering housing that will support local need when the projects are completed. SSEN have advised that their housing strategy would comprise 4 main types of accommodation:

- **Permanent housing**
- **Accommodation villages**
- **Local hotels and rentals**
- **Redevelopment of existing buildings**

The financial model for permanent housing and the redevelopment of existing buildings is being explored and assessed with a view to identifying a cost effective model which is financially sustainable for SSEN Transmission and their contractors, as well as any affordable housing providers, both in the short and longer term. This will likely require a capital contribution as

well as a long term rental agreement with guaranteed income in order for this to be financially viable for the affordable housing sector. Aberdeenshire Council along with its' housing partners, such as RSLs, landowners and the development industry, are in discussions to potentially deliver housing units, across a number of sites and assets in the Peterhead, Turriff and Stonehaven areas, that would initially be occupied by SSEN Transmission/primary contractors' workers. Thereafter, some units could revert to the affordable housing sector and or some units could be for mainstream private housing. In addition to the delivery of permanent housing, there may also be a need for the provision of temporary caravan sites and temporary accommodation villages. Proposals for temporary accommodation villages and caravan sites will be directed to allocated undeveloped housing sites. This will enable the delivery of permanent roads, access, drainage and servicing infrastructure that will facilitate the future development of the sites for permanent housing once the temporary accommodation is removed. Some discussions are also being progressed with a view to exploring the potential for surplus or poorly performing housing assets to be repurposed and or refurbished to provide temporary accommodation for rent for SSEN Transmission/primary contractors' workers. It is likely that a number of different models of housing delivery will be required in order to meet the housing needs of the workers to enable the upgrade to the transmission network in the north of Scotland, particularly given the pressing timescales, all of which will be required to secure the appropriate consents and approvals. This partnership approach to delivery will help ensure a lasting legacy which will meet housing needs, both in the short and longer term, across our communities; essentially delivering the right size and type of homes in the right locations, whilst optimising the collective capacity across the sector to enhance our existing delivery programme.

3.8 The following established models of affordable housing are currently being delivered in Aberdeenshire.

3.8.1 **Low Cost Shared Equity**

Through the Affordable Housing Policies, Aberdeenshire Council, in partnership with private developers, deliver low cost homes for sale in the form of shared equity through S75 agreements which are aimed at first time buyers on low to modest incomes. The Deed of Conditions ensures that properties remain affordable, and provides an element of control over future sales price in the event that any properties are sold. Since 2008 this unsubsidised affordable housing tenure has proved successful and currently there are 304 LCSE properties across Aberdeenshire, of which 104 have been resold, with some on more than one occasion as households' circumstances change. However, it is worth noting that the delivery rate has slowed in alignment with the local economy and housing market activity.

3.8.2 **Create Homes Aberdeenshire MMR**

Create Homes Aberdeenshire MMR Limited Liability Partnership manages 51 mid-market rented accommodation units across four developments in Aberdeenshire. These properties operate under Private Residential Tenancies and are targeted

at households with modest incomes. This model enables the delivery of mid-market housing whilst maintaining a neutral impact on the Housing Revenue Account. Officers will continue to identify opportunities for further units which will be assessed and progressed, where appropriate, subject to funding availability, viability and consents.

3.8.3 **Open Market Shared Equity**

During 2025-2026 in Aberdeenshire, there were 85 applications to the Scottish Government's Open Market Shared Equity Scheme (OMSE) managed by LINK Housing. 67 of those were approved and received passport letters, with 41 sales, 26 expired passports and 18 not approved. The remaining live passports at the end of March 2026 were carried over into 2026-2027.

3.8.4 **Rural Housing Fund and Community Led Housing**

Scottish Government's Rural Housing Fund aims to increase the availability of affordable housing for rent and sale in rural areas through grants or loans. It is open to a wide range of organisations and seeks to empower communities by helping them to meet local housing need. This funding stream is particularly relevant in predominantly rural Aberdeenshire and officers will support and facilitate the identification and development of opportunities through a place-making approach to delivery as part of the proposal to implement Place Plans which could be led by community planning partners, such as local community groups. In Braemar, a community group have successfully secured planning permission, subject to conditions, for 15 affordable housing units. Discussions continue with a local Registered Social Landlord to explore a collaborative approach to the delivery phase of the project. Aberdeenshire Council have provisionally offered in the region of £70k, subject to securing match funding and nomination rights to support the delivery of the project. Officers will continue to support local community groups by providing guidance and advice where appropriate.

3.8.5 **Rural Key Workers Housing Fund**

The Scottish Government's Rural Key Workers Housing Fund can help bring empty properties back into use or allow for the purchase of properties on the open market through local authorities or registered social landlords by making them available to key workers in rural areas in order to meet the housing needs of these local communities. Officers will continue to be directed by evidence and data, to develop any proposals to meet identified key worker housing need by working closely with stakeholders and progressing actions, including the development of a key worker policy, where appropriate.

3.8.6 **Housing Infrastructure Fund**

As part of the Aberdeen City Region Deal, a £20m Housing Infrastructure Fund has been made available for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire to accelerate the delivery of affordable housing in the North East of Scotland. Officers will continue to

work with interested parties to provide advice and support to maximise any potential opportunities which meet Scottish Government criteria.

3.8.7 **Offsite Construction and Procurement**

Scottish Government Strategic Housing Investment Plan guidance states “research shows clear evidence of potential cost savings of up to 8% from larger minimum development sizes of around 40-50 units irrespective of construction type”. Given the rural nature of the Aberdeenshire area, there continues to be challenges around offsite and modular construction. Generally, Aberdeenshire Council’s and our RSL partners’ new build programmes deliver sites which average around 20-30 units and a proportion of these are gap sites. Offsite manufacturing is more suited to larger, higher density, repetitive developments, to provide the required economies of scale, rather than the small-medium size one-off projects which typically come through the affordable housing programme in Aberdeenshire. Modular buildings and bathroom /shower room pods have been assessed but the market opportunities for manufacturing within Aberdeenshire are extremely limited and therefore effectively removes the associated expenditure from the local economy. Furthermore, payment terms within off-site manufacturing are challenging with some suppliers looking for 50% payment upfront when ordering and the balance prior to site delivery which may pose additional risks which require careful management. However, officers continue to explore and examine opportunities for alternative construction mechanisms and will implement these as and when appropriate and viable to do so.

Procurement is a constantly evolving part of the construction industry and officers continue to monitor the options available to provide best value. To achieve competitive tenders and the best value available in the market, the procurement of each development is assessed on its own merit as to whether open tender on Public Contracts Scotland or the Scotland Excel New Build Framework is the more suitable option. However, it is important to note that the construction industry is still experiencing a challenging period as noted in paragraph 2.4, with material cost increases levelling off at a higher rate and labour inflation/shortages across certain trades driving up tender prices and impacting upon the affordability of construction projects.

4. Consultation

4.1 This SHIP is produced using the existing partnership approach of an Affordable Housing Forum and an Affordable Housing Delivery Team which both meet on a regular basis. These enable a shared understanding of the issues and challenges and help to shape and inform both the Local Housing Strategy as well as the SHIP.

4.2 Further to the public engagement on the development of the Local Housing Strategy, a number of consultations have taken, or will take, place to inform this SHIP. These include:

- Discussions with Registered Social Landlord partners, private developers and other services including Planning, Health & Social Care and Property.
- Tenant consultation via a live Tenant Engagement Event 11th August 2026.
- Public consultation through Engage Aberdeenshire – Aberdeenshire Council's public consultation web portal from 14th August until 4th September 2026.

4.3 This SHIP was presented to the six Area Committees during September 2026 for comments and thereafter reported to Communities Committee on 5th November 2026 for approval.

4.4 Responses from the consultation have been broadly supportive, highlighting the need for timely and geographically balanced delivery of affordable, accessible and energy-efficient housing, particularly in rural and high-demand areas, alongside a place-based approach that protects greenspace, supports local services and addresses homelessness.

5. Equalities

5.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment has been carried out and is included as additional information. Positive and negative impacts have been identified, and all negative impacts can be mitigated.

6. Environmental Assessment

6.1 A Pre-Screening report was submitted to the SEA Gateway stating that a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required for the SHIP, as the primary document in relation to land use planning is the Local Development Plan which is subject to a full SEA and which will ultimately cover all housing projects set out in the SHIP. This has been accepted by the consultation authorities.

7. Outcome

7.1 The main outcome of this SHIP is to enable the delivery of high quality, energy efficient housing, which supports climate adaptation, maximising a range of funding streams and delivery models to address housing need across a variety of affordable housing tenures, whilst embracing place making principles.