

Housing and Economy Committee

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City Housing Strategy 2018

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Executive Summary

This report sets out the updated City Housing Strategy (CHS). It provides information on current priorities and delivery plans which are addressing housing challenges and helping to reduce inequality in the city. The CHS has three outcomes:

- People live in a home they can afford;
- People live in a warm, safe home in a well-managed neighbourhood; and
- People can move home if they need to.

The CHS has a regional, city and locality focus to ensure that solutions to housing challenges are addressed at different levels, from working with our regional partners to secure a City Deal, to discussions with citizens at locality level on their priorities for housing and wider placemaking. Strategic engagement with partners, residents and stakeholders is a continuous process.

The CHS is reviewed annually and reported to Committee.

City Housing Strategy 2018

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 Housing and Economy Committee is recommended to:
 - 1.1.1 Note the City Housing Strategy (CHS) update for 2018 for submission to Scottish Government.

2. Background

- 2.1 Under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, local authorities are required to prepare a Local Housing Strategy (referred to as the City Housing Strategy in Edinburgh). The CHS sets out the strategy, priorities and plans for the delivery of housing and related services.
- 2.2 The CHS has three outcomes:
 - 2.2.1 People live in a home they can afford;
 - 2.2.2 People live in a warm, safe home in a well-managed neighbourhood; and
 - 2.2.3 People can move home if they need to.
- 2.3 There is a strong partnership approach to the delivery of the CHS which is supported by key delivery plans. These include the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan and Capital Investment Programme, the Strategic Direction for Preventing Homelessness and the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP). The SHIP is the subject of a separate report to this Committee.
- 2.4 The CHS is reviewed annually, with a report provided to Committee to update on progress and highlight emerging issues.

3. Main report

- 3.1 The CHS has been updated for 2018 (Appendix 1), continuing to focus on the delivery of three outcomes (see 2.2)
- 3.2 The CHS covers all housing tenures. It sets out the role of the Council's Housing Service and its partners in driving change, with a commitment to addressing housing need by delivering a range of housing options to meet the requirements of different households, as well as, investment to improve the quality of existing homes and neighbourhoods.

- 3.3 The updated CHS identifies key priorities under each of the three outcomes. The success of this strategy can only be achieved through collaboration and strong partnership working. The Council consults continuously, and in a variety of ways, on the delivery of existing commitments and the development of new initiatives. Detail of this consultation activity is set out in Consultation and Engagement section below. Ongoing discussions with partners will continue to inform the strategic direction and key priorities.
- 3.4 Progress will be reported annually with the aim of bringing together the ongoing activity around housing-related strategies and initiatives in one place, as well as setting out opportunities to build stronger links with partners and stakeholders in areas where there are gaps, or where further work is needed.

4. Measures of success

- 4.1 More quality, affordable and energy efficient homes are built.
- 4.2 Inequality is reduced and residents' quality of life is improved.
- 4.3 Greater joint working with partners.
- 4.4 Existing homes and neighbourhoods are improved.

5. Financial impact

- 5.1 The financial impacts of delivering the CHS are set out in relevant Delivery Plans.
- 5.2 The financial impact of delivering the Council's Housing Service is set out in the HRA Business Plan.

6. Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 Under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, local authorities are required to prepare a Local Housing Strategy. The Strategy is reviewed annually to ensure it continues to support key strategic priorities and customer needs and is responding to drivers within the housing market, as well as, policy or legislative changes. The updated CHS for 2018 will be submitted to the Scottish Government for comment and discussion as part of their five-year local housing strategy review process.

7. Equalities impact

- 7.1 The Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) concludes that the CHS should have a positive impact on tackling inequality through investment in new affordable homes for people on low to medium incomes.

- 7.2 The commitment within the Housing Contribution Statement will help increase the supply of homes, linked to support services, suitable for older people, people with disabilities and people with complex physical and health needs. A separate EIA was undertaken for the Health, Social Care and Housing Committee report of 19 April 2016 on Housing Investment to Support Health and Social Care Priorities
- 7.3 The HRA budget strategy 2017/18-2021/22 of prioritising investment in services and improvements that reduce the cost of living for tenants will have a significant financial benefit for tenants who are under financial pressure.

8. Sustainability impact

- 8.1 The Council led house building programme seeks to maximise delivery of homes on brownfield sites, reducing pressure on Edinburgh's green belt. New homes are built to high standards in terms of energy efficiency and sustainability.
- 8.2 Investment in existing homes will increase energy efficiency and lead to a reduction in carbon emissions.

9. Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 Consultation on the CHS is a continuous process which identifies and responds to new challenges and national and local priorities. This includes supporting the strategic aims, outcomes and commitments in the Programme for the Capital: Council Business Plan 2017-22.
- 9.2 The Council consults with tenants on an ongoing basis and in a variety of ways. The Housing Budget Strategy is an annual consultation to seek tenants' views on how their rent money should be spent. The HRA Budget Strategy is informed by tenant feedback and delivers on tenant priorities. For the last few years, the top priority for tenants has been for the Council to build more homes. Tenant views have also shaped the development of services designed to help improve quality of life and reduce living costs.
- 9.3 The Edinburgh Affordable Housing Partnership (EAHP) is a partnership of Housing Associations, Co-operatives and the Council. The partnership aims, at a strategic level, to share information and promote joint working to increase the provision of affordable homes within Edinburgh, continue to develop services which help to reduce inequality and support people to live independently.
- 9.4 There is also a health and social care sub group of the EAHP, which has been meeting regularly to help strengthen joint working between health and social care partners. Progress on delivering the housing commitments in the Health and Social Care Strategic Plan is being monitored through the Housing, Health and Social Care Forum that sits within the Health and Social Care Partnership's governance structure. Last December, the Integration Joint Board held a development session on housing and more recently, in September 2017, a seminar was held between

partners to progress joint working on delivering 3,000 homes to meet health and social care priorities.

- 9.5 The Locality Improvement Plans (LIPs) for each of the four localities set out the priorities for improving outcomes over a five-year period (2017-22) at locality and small area levels. The development of LIPs has been a collaborative process involving the community and partners. This commitment to partnership working will continue with the action planning and further development of the LIPs, the outcome of which will continue to inform the CHS.
- 9.6 The Strategic Direction for Tackling Homelessness was developed following extensive consultation with providers, key stakeholders and service users. Any new procurement process following the pilots set out in the Homeless Prevention Commissioning Plan will be co-produced with existing providers, new interested parties, key stakeholders and service users.
- 9.7 A new Edinburgh Partnership Community Plan is under development for 2018 onwards, with housing identified as a key priority. A housing association representative from the Edinburgh Affordable Housing Partnership now sits on the Edinburgh Partnership Board, which will strengthen the links to the interconnected priorities and commitments in the Community Plan.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 [Housing Service Transformation Plan 2015-17](#) – Health, Social Care and Housing Committee 8 September 2015
- 10.2 [Accelerating House Building](#) – City of Edinburgh Council 17 September 2015
- 10.3 [Housing Revenue Account – Budget Strategy 2017-22](#) – City of Edinburgh Council 9 February 2017
- 10.4 [City Housing Strategy Update](#) – Health, Social Care and Housing Committee 13 September 2016
- 10.5 [The Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region \(ESESCR\) Deal](#) – The City of Edinburgh Council 26 January 2017
- 10.6 [Strategic Direction for Tackling Homelessness](#) – Finance and Resources Committee 23 February 2017

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11. Appendices

Appendix 1: Updated City Housing Strategy 2018

City Housing Strategy 2018

City Housing Strategy 2018

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City Wide Context

Edinburgh continues to be a pressured housing market, with high housing costs and a high need and demand for affordable housing. A sixth of all residents in Edinburgh live in low income households and the poorest households have seen their incomes reduce by almost 20% over the last 10 years, increasing the inequality gap in the city. The City Housing Strategy (CHS) ensures there is a strategic approach to addressing these housing challenges. It has a strong focus on partnership working and stakeholder engagement to ensure solutions are targeted at those in greatest need.

The city population is projected to increase at a greater rate than the Scottish average, growing by 20.7% between 2014 and 2039. The Scottish population is projected to increase by 6.6% over the same period. In line with the general trend, the Edinburgh population in the 75+ age group is expected to have the greatest percentage increase over this time¹.

The private rented sector has doubled over the last 15 years and now accounts for 27% of all homes in the city. This is significantly higher than the Scottish average of 14%. The owner-occupied sector has reduced from its peak of 69% in 2001 to 58% in 2015. Social rented homes account for 14% of the housing stock in Edinburgh, compared to the Scottish average of 23%².

Edinburgh has the oldest housing in Scotland, with almost half (48%) of homes built before 1945³, posing significant challenges on upgrading homes to modern standards and improving energy efficiency of homes to tackle fuel poverty. Almost two thirds of all homes in Edinburgh are flats, increasing the challenges in relation to maintenance and improvement of communal areas.

The Council's Housing Service provides affordable homes and other services to nearly 20,000 tenants and 500 home owners in the city. It is the sixth largest landlord in Scotland. Edinburgh is in the top three local authorities in Scotland for tenant satisfaction in relation to the housing service, quality of home and neighbourhood. The Council delivers a housing repairs service with standards that are consistently higher than the average employed by other landlords, with consistently high levels of satisfaction. The Housing service continues to work towards the aim of becoming a world class public service where customers are at the heart of service design and service delivery.

¹ National Records of Scotland DATA – Population Projections for Scottish Areas (2014-based)

² Scottish House Condition Survey, 2013-15

³ Scottish House Condition Survey, 2013-15

Background

Local authorities are required to have a Local Housing Strategy. This sets out the strategy, priorities, and plans for the delivery of housing and related services. Edinburgh's CHS focuses on delivering three key outcomes:

- People live in a home they can afford
- People live in a warm, safe home in a well-managed neighbourhood
- People can move home if they need to

The CHS is reviewed annually, reporting on achievements and areas of strength, while continuing to identify and respond to new challenges and national and local priorities. This includes supporting the strategic aims, outcomes and commitments in the [Programme for the Capital: Council Business Plan 2017-22](#).

The CHS has a regional, city and locality focus to ensure that solutions to housing challenges are addressed at different levels, from working with our regional partners to secure a City Deal to discussions with citizens at locality level on their priorities for housing and wider placemaking: themes which featured heavily during consultation on the [Locality Improvement Plans](#).

The CHS is informed and delivered through partnership. Council and housing association partner investment in existing homes and new affordable homes drives wider neighbourhood improvements, including improvements to private homes.

Outcome 1: People live in a home they can afford

Context – key facts and figures

- There is demand for between 38,000 and 46,000 new homes in Edinburgh over ten years; over 60% of these homes need to be affordable⁴.
- In 2016/17 there was an average of 167 bids for every social rented home advertised through choice based lettings.
- There are over 21,000 applicants registered on EdIndex (the Common Housing Register) each year. Over a quarter of applicants are actively bidding for around 2,700 homes each year.
- Private rents have increased by more than 30% over the last five years, and the average monthly rent is over £1,000⁵. It is projected that rent will account for 45% of average income by 2020.
- The average house price in Edinburgh is six times the average gross annual earnings, 42% higher than Scottish average⁶; making Edinburgh the least affordable city in Scotland to buy a home.

Why this is a priority

Edinburgh is an affluent city with a strong economy but not everyone in the city is able to share in this success. High housing costs pose a risk to the longer term economic growth of the city and widen the inequality gap. Young graduates and workers in key sectors such as construction and health and social care need access to affordable homes. The challenge of securing affordable housing extends to students in Edinburgh, particularly those from poorer backgrounds. The high rental costs of student accommodation are making it increasingly difficult for those who self-fund through loans and part-time employment.

Failure to respond to the need and demand for affordable homes will impact upon the ability of businesses to grow whilst other companies may choose not to locate in the city due to difficulties in attracting a workforce.

What we are doing about it

In 2016, the Council agreed to expand its own housebuilding programme from 3,000 to 8,000 homes, and made a joint commitment with its housing association partners to deliver 16,000 affordable homes over the next ten years. The current Council

⁴ The second Housing Need and Demand Assessment ([HNDA2](#)) for the SESplan

⁵ Citylets

⁶ Bank of Scotland Affordable Cities Review 2017.

administration has expanded this commitment to 20,000 homes over the next decade. This is one of the largest Council led housebuilding programmes in the UK, which will make a significant contribution to the Scottish Government target to deliver 50,000 new homes in Scotland by 2021. This significant investment of around £3 billion is expected to deliver over 4,000 permanent jobs, as well as bringing wider economic benefits to the city.

The Council works in partnership with housing associations and private developers to deliver a mix of affordable housing options to meet the needs of different households across the city, through a range of innovative approaches. Through Scottish Government grant funding, the Council continues to maximise the number of affordable homes that can be delivered. Over the past five years, the Council has supported the delivery of more than 2,000 mid rent homes targeted at working households who cannot afford to buy or rent a home privately in Edinburgh's pressured housing market.

Annual and ongoing consultation has shown that building new affordable homes in the city remains a top priority for Council tenants. Tenant views on how the housing service can be improved have helped to shape the current Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget strategy, which seeks to tackle inequality by improving the quality of life and reducing cost of living for tenants by:

- Building more new affordable homes;
- Investing in affordable energy and energy efficiency measures to make homes easier to heat; and
- Expanding services aimed at reducing living costs, including the development of low cost broadband service, tailored energy advice, a tenant discount scheme, and the expansion of community food growing initiatives.

Going Forward

A project is underway to develop an ambitious and inclusive vision for Edinburgh. City Vision 2050 has four emerging themes: 'inspired, connected, fair and thriving city'. The housing service and its partners can play a key role in helping to deliver this vision for the city by building homes that people can afford; creating places that people want to live in; and maximising the social and economic benefits of this investment.

The Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) sets out the investment and identifies the sites that will be brought forward by the Council and housing association partners over a five-year period. The current SHIP 2018/19 – 22/23 outlines a programme which would deliver nearly 8,000 homes over the next five years. The Council will work with partners, including Scottish Government, to bring forward development of sites currently identified for development beyond the SHIP period in order to deliver the Council's commitment of 10,000 homes in five years.

A whole Council approach is also needed to ensure the housing development process runs as efficiently as possible from beginning to end. The identification and release of land is also essential, as is the commitment from Scottish Government to increase grant allocation and provide greater certainty regarding future levels of funding.

The Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal provides a unique collaboration opportunity with partners across the region to aid the acceleration of housing development. Innovative approaches to delivery of infrastructure are being explored alongside new approaches to procuring and building homes. Governments have agreed to work with regional partners to maximise the potential of public sector land to deliver new homes.

Government also agreed to provide grant funding and consents to enable the Council to establish two Limited Liability Partnerships (LLP's), in partnership with Scottish Futures Trust. These LLP's will own and manage housing for mid-market and market rent, delivering a minimum of 1,500 homes for people on low and moderate incomes.

As part of the holistic approach to addressing the challenges within Edinburgh's housing market, the Council has committed to explore the introduction of fair rent zones for the private rented sector, as introduced in the Private Housing (Tenancies) (Scotland) Act 2016. An officer working group is also reviewing the impact of increasing numbers of short term commercial visitor lets in the city, in terms of management and neighbourhood impact, as well as, potential impact on supply of homes, which links to the wider Council commitment to review its policy on promoting mixed communities. The Council has also contributed to the work of the Expert Advisory Panel on the Collaborative Economy, set up by the Scottish Government, which includes short term lets within its remit.

Outcome 2: People live in a warm, safe home in a well-managed neighbourhood

Context – key facts and figures

- The annual Edinburgh People’s survey shows that residents are very satisfied with their neighbourhood (89%) and more widely, Edinburgh (92%), as a place to live⁷.
- Edinburgh has the highest percentage of homes (48%) that were built before 1945⁸, compared to the Scottish average of 32%. Edinburgh also has the second highest percentage of flats (at 67%, second only to Glasgow’s 74%).
- Edinburgh has the lowest percentage of households in fuel poverty (Scottish House Condition Survey 2013-15); however, this still equates to 24% of all households, with 6% of these in extreme fuel poverty.
- Nearly half (46%) of older people households are found to be in fuel poverty and almost a third (30%) of all social tenants.
- Social rented homes have the highest average EER (energy efficiency rating) at 69.5, compared to 66.6 for the private rented sector and 65.1 for the owner-occupied sector.
- Almost a third (30%) of the private rented sector in Edinburgh is reported as being in urgent disrepair⁹.
- 3.1% of homes in Edinburgh are empty, the same as the Scottish average¹⁰.

Why this is a priority

The age and tenure mix of Edinburgh’s homes presents significant management and maintenance challenges. Almost half of the city’s homes were built before 1945, posing significant challenges for upgrading homes to modern standards and improving energy efficiency of homes to tackle fuel poverty. Almost half of the homes in Edinburgh are flats with most located within mixed tenure blocks.

Edinburgh has the lowest percentage of households living in fuel poverty in Scotland; however, almost a third of social rented tenants experience fuel poverty. Across all sectors, social rented homes have the highest energy efficiency ratings. Low incomes and the cost of fuel are, therefore, the key factors impacting upon the prevalence of fuel poverty in the city.

⁷ The Edinburgh People’s Survey 2016

⁸ Scottish House Condition Survey, 2013-15

⁹ Scottish House Condition Survey, 2013-15

¹⁰ National Records of Scotland, 2016

The private rented sector has doubled over the last 15 years and is likely to increase further, alongside growth in the Build to Rent and purpose built student accommodation sectors. Quality and affordability of private rented accommodation continues to be a major priority.

It is important that new homes form part of well-designed sustainable places. Through the provision of high quality homes and public realm alongside effective services, housing helps to create environments which promote physical and mental wellbeing. Successful places will unlock opportunities, build vibrant communities, and create economic benefits.

What we are doing about it

Over the last five years almost half of all Council homes have benefited from the installation of new heating systems, insulation, or other energy efficiency measures. By 2020 all Council homes will have benefited from internal modernisation programmes including the installation of modern kitchen and bathrooms. This investment will ensure that Council homes meet and go beyond the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH). To help support energy efficiency programmes in areas of mixed tenure, Scottish Government funding (through HEEPS: ABS, SEEPs and ECO) is used to maximise the benefits of investment for all residents.

New Council and housing association homes are being built to the highest possible industry standards to ensure that they are amongst the most energy efficient across the country. All new Council homes will make use of renewable, clean or efficient energy sources to help reduce tenants' energy bills and contribute to Council carbon reduction targets.

Working with other social landlords the Council has also taken a lead role in the creation of Our Power, a new not-for-profit energy company. Our Power is helping the most vulnerable in Edinburgh by providing low, competitive and stable tariffs. Energy advice continues to play an important role in helping residents change the way they use their energy and cut costs. Over 50,000 residents have contacted Home Energy Scotland (part funded by the Council) for advice and information since 2013.

The Council has developed an Acquisition and Disposal strategy to help address the significant challenges of mixed tenure. The Council is acquiring homes in blocks where we are already a majority owner, thus, enabling works to be carried out to common areas within blocks. These purchases are funded by the sale of homes in blocks where the Council is the minority owner and unlikely to be able to achieve full ownership. Several housing associations in the city have also developed their own acquisitions and disposals initiatives for similar purposes.

The Private Rented Services Team play a role in overseeing the quality of the private rented sector, by managing the landlord registration scheme and reviewing whether

landlords are 'fit and proper'. Enforcement measures have increasingly been used in recent years to tackle problematic landlords who undermine confidence in the sector. The Private Rented Services Team also help bring long term empty homes back in use.

Edinburgh has a relatively small number of empty homes. However, it is recognised that the impact of a long-term empty home on neighbouring residents can be significant. Bringing empty homes back into use can improve neighbourhood amenity, as well as reducing risks of vandalism or anti-social behaviour. It is for that reason that the Council's approach is to focus on long term problem cases, particularly where they are causing issues for neighbours or the wider community.

The Council's Scheme of Assistance promotes the principle that homeowners have the primary responsibility for maintaining and repairing their own homes. If essential repairs are not carried out, the Council can issue a statutory notice to enforce repair works. In order to prevent a minority of owners delaying essential repairs and maintenance work, the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 allows local authorities to pay the "missing shares".

The Council approved a new service in September 2017 to pay for the "missing shares" of essential repairs and maintenance (i.e. not improvement) in communal areas of tenement blocks. This enhances the existing intervention service, which has been successful in a number of cases in actively encouraging owners to organise repairs themselves without having to progress to enforcement.

In 2016, the Council's Housing Service underwent a transformational change process, adopting a new service model. This transition was driven by the twin objectives of increasing efficiency and delivering better integrated local services. The service has now moved to a patch based model for housing officers, and there are around 100 patches across the four localities, with an average of 200 tenants per patch.

Locality working will be further enhanced by the four Locality Improvement Plans (LIPs). The LIPs set out the priorities for improving outcomes over a five-year period (2017-22) at locality and small area levels based on community intelligence drawn from a range of sources. They are a key component of the Council and partners approach to localities working and provide a means of achieving more effective public sector integration and of strengthening the meaningful involvement of communities.

Creating sustainable places is a major priority within the house building programme. This is ensured by engaging with all stakeholders, working closely with local communities and maximising funding to align development to meet priorities, reduce inequality and increase health and wellbeing. This approach can be seen in Pennywell/ Muirhouse; where new homes have been developed alongside a new school and partnership centre with plans to develop a new civic centre.

Going Forward

The Council and housing association partners will continue to drive quality through the new supply programme. The two LLP's which the Council is establishing with Scottish Futures Trust will offer quality homes and reliable customer service at good value rents. All new developments are required to meet the Building Regulations, which contain stringent targets for energy efficiency.

Affordable, clean and reliable energy can only be delivered in collaboration with partners. Social landlords and environmental charities have emphasised the need for partners across the city to work together to help people who are suffering as result of energy inequality. The Council is committed to make energy more affordable for residents and one of the most energy efficient, clean energy cites in the UK.

The Council will continue to promote energy advice help to all residents and will pilot a new energy advice service in early 2018 to provide tailored advice and support to over 1,000 Council tenants a year. The energy advisors will be based in each of the four localities and will be targeting support at those most affected by the impact of high energy costs.

Consultation is currently underway on the 2018/19-2022/23 HRA Budget Strategy. One of the key strands of the strategy is a plan to invest in existing homes and neighbourhoods to bring them up to the quality of new build. The approach will be piloted in each of the four localities, before it is rolled out city-wide. The Shared Repairs Service will be key partners in helping to shape and deliver policy and practice to assist work to progress in mixed tenure areas.

The Scottish Government have recently consulted to seek views on making changes to the repairing standard, which sets out minimum condition standards for privately rented housing. The consultation also considered changes to the energy efficiency standard, to bring the private sector up to the same standard as social housing. The Council will continue to work with the Scottish Government in relation to the development and implementation of any new policies or regulations.

The Programme for the Capital: The City of Edinburgh Council Business Plan 2017-22 sets out the need to review the Council's policy on promoting mixed communities. The review should be completed by summer of 2018 and will include homes of multiple occupancy, short term temporary lets and student housing.

A new Edinburgh Partnership Community Plan is under development for 2018 onwards, with housing identified as a key priority. A housing association representative from the Edinburgh Affordable Housing Partnership now sits on the Edinburgh Partnership Board, which will strengthen the links to the interconnected priorities and commitments set out in the Plan.

Outcome 3: People can move home if they need to

Context – key facts and figures

- More than 5,700 households received housing options advice and assistance in 2016/17. Over 45% of these households did not go on to make a homeless application¹¹.
- Homeless presentations have fallen year by year from the peak of over 5,500 in 2006/07 to around 3,400 in 2016/17. However, the average length of stay in temporary accommodation has increased by 72% to 141 days over the same period.
- The number of people who slept rough the night before their homeless presentation has increased slightly in the last two years.
- An average of 700 adaptations are carried out every year in Council, housing association or privately owned homes to help people live independently.
- There are 21,100 applicants registered with EdIndex at any one time. Almost 20% (4,100) have some level of re-housing priority:
 - 490 applicants have urgent gold or gold priority because their current homes cannot be adapted or they are awaiting hospital discharge;
 - 2,400 applicants have silver homeless priority, as they have been assessed as statutory homeless; and
 - 1,000 applicants have overcrowding priority.
- 4% of households in social housing in Edinburgh are overcrowded. This is lower than the percentage for the private rented sector (5%) and slightly higher than the overall figure for Scotland (3%)¹².

Why this is a priority

As the population is growing and people are living longer in the community, it is envisaged that more support services would be required to help people access suitable housing and live independently in their own homes.

Providing adequate housing support for people to lead an independent life remains a priority. This includes providing housing advice and assistance to prevent homelessness happening in the first place and for those whose current homes can no longer meet their

¹¹ Housing Options (PREVENT 1) statistics in Scotland: 2016-17

¹² Scottish House Condition Survey 2013-15

needs or who become homeless, advice on housing options and assistance to access suitable housing is the key for their resettlement.

The number of people presenting as homeless has fallen year by year over the last decade, however the number of people who slept rough the night before their presentation has increased slightly in the last two years. Homeless people are also now spending significant longer in temporary accommodation. A survey¹³ by Shelter England has found that the longer the people live in temporary accommodation, the greater their health problems become, resulting in more frequent use of health services. Reducing the time spent in temporary accommodation and moving on to suitable settled accommodation is therefore a shared priority for housing providers, as well as, health and social care partners in the city.

What we are doing about it

The Council approved the current Homeless Prevention Commissioning Plan in September 2011. The focus of the plan is to deliver services which seek to prevent homelessness; to ensure people spend as little time as possible without a home; and if they do become homeless, that resettlement is effective and adequate support is in place to ensure people to live sustainable, independent lives. It includes plan to develop four pilots in relation to Advice and Support; Crisis and Complex Needs; Domestic Abuse Services; and Young Persons Services.

The strong partnership approach through EdIndex, the common housing register partnership between the Council and 19 partner landlords, continues to provide opportunities for improvements in the way people access affordable housing options in Edinburgh. It also provides an effective framework to support delivery of the housing contribution to health and social care integration.

Housing partners continue to strengthen joint working with health and social care partners to ensure new homes can meet the needs of priority groups and that support services are integrated with housing. Through the Housing Contribution Statement, which forms part of the Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership's Strategic Plan for 2016 – 2019, housing partners have committed to invest up to £300 million of the housing investment programme to build around 3,000 affordable homes, integrated with health and social care services, to meet the needs of older people and people with complex physical and health needs.

Going Forward

¹³ Living in limbo: Survey of homeless households living in temporary accommodation, Shelter England, 2003, https://england.shelter.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/66404/Living_in_limbo.pdf

Responding to homelessness remains challenging and joint working to assist households affected by homelessness will remain a priority for EdIndex partners. In November 2016, the EdIndex partners agreed their priorities for the next three years and to strengthen the partnership with an aim to support access to affordable housing in the city. With high demand for affordable and other forms of suitable accommodation, innovative options are required to deliver successful outcomes. In addition, the partners acknowledged the new challenges facing them and agreed to explore and develop services in relation to digital inclusion, supporting people affected by welfare reforms and getting housing applicants 'tenancy ready'.

Under the new administration, the Council has committed to setting up a Homelessness Task Force, which will be chaired by the newly appointed Homelessness Champion. The remit of the task force will include reviewing the use of temporary accommodation and exploring alternative delivery models.

The Council works with a range of third sector partners to provide services for homeless people. Some of the services provided in partnership with the third sector include, street based outreach, hostels, supported accommodation, multiple and complex needs services and housing support. As agreed by Finance and Resources Committee¹⁴ on 23 February 2017, the Council will continue to progress towards the delivery of the commissioning plan for homelessness services with partners and its strategic direction for tackling homelessness.

Inadequate physical features or layout of homes could be a barrier for people leading an independent life. Adaptation is therefore key to helping people to remain in their own homes within the community setting. Recognising the importance role of adaptations, the Council has made a commitment to "review the application process and increase the budget for housing adaptations with a view to supporting more disabled tenants and owners to remain in their own homes. As well as, helping older and disabled homeowners to move to more suitable housing should they wish to do so." Partners involved in the adaptations process have started initial discussions on how best to take forward this policy commitment.

In September 2017, a seminar was held with health and social care partners to inform the delivery of the 3,000 new affordable homes. Participants at the seminar considered who these homes are to be built for, what they should look like, and how they should be planned and designed. The annual SHIP planning process will help to ensure the design and location of new homes helps to meet these specific needs.

¹⁴ Strategic Direction for Tackling Homelessness in Edinburgh
http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/4131/finance_and_resources_committee

Working in Partnership to Deliver the Strategy

There is a strong partnership approach, and supporting governance arrangements, to deliver and monitor the progress of the CHS. The CHS covers all housing tenures, it sets out the role of the Council's Housing Service and its partners in driving change, with a commitment to addressing housing need by delivering a range of housing options to meet the requirements of different households, as well as investment to improve the quality of existing homes and neighbourhoods.

The success of this strategy can only be achieved through collaboration and strong partnership working. Consultation on the CHS is a continuous process, rather than one-off consultation. The CHS is supported by key delivery plans. These include the Council's HRA Business Plan and Capital Investment Programme, Strategic Direction for Tackling Homelessness and the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP).

Ongoing discussions with partners will continue to inform the strategic direction and key priorities. Progress will be reported annually with the aim of bringing together the ongoing activity around housing-related strategies and initiatives in one place.