



Moray Citizens' Panel

Consultation on the Draft

Moray Local Housing Strategy 2013-18

Moray Council and its partners have been developing a new Local Housing Strategy (LHS). The aim of the LHS is to make sure there is enough housing, of the right size and type, of good quality and in the right places, to meet the needs of local households.

We have developed a draft LHS which sets out what we would like to achieve (our outcomes), and what we will do to achieve them (our actions). The Draft LHS and the emerging Local Development Plan both use the Moray Housing Need and Demand Assessment 2011 as a key evidence base. It is important that our LHS takes the views of local people into account, and we invite you to give your views through this consultation questionnaire. Please tell us what you think of the Draft LHS by **8 March 2013**.

You can also complete the survey online at www.craigforth.co.uk/MCP13a. If you have any questions on the survey please contact Craigforth on: **0800 027 2245** or office@craigforth.co.uk.

Our Priorities

Q1 This consultation has been arranged into 6 priority areas:

- 1. To address housing need and improve access to housing**
- 2. To meet our statutory obligations to homeless households**
- 3. To assist people with particular housing needs**
- 4. To improve the energy efficiency of housing and contribute to addressing climate change and address fuel poverty**
- 5. To improve the condition of Moray's housing stock**
- 6. To promote successful, safe, sustainable communities and social inclusion**

Are these the right priorities?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither/Nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	2	3	4	5	6

Please tell us what you think about these priorities.

Priority 1: To address housing need and improve access to housing

Moray has a severe shortage of affordable housing. The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment (HNDA) found that 60% of households in Moray cannot afford housing from the open market without help. Moray is a low wage economy and many households cannot afford to buy a house at current market prices. The lack of public funding will limit the number of new affordable rented houses to be built. Moray's population is ageing and there is a mismatch between the demand and supply of different sizes and types of housing, both in the public sector and the private sector.

The outcomes that we want to achieve are...

- There is an adequate supply of affordable housing
- We make the best use of existing social rented housing
- Social rented housing is allocated equitably
- Every customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services.

Please give your views on our proposed actions below...

Q2 **Action: Increase the supply of affordable rented housing and getting maximum value from any available investment funding.**

Affordable rented housing means housing owned by Councils or Housing Associations.

Do you think that this will help people to find a home?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither/Nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	2	3	4	5	6

Please tell us what you think about this action.

What else could we do?

Q3 **Action: Make best use of current affordable rented housing by reviewing Allocations Policies, and minimising the time taken to relet empty properties.**

There will be a separate consultation on any proposed changes to our Allocations Policy.

Do you think that this will help people to find a home?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither/Nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	2	3	4	5	6

Please tell us what you think about this action.

What else could we do?

Q4 Action: Maximise the use of current legal powers to retain affordable rented housing, that is consider the need for renewal of the Council's Pressured Area Status Designation(s).

Some Council houses are covered by Pressured Area Status designations - these suspend the Right to Buy for some tenants for 5 or 10 years. We intend to review, and possibly extend, this designation across all Council properties, and we will ask tenants what they think about this closer to the time.

Do you think that this will help people to find a home?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither/Nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	2	3	4	5	6

Please tell us what you think about this action.

What else could we do?

Priority 2: To meet our legal duties to homeless households

The Council improved the housing options advice it gives to people at risk of homelessness. The Housing Options Team has played a key role in reducing numbers of people choosing to fill in a homeless application. We need less temporary accommodation, particularly B&Bs, but the lack of permanent affordable housing is still an issue. Most homeless households in Moray originate from Moray, and are mostly single people. The number of households who are homeless because of domestic abuse has been rising.

The outcomes that we want to achieve are...

- People at risk of losing their homes get advice on preventing homelessness
- People looking for housing get information that helps them make informed choices and decisions about the range of housing options available to them
- There is an adequate and appropriate supply of good quality temporary accommodation for homeless households
- There is adequate and appropriate provision of housing support for homelessness households, including people fleeing domestic abuse

Please give your views on our proposed actions below...

Q5 Action: Ensure provision of good quality advice and assistance on housing options.

The Council's Housing Options Team gives advice to people at risk of being homeless.

Do you think that this will help people at risk of homelessness?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither/Nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	2	3	4	5	6

Please tell us what you think about this action.

What else could we do?

Q6 Action: Reconfigure temporary accommodation to fit changing demands.

We need less temporary accommodation. We hardly ever place homeless people in Bed and Breakfast accommodation. Some temporary accommodation has been returned for use as permanent homes. Smaller units of temporary accommodation are in highest demand.

Do you think that this will help homeless people?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither/Nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	2	3	4	5	6

Please tell us what you think about this action.

What else could we do?

Priority 3: To assist people with particular housing needs

This means people who need housing with particular design features, or housing with care services e.g. older people, people with disabilities, Gypsies/Travellers.

Older People

Moray's population is ageing. Most older people would prefer to stay in mainstream housing for as long as possible. However, there is a shortage of suitably designed or adapted housing for older people. Also, there is a shortage of housing with care support services.

Moray has proportionally less care home provision and less extra care housing for the frail elderly, than the Scottish average. Older people in Moray are much less likely to live in a house that has had a disabled adaptation than the Scottish average.

Demand for sheltered housing has reduced. We believe that, in the future, older people are likely to want ground floor/amenity housing or will need the more intensive care and support available in extra care housing (also known as very sheltered housing).

The outcomes that we want to achieve are...

- There is an adequate supply of appropriate housing for older people
- There is an adequate supply of housing with support for older people

Please give your views on our proposed actions below...

Q7 Action: Increase the supply of amenity housing for affordable rent (Council or Housing Association).

Amenity housing is designed or adapted to be suitable for older people or people with mobility problems. Our programme of Council house building includes amenity bungalows.

Do you think that this will help older people to find suitable housing?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither/Nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	2	3	4	5	6

Please tell us what you think about this action.

What else could we do?

Q8 Action: Increase supply of extra care housing.

Extra care housing is sometimes called very sheltered housing, and can be an alternative to care homes. Increasing supply will involve working closely with Community Care Services and the NHS.

Do you think that this will help older people to find suitable housing?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither/Nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	2	3	4	5	6

Please tell us what you think about this action.

What else could we do?

Q9 Action: Increase the supply of owner occupied housing suitable for older people.

As the number of older people increases, and with cuts in public spending, it is unlikely that the Council will have enough housing suitable for older people. We think there is a need to increase the supply of modestly priced, appropriately designed owner occupied housing to meet the needs of Moray's older and/or disabled people. At the moment the Council cannot influence the size/type of housing built by local developers.

Do you think that this will help older people to find suitable housing?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither/Nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	2	3	4	5	6

Please tell us what you think about this action.

What else could we do?

People with physical or sensory disabilities

Most of Moray's housing stock was built before 1965 when accessibility was not a recognised priority. Therefore many people with disabilities need equipment and adaptations in their home. In Moray, there is less provision of amenity/accessible housing and fewer houses with a disabled adaptation than in neighbouring local authorities. It is likely that the need for accessible or adapted housing will increase as the number of older people increases. It is likely that there will be increasing pressure on grant funding for disabled adaptations.

The outcomes that we want to achieve are...

- There is an adequate supply of appropriate housing for people with disabilities

Please give your views on our proposed actions below...

Q10 Action: Increase the supply of accessible, adapted, affordable rented housing.

Moray Council and local Housing Associations have been building new rented housing. Each development has included a small number of fully wheelchair accessible bungalows, and a number of 2 and 3 bedroom amenity bungalows. These properties generally have level access and accessible shower rooms. We will continue to include these types of housing in the Council's new build programme.

Do you think that this will help disabled people to find suitable housing?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither/Nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	2	3	4	5	6

Please tell us what you think about this action.

What else could we do?

Q11 Action: Improve the delivery performance of disabled adaptations across all tenures and landlords.

Disabled adaptations are funded in very different ways across landlords (Council and Housing Associations), and tenures (rented or owned). The Scottish Government is looking into how this could be improved and made fairer. In the meantime the Moray Health & Social Care Partnership have agreed to work with Housing and Property Services to look for efficiencies and improvements to the process of delivering adaptations.

Do you think that this will help disabled people to live comfortably in their own home?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither/Nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	2	3	4	5	6

Please tell us what you think about this action.

What else could we do?

Gypsies/Travellers

Until authorised halting sites are established in Moray, the Council will continue to implement its Protocol and Guidelines for the Response to Unauthorised Camping in Moray. The Protocol states that “public agencies in Moray recognise and respect the fact that Gypsies/Travellers may wish to maintain a travelling way of life whether because of family tradition, economic necessity, or simply a desire not to be “tied down”. Camping is seen as an expression of the Gypsies/Travellers’ cultural identity. Agencies acknowledge that there should be no discrimination against Gypsies/Travellers because of their way of life and culture”. Protocol and Guidelines for the Response to Unauthorised Camping in Moray are available at www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_51689.html

The outcomes that we want to achieve are...

- Gypsies/Travellers have access to appropriate short & long term accommodation to meet their needs

Please give your views on our proposed actions below...

Q12 Action: the Council will continue to use the Protocol and Guidelines for the Response to Unauthorised Camping in Moray.

Do you think that this will help help the Council to meet its legal duty to Gypsies/Travellers?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither/Nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	2	3	4	5	6

Please tell us what you think about this action.

What else could we do?

Priority 4: To improve the energy efficiency of housing and contribute to addressing fuel poverty and climate change

The outcomes that we want to achieve are...

- People live in housing that they can afford to heat
- People live in energy efficient housing that minimises greenhouse gas emissions

Fuel Poverty

A household is fuel poor if they have to spend more than 10% of their income on fuel to heat their home to a satisfactory level, and is in extreme fuel poverty if they have to spend more than 20%. Fuel poverty is caused by (i) low incomes, (ii) increasing fuel prices, (iii) poorly insulated homes (low energy efficiency). Fuel poverty in Moray is significantly higher than the Scottish average. Moray has more older houses with poor energy efficiency. Moray has one of the lowest average incomes in Scotland and this means that many households struggle to pay their fuel bills.

Q13 Action: Tackle fuel poverty by improving the energy efficiency of homes and by providing households with advice and information that will help them reduce their energy bills.

Energy efficiency improvements will include measures such as insulation, new heating systems, windows. Energy advice will include the cheapest fuel tariffs, help to operate heating systems efficiently.

Do you think that this will be an effective way of helping households in fuel poverty?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither/Nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	2	3	4	5	6

Please tell us what you think about this action.

What else could we do?

Climate change and carbon emissions

By 2020, the Scottish Government aims to reduce carbon emissions in Scotland by 42%. Around 25% of greenhouse gas emissions come from housing. This means that measures to reduce energy consumption in homes will make an important contribution to achieving climate change targets. There are more energy inefficient homes in Moray than the Scottish average.

Q14 Action: Reduce carbon emissions from homes by improving the energy efficiency of homes and by helping householders to minimise home energy use.

These actions are broadly similar to those that will help tackle fuel poverty.

Do you think this is the most effective approach to reduce carbon emissions from homes in Moray?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither/Nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	2	3	4	5	6

Please tell us what you think about this action.

What else could we do?

Priority 5: To improve the condition of Moray's housing stock

The condition of housing in Moray is slightly better than the Scottish average. However, approximately 30% of Moray houses require an urgent repair. Housing owned by the Council and Housing Associations is generally in good condition. Most of the disrepair in Moray is in private sector housing. The LHS has separate actions on private sector housing and affordable rented housing.

The outcomes that we want to achieve are...

- People live in houses of good quality

Please give your views on our proposed actions below...

Q15 Action: The Council will operate a Scheme of Assistance to help owners improve the standard of their homes.

The private sector Scheme of Assistance (SofA) is the principal means by which the Council helps owners to improve the condition of their home. Under the SofA the Council will provide owners with information and advice to help maintain their homes, but will not offer grants to meet the cost of repairs/ improvements.

Do you think that the SofA is an effective way of helping owners to maintain their homes in good condition?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither/Nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	2	3	4	5	6

Please tell us what you think about this action.

What else could we do?

Q16 Action: The Council will continue to prioritise elderly and disabled people for support under the Scheme of Assistance (SofA).

Under SofA, the Council provides older and disabled owners with financial assistance to meet the cost of adapting their homes. The Council also provides this priority group with Care and Repair services to support them to carry out adaptations and repairs.

Do you think that the Council should continue to prioritise older and disabled owners for support under SofA?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither/Nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	2	3	4	5	6

Please tell us what you think about this action.

What else could we do?

Q17 Action: The Council and housing associations will ensure that their housing stock meets the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) by 2015.

All Councils and Housing Associations have a legal duty to ensure that their housing stock complies with the SHQS by 2015.

Do you think that the SHQS is an effective way of improving the quality of housing in the social rented sector?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither/Nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	2	3	4	5	6

Please tell us what you think about this action.

What else could we do?

Priority 6: To promote successful, safe, sustainable communities & social inclusion

Moray is one of the least deprived areas in Scotland, though many households suffer from low income, poor health and lack of employment opportunities. People living in remote rural areas suffer from poor access to services. People in Moray are generally happy with the quality of the neighbourhoods though some have concerns about litter, dog fouling and anti-social behaviour. The Council would like to see an improvement in the design of new housing, with estates that are less dominated by cars and with good access to services.

The outcomes that we want to achieve are...

- People live in attractive, socially balanced neighbourhoods, with good access to services
- Communities play an active role in setting and delivering local priorities

Please give your views on our proposed actions below...

Q18 Action: The Council will continue to promote tenant engagement in the work of the Housing service.

The Council's Tenant Participation Strategy gives tenants a say on how Council housing services are delivered.

Do you think it is important that tenants continue to have a say on how the Council delivers services to local communities?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither/Nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	2	3	4	5	6

Please tell us what you think about this action.

What else could we do?

Q19 Action: The Council will continue to engage with residents and partners in the community planning process.

The Moray Community Planning Partnership gives local residents a say on how services are delivered to their areas and enables partners to work together to improve local services.

Do you think that the Community Planning Partnership contributes to improving the quality of your neighbourhood?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither/Nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	2	3	4	5	6

Please tell us what you think about this action.

What else could we do?

Q20 Action: Housing developers should improve the design of new housing estates.

The Council's Urban Design Guide & other guidance aim to improve the design of new housing developments.

Do you think that the design of new housing estates needs to be improved?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither/Nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	2	3	4	5	6

Please tell us what you think about this action.

What else could we do?

Finally, about you...

Q21 Your answers are confidential, and your name will not be associated with your response. However, it would help us to analyse our survey if you would tell us a little about yourself.

Your age...

Your town...

The house you live in is...

1

Owner

2

Private renter

3

Council or Housing Association tenant

4

Other

Thank you for helping us with this

Please return this questionnaire in the envelope provided by 8 March 2013.

Any Questions?

Freephone 0800 027 2245 or Email survey@craigforth.co.uk

All information you send to us is strictly confidential and will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998).