



## Older Person's Strategy

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## 1. Purpose of Strategy

- 1.1 This strategy sets out how we will provide housing and other services for our older customers, those aged 60 and over, now and into the future. This will guide our decision making and financial investment to support choice, independence and wellbeing. This aligns with our Vision and Strategic Objectives contained within our Corporate Strategy.

## 2. Scope

- 2.1 The key aims of our strategy include:
- Providing a variety of housing options and service for our older customers
  - Supporting our tenants to live independently in their own homes for as long as possible
  - Effectively engaging in meaningful consultation with our older customers to ensure we understand their needs and preferences.
  - Work in partnership with statutory and voluntary organisations to ensure services are provided to meet individual needs.
  - Alignment with current national and local strategies for older people

## 3. Key Documents

- 3.1 There are a number of key documents which set out the strategic direction of services for older people:

- Housing (Scotland) Act 2025 – new statutory duties will likely have impact on our older tenants, specifically in relation to allocations, sustainment and adaptations.
- Housing to 2040 – Scotland’s vision for everyone to have a safe, good quality and affordable home that meets their needs in the place they want to be.
- Scottish Government’s Guidance on the Provision of equipment and adaptations – recent publications highlight particular challenges in rural communities such as Argyll and Bute.
- Scotland’s National Strategy: Housing to 2040. Actions include:
  - Increasing the supply of accessible and adapted homes and improving choice
  - Streamlining and accelerating the adaptations system
  - Taking action to better integrate the work of housing, health and social care services.
- Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership: Joint Strategic Plan 2025/26 – 2030/31 – a shared planning approach is required between housing, health and social care to ensure relevant outcomes are met for our older customers
  - Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) guidance 2025
  - SFHA’s Road to 2026: Homes Fit for the Future. A policy position paper focusing on making sure there are enough homes available to support independent living for older people.

- 3.2 In addition to this, Bield’s ‘A Roadmap for Independent Living: Reimagining Housing, Health and Ageing in Scotland’, calls for a National Independent Living

Strategy to be developed, to guide policy, practice and investment. Recognising the importance of the following principles:

- Collaboration and prevention
- Person-centered homes
- Community and Connection
- Technology for Independence

#### **4. Context/Background**

4.1 Argyll and Bute Projected increase in population age groups - between 2018 and 2028:

- 0 to 15 age group is projected to see the largest percentage decrease (-17.6%)
- The 75 and over age group is projected to see the largest percentage increase (+23.3%).
- 45 to 64 is projected to remain the largest age group.

4.2 35% of ACHA's tenants are over the age of 60; only 4% of those are living in Sheltered Housing.

4.3 We recognise we may have a number of tenants, who are over 60, who will want to remain in their own home, improve their health, live longer and independently, rather than live in Sheltered Housing

4.4 In addition to this, results from our recent Customer Satisfaction Survey showed 13% of our tenants aged 75+ told us they prefer home visits from staff.

4.5 A projected increase in our population and our tenants, identifies we have a need to aid our older tenants which could better enable them to live independently and improve quality of life, with wellbeing support. By reviewing our services to provide a more person-centred approach, we will be better able to customise wellbeing support for those individuals who require additional help and better utilise our housing stock to respond to the current Housing Emergency.

4.6 Current housing need and demand for applicants 60 and over is shown in the table below:

Region	General list	Homeless list	Transfer List	Total
Atlantic Islands	80	2	12	<b>94</b>
Bute Area	61		25	<b>86</b>
Cowal Area	90	7	24	<b>121</b>
Helensburgh & Lomond Area	141	8	39	<b>188</b>
Kintyre Area	27	3	22	<b>52</b>
Mid Argyll Area	41	1	11	<b>53</b>
Oban & Lorn Area	131	2	49	<b>182</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>571</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>776</b>

4.7 Of those applicants, 299 reported a mobility disability.

4.8 By understanding local demographic trends, health conditions and varying support needs, we can identify opportunity for further development of appropriate services.

## 5. Current Service Provision

5.1 A Strategic review of our Sheltered Services has recently been undertaken. Our tenants had the following to say:

- 'At this point in time I don't need support, but I know if I do need support, it would be available for me.'
- 'We are very fortunate to have such highly qualified and experienced staff here who carry out their duties to a very high standard.'
- 'The communal facilities are excellent. Residents if wanted to do so come along for coffee and chat every morning. Very friendly and enjoyable'
- 'Residents look after each other so safety and security is well looked after. ACHA is very up on this as well so can sleep with no worries.'
- 'We are treated as individuals living an independent life.'

5.2 Our tenants also told us that the following aspects of independent living are important to them:



5.3 Following extensive consultation, and taking into account tenant feedback, six of our Sheltered complexes have been re-classified. Three are now classified as Retirement Housing and three as Amenity Housing:

	<b>Address</b>	<b>No.of Units</b>
Sheltered Complexes	Caledonia Court, Ardrishaig	17
	Chalmers Court, Inveraray	19
	Dunmar Court, Oban	31
	Lochgair Place, Tarbert	13
	Wallace Court, Dunoon	17
Retirement Housing	Cragroy, Dunoon	26
	Ferfadd Court, Bute	33
	Ford Spence Court, Oban	20
Amenity Housing	Elder Crescent, Islay	10
	MacDougall Place, Mull	4
	McCracken Court, Lochgilphead	7

5.4 We are now able to offer increased housing options for our older customers, providing choice and flexibility:

	Amenity Housing	General Needs Housing	Retirement Housing	Sheltered Housing
 24 Hour Emergency Telephone Response	X	X	X	✓
 Security Access	X	X	✓	✓
 Communal Area & Cleaning	X	X	✓	✓
 Maintained Communal Gardens	X	X	✓	✓
 Emergency Repairs	✓	✓	✓	✓
 Local Staff Presence	X	X	✓	✓
 Pets Possible	✓	✓	✓	✓
 Support with Social Activities	X	X	✓	✓
 Guest Room for Family & Friends	X	X	✓	✓

✓ = Available,  
X = Not Available

5.5 Tenants at our Sheltered Housing schemes (and Retirement complex Cragory in Dunoon) have access to a warden call system, connected to our Alarm Receiving Centre BR24.

5.6 Argyll and Bute Council also offer several services for older tenants which our staff are aware of and will signpost to, where necessary.

- Care at home services
- Occupational Therapy Services (see aids and adaptations, below)
- Community Dementia Services
- Self-Directed Support (SDS): Information about how to access support and advice)
- Care and Repair Services: Advice for elderly and disabled homeowners to repair, improve or adapt their homes

5.7 ACHA is committed to reaching the Scottish Government's goal of all our homes heating emissions reaching zero by 2045. To this end, we continue to explore funding opportunities to make our homes as energy efficient as possible.

5.8 In response to feedback, we have also increased our digital connectivity within our retirement/sheltered complexes by upgrading our communal Wi-Fi facilities.

5.9 We have also piloted innovative assistive technology which allows tenants to communicate with us in alternative ways, freeing up staff time and allowing us to target resources where most required.

## 6. Aids and Adaptations

- Older people can benefit significantly from well-designed aids and adaptations that enable independence, prevent hospital admission and remove the need for more costly care interventions. We are committed to working with our local authority partners to identify and prioritise those individuals who are in need of aids and adaptations.

## 6 Strategic Objectives

- To expand wellbeing services beyond sheltered/retirement housing. It is clear that not all of our older tenants live in Sheltered/Retirement Housing but may require assistance in order to live independently in their own home rather than consider alternative options.
- To consider future service models. Our recent service review determined that Sheltered Housing was not the preferred model for our current tenants. A landscape review and analysis of need and demand is required to determine alternative models to meet the requirements of current and prospective tenants, now and into the future.
- To consider opportunities to develop new build housing for older people. Updated guidance on the Scottish Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) places emphasis on addressing the needs of an aging population This is already considered within our Corporate Strategy. 10% of our new build programme will be wheelchair readily adaptable (where location allows).
- To promote digital services that support independent living; technology can offer exciting opportunities, such as:
  - Helping people control their own home environment.
  - Helping undertake daily living tasks
  - Helping monitor health and safety
  - Support community and combat social isolation.
- We will commit to exploring digital alternatives to support this
- To increase awareness among older tenants of the opportunities for downsizing to more suitable housing and support those who wish to move.
- To adapt housing and provide associated services which enable older tenants to live independently in their own homes, linking in with Health and Social Care partners to achieve this.
- To future proof our housing and deliver services that help us tackle social isolation and better engage with older tenants in an increasingly digital environment
- To continue to support community and resident involvement amongst our older tenants – intergenerational living, creating social interaction
- To consider the needs of our older tenants when implementing policy changes required as a result of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2025. ACHA has already

demonstrated it's committed to this in it's new Pet Policy and Domestic Abuse Policy which will be ready in 2026.

- To maximise the potential opportunities for tenants by ensuring strong and developing relationships with local authorities, third sector agencies and other agencies involved in meeting the needs of older people.

## **7. Performance Development**

- 7.1 Our Older Person's Action Plan (Appendix 1) will be monitored regularly by the Sheltered Housing Manager, Housing and Neighbourhood Services

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
<b>Collaboration and Prevention</b>	Increased investment in aids and adaptations	Medium term
	Invest in homes that support us as we age; Continue to explore funding opportunities to increase energy efficiency.	Medium to long term
	Improved collaboration with OT's – review of adaptation request process to ensure this is as streamlined as possible	Medium term
	Targeted approach to underoccupancy – explore initiatives to encourage downsizing	Long term
	Continue to explore funding opportunities to increase energy efficiency.	Short to medium term
<b>Person Centered Homes</b>	Consider dementia friendly designs in new build properties	Long term
	Access to nature and outdoor activity as part of daily life – consider exemplar estate projects which promote this	Long term
	Absence of Sheltered/Retirement in Helensburgh. Demand analysis to be carried out to determine if this required in the future.	Long term
<b>Community and Connection</b>	Co design neighbourhoods based on wellbeing principles. Consultation on future exemplar estate projects, including community partners	Medium to long term
	Explore alternative funding streams to support an affordable Wellbeing model	Medium to long term
	Consider opportunities for developing engagement/consultation opportunities	Short term

	Promote neighbourhoods that reduce social isolation – consider intergenerational activities	Short term
<b>Technology for Independence</b>	Introduction of tenant focus groups to explore digital tech solutions	Short to medium term
	Expansion of digital inclusion initiatives – wider promotion of techy tea parties	Short term
	Staff training to include Digital Champion and support for older tenants in technology	Short term