



ARDS

district housing plan & local housing strategy 2011/12



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Consultation

As part of the District Housing Plan process a consultation exercise was carried out with a range of stakeholders, including Estate Agents and Council Offices, active in the local housing market. The purpose of the consultation was to ascertain their thoughts and views on related housing matters within their areas.

We would like to thank all those who participated in the consultation exercise which has been a valuable source of information when identifying key issues and in compiling the District Housing Plan.

The key issues are included in Section 2 of this report.

Responses to District Housing Plan

This document has been produced by the Housing Executive's Corporate and Area Planning teams. We would welcome your comments on this year's plan. Comments should be sent to:

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The District Housing Plans for the 26 District councils will be available on our website at www.nihe.gov.uk

We can let you have a copy of the plans in a language that meets your needs and in different formats, including print, Braille, audio cassette, computer disk and DAISY format.



FOREWORD

Foreword

The District Housing Plan reports Housing Executive performance for 2010/2011 and the programmes planned for your council area for the coming year.

The recession continues to have an impact on the entire public sector and recent budgets from the UK Government and Northern Ireland Executive have pointed to continuing reductions in public expenditure, especially in capital projects, for the foreseeable future. In addition the collapse of the property market has a direct effect on the amount of income that we receive from selling our houses and land.

Despite the economic situation, in the past year, housing associations, in partnership with the Housing Executive and the Department for Social Development (DSD) started work on a record 2,418 social housing units, greatly exceeding the target of 2,000. However, with reducing levels of funding for new housing in the coming years, the target for the year ahead will be 1,400 starts and the budget for the succeeding two years will reduce these annual targets further.

In terms of our own houses, you will see from this year's Plan that we are limited in the number of improvements that we will carry out compared to previous years. The recent severe winter weather highlighted the need to invest in our stock and especially to ensure houses are as warm and energy efficient as possible. We will continue to make the case for investment in our tenant's homes and across all tenures.

The initial report of the fundamental review of the Housing Executive, commissioned by the Department for Social Development (DSD), was submitted in March. We expect that there will be extensive consultation on any proposals which will be put forward by the Department.

2011 marks the 40th anniversary of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, an organisation which has a history of achievement and progress. However, we work to serve the community and we want to continue to move forward and meet the housing challenges which are ahead of us.

Throughout this report, you will see many examples of our work, the scope of our business and the impact housing has on the local community. Partnership working is important in helping to bring about shared and safe communities and we would like to thank all who have worked with us in the past year.

We would like to acknowledge the work of the Housing Council which makes a valuable contribution to housing policy throughout the course of the year.



Stewart Cuddy
Acting Chief Executive



Brian Rowntree
Chairman

Executive Summary

The District Housing Plan forms part of our statutory requirement to consult with councils in Northern Ireland on our programmes and performance.

Section 1 Regional Context

This section gives an overview of Government policies in relation to the Programme for Government, economy, planning and welfare reforms that direct our work or affect the housing market. An overview of the Northern Ireland housing market context is given along with the Housing Executive's priorities for housing.

Section 2 Ards housing market analysis

It should be noted that House Condition Survey figures at 2009 (HCS 2009) are for **North Down and Ards** council areas. All figures not relating to the House Condition Survey 2009 are for Ards Borough Council only.

Planning

- There is remaining potential for 8,339 units of new housing (private and social) to 2015 - DOE Planning Services land availability monitor 2010;
- The Ards and Down Area Plan was adopted in March 2009 after Planning Service considered the outcome of the Planning Appeals Commission report;
- The Northern Ireland Housing Executive continues to work closely with DOE Planning on developing agreed procedures in relation to various Planning Policy Statements.

Socio-economic statistics

- The population in Ards is projected to increase by 4.9% by 2019, however the average household size is decreasing;
- The largest numerical increase is in the number of older people;
- The population has become more diverse in Ards, as a result of migrant workers, however net international migration is decreasing;
- The Council area is the 8th least deprived in Northern Ireland (NI), according to the most recent NI Multiple Deprivation Index;
- The percentage of people claiming unemployment benefits at March 2011 is 4%, and is lower than the Northern Ireland average (5.2%);
- The number of households in fuel poverty increased to 43.6% in 2009, similar to the Northern Ireland average (Source HCS 2009).

Housing market statistics

- The total housing stock in North Down and Ards is approximately 68,030; the private rented sector represents 14.4% of the overall tenure share;
- Housing unfitness in North Down and Ards is less than 2%; lower than the Northern Ireland average of 2.4% (Source HCS 2009);



- In 2006, the average house price in Ards was £174,094 (NI average £174,178). At 2010 the average house price was £184,396, almost 18% higher than the NI average (NI average £ 156,746) but significantly less than at the peak of the market (Ards average £242,423 in 2007);
- NIHE housing stock at March 2011 totalled 3,911 units with 4,936 units sold to date (of which 3,703 were houses);
- There is a significant waiting list for social housing in both urban and rural areas of Ards. At December 2010 there were 1,721 applicants of which 1,025 (60%) were in housing stress;
- There were 726 homeless presenters for the year to March 2011, of which 455 (62.7%) were awarded Full Duty Status. This shows a reduction in the numbers of people presenting as homeless but an increase on those being awarded Full Duty Status;
- The number of allocations made annually decreased from 406 in 2009 to 339 in 2010;
- Our housing needs assessment estimates that 771 new social homes are required for the period 2010 to 2015.

Section 3 Ards Local Housing Strategy

In Ards in the past year (2010/2011) we spent £6.693 million. The Housing Executive's projected investment for 2011/2012 is £6.451 million. In addition new build work to the value of £9.3 million (77 units) was commenced in 2010/11 and funding is available for 113 new build units in 2011/12. Performance for 2010/2011 along with programmes for 2011/2012 is reported under our Corporate Objectives.

Corporate Objective 1 delivering the decent homes standard

- During 2010/2011 we completed 43 Revenue Replacements, 330 External Cyclical Maintenance improvements and 144 dwellings had smoke alarms replaced;
- Schemes currently on site will provide; 110 Heating Installations, External Cyclical Maintenance to 214 dwellings, replacement for 324, ten year old smoke alarms and installation of 417 smoke alarms;
- During 2011/12 we plan to start Revenue Replacements to 161 dwellings, Heating Installations to 31 dwellings and Health and Safety work to eight dwellings. We plan to demolish 32 dwellings as a result of an economic approval to demolish and redevelop a site in Newtownards with social housing;
- During 2010/2011 eight Renovation Grants were completed in the private sector. In 2011/12 we plan to complete 11 Repair Grants;
- In addition to Heating Installations to our own stock we manage the Warm Homes Scheme. In the year to March 2010, in Ards 282 homes in the private sector were insulated, seven had heating installations and 25 had both insulation and heating installed;
- We are working to implement an energy brokering scheme and continue to work with others to promote energy efficiency awareness.

Corporate Objective 2 promoting independent living

- During 2010/2011 there were 39 Disabled Facilities Grants completed in the private sector and 86 adaptations were completed to our own stock. The South East area budget for adaptations in 2011/12 is £4.35 million and we plan to complete 62 Disabled Facilities Grants in the private sector;
- £0.7 million was spent during 2010/2011 on providing Supporting People Services. Existing funding enables the delivery of 26 supported housing accommodation based schemes and 3 floating support services. A similar level of funding has been budgeted for 2011/2012;
- We will continue to assess the need for new wheelchair housing;
- We will provide a range of services to tackle homelessness in line with our homelessness strategy;
- During 2010/2011 Newtownards District Office placed a total of 123 homeless presenters into temporary accommodation.

Corporate Objective 3 fostering urban and rural regeneration

- We will continue to deliver DSD Neighbourhood Renewal funding through the Small Pockets of Deprivation (SPOD) programme;
- We will continue to work with our partners and local communities to deliver projects as part of the Areas at Risk Programme;
- We will continue to implement the Rural Housing Strategy.

Corporate Objective 4 promoting affordable housing

- During 2010/2011 one general needs social housing scheme and two category one elderly schemes were completed for 31 units. During 2010/11,12 schemes for 77 units commenced;
- During 2010/11 work continued on a further 145 units which had commenced in 2009/10;
- There are 7 general needs schemes (113 units) on the 2011/12 programme;
- Locations of housing need are included in the unmet need prospectus where schemes have not been programmed;
- Continue to promote the private rented sector as an affordable housing option;
- Continue to work with DSD and DOE to help formulate policy to deliver developer contributions for affordable housing through the planning system.

Corporate Objective 5 building a stronger community;

- Newtownards District Office staff are involved in a number of multi-agency groups relating to community safety;
- Our Neighbourhood Officer service works directly with local communities on issues which affect their daily lives;
- During 2010/2011 one property was repossessed and three cases were referred to mediation services as a result of anti-social behaviour investigations;
- Newtownards District Office will continue to work with 21 community groups on a range of issues;
- A 'local offer' has been piloted by Housing Benefit, Accounts Unit and the Area Housing Community Network.

Corporate Objective 6 delivering better public services

- Manage services in a cost effective manner;
- Provide high quality and responsive services for our customers;
- Continue to improve services through the roll out of the modernising services programme.

In the coming year we will strive to ensure that a high quality service is delivered to residents in the borough.



Trinity Housing Association Category 1 apartments, Church Street, Newtownards



SECTION ONE

Section 1 Regional context

1.1 Introduction

Each year the Housing Executive publishes District Housing Plans for the 26 District Councils in Northern Ireland. These documents form part of our statutory requirement to consult with councils on our programmes and performance.

Section 1, outlines priorities and spending for the year ahead. It also gives a brief overview of policy issues affecting housing and summarises some of the main issues from the Housing Market Review and Perspectives Report. Section 2 gives an analysis of the local housing market and Section 3, sets out the Local Housing Strategy. The final section contains appendices giving statistics, contact details and useful links for further information on topics discussed in the Plan.

Our plans are constructed to reflect government policy as set out in the *Programme for Government*, published in January 2008. In addition, our policies and plans are developed in the context of a number of government strategies including: the Sustainable Development Strategy; Anti-Poverty Strategy; and the Department for Social Development's priorities.

Our policies are developed with equality considerations incorporated from the outset. We consult regularly with our partners in the Consultative Forum on equality issues and through the Housing Council and the Housing Community Network. We have begun implementation of our new policy statement on Children and Young People along with our child protection policy.

Together, the Review of the Northern Ireland Housing Market, the Corporate Plan and the District Housing Plans represent our overall housing strategy for Northern Ireland.

1.2 Our housing priorities and programmes

Reduced levels of funding and reduced income from the sale of our assets will present challenges and we have prioritised our work for the year ahead. There remains an ongoing need to invest in both the private and social housing sectors to maintain conditions and in measures to alleviate fuel poverty.

Our priorities are as follows:

- New social house building;
- Maintenance and Improvements to our own stock;
- Promoting energy efficiency and helping to combat fuel poverty in the residential sector;
- Investment in private sector housing through Grants;

- Supporting the housing needs of disabled people;
- Homelessness and those in housing stress;
- Community safety;
- Better community relations, community development, participation and cohesion;
- Better housing for the Traveller Community;
- Urban and rural regeneration.

Section 3 gives details of our local performance and programmes which are set out under our six Corporate Objectives.

1.3 Funding

Delivery of our programmes and services depends on rental income, government subsidy and the sale of assets including land and house sales. Around £100million per year of our income has been lost due to the effects of the recession on the housing market, particularly in the reduced number of sales of our assets.

Our budgets will continue to be restricted and will affect all areas of work including new build, improvements and grants. We can not plan for or deliver the level of investment that we know is needed to improve housing conditions in both the social and private sectors.

We will seek further funding during the course of the year through the 'monitoring round' process, but this is likely to meet with only limited success as budgets across Government are tightened.

Overall the level of reductions in the NI Budget following the **Comprehensive Spending Review 2010**, is to reduce capital expenditure by 40% over the four years and 5% of revenue expenditure in each of those years.

We make a considerable investment to housing in Northern Ireland each year. During 2010/11 we spent £352.5 million on our mainstream programme expenditure, including capital costs associated with improvement programmes, together with the revenue costs of maintenance and other improvement programmes, private sector grants and the Social Housing Development Programme.

The 2011/12 proposed spend for our mainstream programmes is £321.3 million. Funding of £142.6 million is available for the Social Housing Development Programme to enable delivery of 1,400 new social housing starts (1,200 general needs housing and 200 supported housing).

For our Capital Improvement programme there is funding of £19.3 million and for our Maintenance Programme there is funding of £138.0 million.

Expenditure for private sector grants will be around £21.4 million, to enable approval of mandatory Disabled Facility and Repairs Grants, and to take into account previous committed expenditure on both mandatory and discretionary grants.

1.4 Policy context

The Northern Ireland Executive has made the economy its top priority in the Programme for Government and has established a Sub Committee to oversee the production of an Economic Strategy for Northern Ireland. The aims are to rebalance the economy, by rebuilding the economy and securing employment growth in the shorter term and increasing the private sector in the longer term.

Planning policy sets the context for housing provision in Northern Ireland. The Department for Regional Development (DRD) published its consultation document in January 2011, for the ten year review of the Regional Development Strategy - 'Shaping Our Future'. The Strategy's purpose is to deliver the spatial aspects of the Programme for Government. The consultation period ended on the 31 March 2011 and we have submitted a response.

The main purpose of the **Planning Bill** is to transfer the majority of planning functions from the Planning Service to the new councils, once new government arrangements and standards have been put in place. From the 1st of April 2011, the Planning Service's function and staff have been absorbed into the core of the Department of the Environment (DOE). Planning functions have been reorganised to anticipate transfer to councils. Local Planning Divisions will take responsibility for development plans and management functions, which will in due course transfer to councils and a Strategic Planning Division, will take forward the responsibilities which will remain with the DOE, following government reform.

Housing has been impacted by **planning policy statements** in recent years with the introduction of PPS12 (Housing in Settlements) and PPS21 (Sustainable Development in the countryside). The review of PPS12 by a multi agency steering group, incorporating DOE, DSD and the Housing Executive, continues to consider ways of securing delivery of additional social and affordable housing via developer contributions.

The Housing (Amendment) Act 2010 placed, for the first time, a statutory responsibility on the Housing Executive to produce a homeless strategy.

Under Amendment Bill No 1 we are required to publish our **Antisocial Behaviour policy** procedures.

We have responded to the **sustainable development updated action plan** 'Everyone's Involved' and await the final action plan. The aims of the strategy are

to build a future characterised by economic prosperity, equality and social cohesion. We actively monitor our own activities against a set of performance measures to help us gauge progress in terms of sustainable development best practice.

As well as the Comprehensive Spending Review there are a series of **welfare reforms** proposed by the UK Government. These include the introduction of a 'Universal Credit' from 2013 to replace most in work and out of work benefits. By 2017 all existing claimants should have transferred to the new system. It is proposed that the amount of credit will be subject to an upper limit to ensure that no household can receive more in welfare than net median income.

Housing Benefit entitlement levels are also set to reduce and changes relating to Local Housing Allowances for private tenants commenced in April 2011. Other changes are planned for 2012 and 2013 with some proposals yet to be finalised. The impact of these changes on the housing market and particularly tenure choice is as yet difficult to predict.

1.5 Northern Ireland housing market

The Housing Executive publishes an annual Review of the Housing Market which sets out trends and key developments across tenures. The report helps in setting policy direction and resource priorities for the year ahead.

This year's Review again focuses on the interdependence of the economy and the housing market. The past 2 years have proved difficult for the Northern Ireland economy and the First Trust's economic outlook offers little optimism for 2011.

According to the University of Ulster quarterly house price index for quarter 4 of 2010, "the pattern of the house price index has been erratic since 2009 showing an uneven recovery for the Northern Ireland housing market. It would seem that this rather tentative fluctuating picture is likely to prevail over 2011 as the market seeks to stabilise." NI households face the combined effects of a declining manufacturing base, lower rates of public expenditure, higher fuel and food prices and an increase in value added tax. Main headlines from the Review of the Housing Market are:

- While property prices have reduced, there is still an affordability issue as tighter lending restrictions means that it is more difficult to secure a mortgage;
- The outlook for house building in 2011 looks poor;
- The private rented sector has grown significantly and accounts for 17% of occupied housing tenures at 2009. The growth in this sector has in part been underpinned by housing benefit. Changes to housing benefit regulations are planned between 2011 and 2013;

- There are still a substantial number of applicants registering for social housing. For many households, social housing offers security of tenure at an affordable price;
- Through our Net Stock Model, we have assessed that 2,500 new social dwellings are required each year;
- Housing conditions have improved with only 2.4% of Northern Ireland's total stock deemed unfit, although there are variations between tenures and in urban and rural areas. Current restrictions on discretionary grant funding may have a detrimental effect on unfitness levels across the private sector;
- The level of fuel poverty rose rapidly between 2006 and 2009 from 34% to 44% of all households, reflecting in particular the rise in fuel prices over this period.

Demographic trends have important implications for the design and number of new dwellings required and also for housing support services. It should be noted that projections are based on trends and current housing and economic conditions. Any major changes in these may affect projections.

- The population of Northern Ireland is projected to grow to 1,906,000 by 2019;
- The number of children under 16 is forecast to grow a little over the next ten years but the percentage will decrease slightly;
- The number and proportion of people of pensionable age will grow from 302,000 to 326,000 however, the number of people aged 75 and over is projected to increase substantially between 2009 and 2019: by 38,000 to 153,000;
- The number of households is projected to grow however, the average household size is projected to decrease from 2.52 in 2009 to 2.40 by 2019;
- Although the unemployment claimant count is lower than most of the European countries at 7.4%, the reliance on public sector jobs makes us vulnerable to reducing budgets.

1.6 Corporate Governance

We have received a report by DSD following an inspection of the governance arrangements which the Housing Executive has in place to regulate how we carry out our business. In the main the report found that governance arrangements are good. However, the review highlighted a number of areas where the existing framework of checks and balances could be improved further. We are now working through an agreed implementation plan to address these matters, with reviews of progress undertaken by the Board and DSD on a regular basis.

There has also been a "Gateway Review / Health-check" of our maintenance contracts and again we are progressing an implementation plan to address the recommendations.



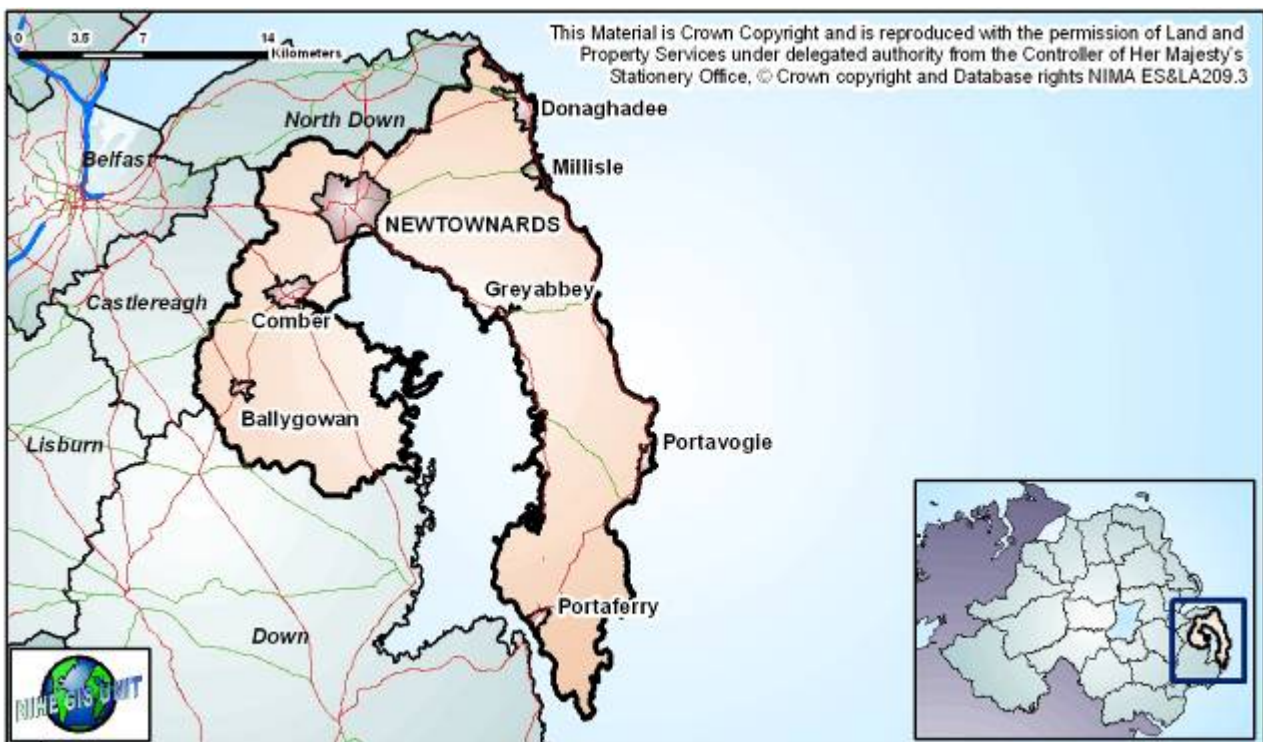
SECTION TWO

Section 2 Ards housing market analysis

2.1 Introduction

Section 2 analyses the main factors that influence the local housing market and inform our housing need assessment. These include the planning context within which the District Housing Plan is set, demographic trends, socio-economic issues and information on housing stock.

Map 1: Ards Borough Council Area



Source: NIHE GIS

The geographical area of Ards Borough coincides with that of the Housing Executive's Newtownards District, and is shown in Map 1 above. The borough incorporates the larger settlements of Newtownards, Comber and Donaghadee, a number of villages situated along the sea coast and shores of Strangford Lough, and several smaller settlements distributed throughout the open countryside.

2.2 Planning

Physical Planning

The planning context is set out in the Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025: 'Shaping our Future' and the Draft Ards and Down Area Plan 2015. The Housing Growth Indicators set by the Department for Regional Development (DRD) for Ards for the periods 1998-2015 and 2008-2025 allows for 10,500 units and

9,550 units respectively of new build development. According to the DOE Planning Service's Northern Ireland Housing Land Availability Report for 2010 there were 4,824 units completed between 1998 and 2010, with immediate potential for a further 8,339 dwellings.

The Ards & Down Area Plan was adopted on 30th March 2009 after Planning Service considered the outcome of the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) report. The plan identifies additional land which has been zoned for housing, but none that has been specifically zoned for social housing.

The Housing Executive continues to meet regularly with Planning Service to progress the review of PPS12 in order to help better ensure the delivery of social and affordable housing. In addition, we have developed joint protocols for the application of policy CTY 5 (PPS 21) for affordable housing in the countryside and policy OS I (PPS8) for the development of open spaces.

Regeneration

In Ards Borough, Housing Executive regeneration activity aims to improve housing and environmental conditions with physical improvements to housing stock and the environment. It also seeks to ensure that the community is developed and supported at the same time through delivering neighbourhood based services and community initiatives, often through a multi-agency approach.

A number of areas within Ards have been identified under the DSD Areas at Risk Programme and the Small Pockets of Deprivation Programme. The Areas at Risk Programme was established in 2006 to identify and intervene in areas at risk of slipping into a spiral of decline. The Small Pockets of Deprivation Programme (SPOD) was established to address the needs of deprived areas that have very small populations and are therefore too small to allow an effective integrated regeneration strategy to be developed. Further details of investment and activities can be found in Section 3.4.

Private sector investment is essential to the continued regeneration of urban areas of Ards. Castlebawn development which includes a new Tesco superstore, retail warehousing, leisure and business park is due to commence in the near future. It is anticipated that this private development will bring upwards of 200 permanent retail jobs to the area and the dilapidated area of townscape character around Court Street will soon be revitalised, making the town a more attractive place to live, work and shop.

Following our involvement in the initial stakeholder groups last year, we welcome the publication of the draft Rural White Paper Action Plan which was issued for public consultation at the end of March. The Plan, for the first time, sets out proposed actions to deal with rural issues across Government. The consultation closes in June 2011; we will be submitting a response to this with particular reference to those proposals related to rural housing. Following the outcome of

the consultation, we will be keen to avail of any opportunities that the Rural White Paper Action Plan creates for us to work with others to further progress rural regeneration.

It is important that we do not lose the impact of our significant regeneration activity in both urban and rural communities in the borough. However, as a result of limited funding, some aspects of regeneration will be restricted.

Socio economic Planning

The population of Ards increased by 8.8% between 1999 and 2009 and is projected to increase by a further 4.9% by 2019. During the same period (2009-2019) the number of households is projected to increase by 9.3%. Changing demographic trends, particularly in age profiles and average household size are important factors in planning for new housing. Statistics indicate a need for a larger proportion of dwellings for smaller household groups.

The European Union A8 population was around 600 at 2009 representing less than 1% of the total population of the borough. Generally the number of new migrant workers in the borough has been reducing steadily since 2006. This reduction reflects reduced employment opportunities due to the decline in the economy. The majority of migrant workers live in the private rented sector with a small but growing number seeking housing in the social sector.

Community cohesion can contribute to the proper functioning of the housing market. There is a strong community ethos throughout Ards Borough. The Housing Executive continues to work along with other agencies and local groups to build a stronger community, particularly in areas of social need.

Inevitably the **local economy** has been affected by the recent recession. The downturn in the economy brought difficult trading conditions to Ards Borough, an area which prior to the recession had experienced economic expansion with rapid growth in the hospitality and tourism sectors. The number of people claiming unemployment benefits in the borough has increased by 13% over the past year but remains less than the Northern Ireland average.

In Northern Ireland incidents of fuel poverty have increased significantly. A fuel poor household spends in excess of 10% of its income on fuel to heat their home to a satisfactory standard of warmth (21° in main living room and 18° in other occupied rooms). At 2009, 39.5% of households in Ards were in **fuel poverty**, less than the Northern Ireland average (43.7%). Income is a major factor in the level of fuel poverty with older people being particularly vulnerable given their high level of benefit dependency. Rises in energy prices have contributed to the sharp escalation in fuel poverty across Northern Ireland.

Table 1: Socio economic statistics

Population	Mid Year Estimate 1999	Mid Year Estimate 2009	Projected 2019
Population	71,779	78,100	81,902
Household	N/A	32,300	35,300
Household Size	N/A	2.4	2.29
No. of children	15,649 (21.8%)	15,290 (19.6%)	15,888 (19.4%)
No. of working age	44,434 (61.9%)	47,568 (60.9 %)	48,819 (59.6%)
No. of older people	11,696 (16.3%)	15,242 (19.5%)	17,195 (21%)

Estimated Net International Migration	July 2006/ June 2007	July 2007/ June 2008	July 2008/ June 2009
Ards	42	55	-18

N.I. Multiple Deprivation Measure 2010	LGD Rank 1 – 26 (1 most deprived)	Most deprived *SOA	Least deprived SOA
Ards	18th	Scrabo 2	Comber North 2

* Super Output Area
Source: NISRA

Unemployment Benefit	March 2009	March 2010	March 2011
No of unemployment benefit claims	1,491 (3.1%)	1,769 (3.7%)	2,003 (4%)

Source: DETI NI

Housing Benefit	March 2009	March 2010	March 2011
NIHE tenants in receipt of Housing Benefit	2,702	2,767	2,822

Source: NIHE

Fuel Poverty	Ards HCS 06	Ards& North Down HCS 09	NI HCS 09
% in Fuel Poverty	39.5%	43.6%	43.7%

Source: NIHE House Condition Survey

2.3 Housing Market Profile

Information for the 2009 House Condition Survey was collected on the basis of the proposed new council boundaries under the Review of Public Administration. This change of boundary means that figures cannot be compared with previous surveys.

The housing stock in the Ards and North Down area is approximately 68,030 units (HCS 2009 figures). The private rented sector accounts for 14% of total stock but still remains lower than the Northern Ireland figure of nearly 17%. Conversely the social housing sector in Ards and North Down at 10.8% is among the lowest in Northern Ireland (15% average). The percentage of vacant stock in the Ards and North Down area is 3.1%, almost half the Northern Ireland average of 5.9% (HCS 2009).

Housing Conditions continue to improve with levels of unfitness in North Down and Ards well below the regional average in 2009 (HCS 2009).

Within the **private sector**, the drop in construction of new dwellings is demonstrated with only 150 private sector new build starts in September 2010 compared to 689 in September 2006. Local estate agents confirm a reduction in both new housing starts and transactions in the past two years.

Owner occupation continues to be the most popular tenure in the borough. However there are indications that although the number of owner occupied dwellings may grow slowly over the coming years, its tenure share of the overall housing market will not increase. Ongoing economic uncertainty and restricted lending practices will continue to limit construction and transactions.

In 2006, the **average house price** in Ards was higher than the Northern Ireland average but has significantly reduced since the height of the market. The average house price in Ards Borough, at September 2010, was £184,396 compared to £239,890 September 2007. This is an increase from the average house price in 2009 (£149,553) however caution should be exercised when interpreting house prices in 2010 given the low number of transactions and it is considered that market adjustment is still ongoing.

During 2010 there were only 55 **new build** property sales in the borough. For the quarter ending December 2010, the average new build property sales price was £165,600 showing ongoing market adjustment in the new build property market. Limited access to mortgages, an increase in potential vendors and a loss of confidence brought on by budgetary cuts has resulted in further market uncertainty and increasing affordability pressure. The increase in the private rented tenure is an indication that the owner occupied sector continues to prove inaccessible to many potential buyers.

Table 2: Housing statistics (Stock Information)

	Owner Occupied	Social Stock	Private Rented	Vacant	Total
Ards HCS 2006	22,830	4,300	2,570	1,180	30,880
Ards/North Down HCS 2009	48,750	7,380	9,780	2,120	68,030
NI HCS 2009	461,800	110,200	124,600	43,400	740,000

Housing Conditions (all stock)	Ards 2006	Ards/North Down 2009	NI 2006	NI 2009
Unfitness	<2%	<2%	3.4%	2.4%
Fail Decent Homes Std	25.8%	18.9%	23.0%	15.1%

Source: NIHE House Condition Survey

Private Sector Activity	Sept 2006	Sept 2007	Sept 2008	Sept 2009	Sept 2010
Ards New Build Starts	689	584	420	305	150
NI New Build Starts	13,946	12,488	7,879	6,140	6,339
Ards Average House Price	£214,267	£239,890	£188,660	£149,553	£184,396
NI Average House Price	£174,178	£233,415	£218,145	£160,855	£156,746

Source: NHBC & University of Ulster

Private Housing Benefit Ards	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
No. of Claims	1,135	1,186	1,379	1,681	1,953

Local Housing Allowance for 3 bedrooms = up to £103.55 pw from April 2011

Source: NIHE

Information for the 2009 House Condition Survey was collected on the basis of the proposed new council boundaries under the Review of Public Administration, combining Ards with North Down Borough Council areas. This change of boundary means that figures cannot be compared with previous surveys.

Northern Ireland **Co-ownership** Housing Association assists those on low income to access the owner occupied sector. A total of 1,309 properties have been purchased through the scheme in Ards, only 26 of those in the past financial year.

Another route to low cost owner occupation has been the **purchase of social housing** from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive or housing associations by existing tenants. However, the number of transactions has dropped considerably in this sector since 2007. In 2010 only eight properties were sold to tenants under the House Sales scheme, which shows a very small growth in number of NIHE house sales, but remains significantly lower than at the height of the House Sales scheme.

The **private rented sector** has grown significantly in Northern Ireland since 2001. Local estate agents confirmed that this tenure is buoyant within the borough. Private sector Housing Benefit claims continued to increase to nearly 2,000, the highest number of claims to date. Since 2007 the increase reflects both the economic climate in Ards Borough and a rise in the number of households choosing to live in the private rented sector. Private rental has become a popular choice for an increasing number of younger households who face affordability pressures. It is also popular among migrant workers and an increasing number of single person households.

Houses in Multiple Occupation continue to play an important role in meeting the housing needs of people who are single, who have temporary employment, students, low income households and more recently migrant workers. The Housing Executive uses a combination of methods – inspection, grant aid and enforcement orders – to raise standards in HMOs. There are four registered HMOs in the borough, the majority of these are situated in Newtownards Town.

2.4 Social housing

The number of social housing applicants in 2010 was at an all time high (1,721 applications) having increased between 2000 and 2010 by 138%. Those in housing stress rose to above 1,000 at December 2010 for the first time. The number of allocations in 2010/11 decreased to 339, lower than in 2009 but remaining higher than the average number of allocations over the past five years. Newtownards District Office currently monitors the reason for tenants terminating their properties and information to date suggests the increase of available properties in the private rental sector is a significant factor in tenants terminating Housing Executive tenancies.

The housing need projection for 5 years to 2015 for Ards Borough shows a gross need of 982 units. Taking into account schemes on site at 31st March 2010 the net projection for further new build over the period is 771 units. Projections are calculated using waiting list trends, supply trends and other demographic and local information. The Social Housing Development Programme is formulated using our housing needs assessments and strategic guidelines to help address

social housing need. It is likely that the budget for social housing will be reduced in the coming years and this will inevitably affect the delivery of schemes locally leading to a possible increase of those in housing stress.

Housing need exists across all areas of Ards Borough. Popular locations include Newtownards particularly the town centre area and Comber. The Bowtown estate is the only CLA that does not require additional new build at this time.

Single person households continue to dominate the waiting list, accounting for 44% of all applicants in housing stress. Small families and older person households are the other main groups in housing stress.

The continued increase of numbers in housing stress will be closely monitored as will the increasing numbers of relets.

Current **Northern Ireland Housing Executive stock** within the borough is 3,911 dwellings, the majority of which are houses and bungalows. Since the introduction of the House Sales Scheme around 56% of Northern Ireland Housing Executive properties in Ards have been purchased. The remaining stock is managed to ensure that vacancies are kept to a minimum. At the end of December 2010 just over 1% of Housing Executive properties were vacant. At 31 March 2010 there were 17 schemes on site which will provide a further 222 Housing Association dwellings in Ards Borough, a significant contribution to the provision of social housing in the borough.

Homeless applicants are included in the overall waiting list figures but it is possible to analyse homelessness separately. The number of people presenting as homeless and being awarded Full Duty Status has increased by nearly 20% since 2006. The main factors for applicants presenting as homeless in Ards Borough include marriage/sharing breakdown, relationship or family disputes and unsuitable accommodation.

Just over 47% of all who presented as homeless and 30% of all applicants who received Full Duty Status in 2010/11 were single households. Small family households accounted for 26% of those presenting as homeless and 32% of those receiving Full Duty Status. Newtownards District Office made a total of 123 placements into temporary accommodation in 2010/11, an increase from 108 in 2009/10.

Table 3: Social housing statistics Public sector

5 year projected need to March 2015 ¹	
Newtownards Town	416
Local towns	212
Villages	138
Small settlements	5
Total	771

Ards Social Housing Waiting List trends

December	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
All Applicants	1,421	1,626	1,644	1,641	1,721
Housing Stress	834	896	892	927	1025
Allocations	300	319	301	406	339

Ards Waiting list sub-set of homeless applicants

	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
Number Presented	618	635	631	743	726
Awarded Full Duty Applicant	382	391	375	490	455

	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
HA Starts Ards	93	84	150	77
NIHE House Sales Ards	28	1	6	8
Average Market Value	£103,875	N/A	£83,083	£74,062

Source: NIHE

¹ Projected housing need is calculated using a number of factors such as waiting list trends, supply trends, specific local issues, regeneration and rural proofing.



SECTION THREE

Section 3 Ards local housing strategy

3.1 Introduction

The housing market analysis identified a number of housing issues within the borough, including affordability, homelessness, fuel poverty and the need for additional social housing in some locations. These issues present significant challenges in the current economic climate.

This section sets out our priorities for the current year as well as our performance for the past year. Our programmes are set out under our six Corporate Objectives.

The Housing Executive's projected investment within Ards Borough in 2011/12 is £6.451 million.

Table 4: Ards Borough actual and projected spend

Activity areas	Actual spend - £m		Projected spend - £m
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Capital improvement work*	2.231	1.106	0.544
Planned maintenance work	2.303	1.630	1.939
Response maintenance**	2.732	2.216	2.546
Private Sector Grants	1.494	0.669	0.708
Warm Homes	-	0.311	***
Supporting People	0.807	0.761	0.714
Total	9.567	6.693	6.451
Investment in New Build****	19.761	9.363	*****

Source: NIHE

* Capital Improvement includes major Disabled Person Adaptations – extensions.

**Response maintenance figures include minor Disabled Person Adaptations, Redecoration and Displacement Grants.

***Warm Homes spend is demand led and cannot be projected at district level.

**** Investment in new build is the total cost of schemes starting in the programme year but which may be spent over more than one year. The amount includes Housing Association Grant funded by Government subsidy which was £13.852million for 150 units (2009/10) and £5.922 million for 77 units (2010/11).

Of this amount £5.922 million is Housing Association Grant funded by Government.

***** The 2011/12 draft social housing development gross programme contains 113 units, total cost of units has not been finalised.

Some financial information cannot be reported at a district level and therefore it is shown at an Area level in Table 5.

Table 5: South East Area actual spend 2009/10 – 2010/11

Activity areas	Actual spend £m	
	2009/10	2010/11
Grounds Maintenance	1.917	1.740

Source: NIHE

3.2 Objective 1 – Delivering the Decent Homes Standard

A decent home is one that meets modern standards in relation to fitness, structure, energy efficiency and facilities. We had planned that all our properties would reach the Decent Homes Standard (DHS) by 2010; however, reduced funding has prevented this and we cannot say when this will be accepted.

In the past year we completed:

- 43 Revenue Replacements to Housing Executive dwellings;
- 330 Housing Executive dwellings had External Cyclical Maintenance work carried out;
- 144 Housing Executive dwellings had 10 year old smoke alarms replaced.

Schemes started in 2010/2011 are programmed to complete;

- 110 Heating Installations to NIHE properties;
- External Cyclical Maintenance to 214 NIHE properties;
- 324 smoke alarms replacements in Housing Executive properties;
- 417 smoke alarms installations to NIHE properties.

Schemes programmed for 2011/12 are programmed to carry out;

- Revenue Replacement to 161 NIHE properties;
- Heating Installations to 31 NIHE properties;
- Health and Safety work to eight NIHE properties.

Details of our programmes can be found in Appendix 2.

Providing **Grants** to private sector landlords and owner occupiers can assist in maintaining properties to stay in good condition and not fall into unfitness or serious disrepair. However, due to current funding restrictions discretionary Renovation, Replacement and Home Repair Assistance Grants are only available in exceptional circumstances. Grants to adapt properties in the private sector for

disabled people continue to be available. See Appendix 2 for details of grants performance during 2010/2011.

In Ards Borough Council Area in the past year we completed:

- 8 Renovation Grants;
- 39 Disabled Facilities Grants.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) are an important part of the private rented sector. Within Ards, there were 48 properties identified by the Housing Executive as potential Houses in Multiple Occupation. Ongoing identification of potential HMOs and ensuring compliance with the HMO Statutory Registration Scheme, continue to present a significant challenge, as does the enforcement activity associated with the scheme where non compliance exists. Our focus remains on inspection and compliance of standards through the HMO registration scheme. In the past year 2 Article 80 Notices (fit for number of occupants) and 1 Article 79 Notice (management standards) were served in Ards Borough. A HMO Strategy has been developed to not only ensure compliance, but also to provide advice to tenants and prospective tenants of HMOs such as students.

Improving energy efficiency and helping to reduce fuel poverty remain key priorities for the Housing Executive. Our work as **Home Energy Conservation Authority (HECA) for Northern Ireland** has helped to improve energy efficiency across the residential sector by 21.4% from 1996 to 2009.

We have been working to switch to efficient gas and oil heating systems in our homes, however, we are reviewing our heating policy to ensure that it is fit for purpose. Any changes will require both Northern Ireland Housing Executive Board and Department for Social Development (DSD) approval.

All of the main fuels (natural gas, oil, coal and electricity) have increased in price in recent years and the review will test if our approach needs to change. The review will include the role of new technologies, evaluating the practicalities of installation, maintenance costs, servicing, emissions and operational costs. A choice of energy suppliers in Northern Ireland is detailed in Appendix 7.

We now manage the **Warm Homes Scheme** which can help vulnerable households in the private sector to improve the energy efficiency of their homes and help to alleviate fuel poverty. In the year to March 2011:

- 282 homes were insulated;
- 7 homes had heating installations;
- 25 had both insulation and heating installed.



Despite substantial improvements in energy efficiency there has been an increase in the number of households in fuel poverty. Energy efficiency improvements alone cannot effectively tackle fuel poverty it also requires simultaneous action on fuel prices and low incomes. The Assembly has now passed legislation to allow us to implement an energy brokering scheme and we are working to design a scheme to allow early implementation.

We continue to fund Bryson Charitable Group to provide energy efficiency awareness courses to schools and during the year 10 schools were visited in Ards Borough.



Photo Multi-element improvement work in Westwinds estate, Newtownards

Through working closely with partner housing associations and where we are leading design work we continue to promote the best modern standards of **housing design**. An important aspect of this is sustainable design which seeks to ensure energy efficiency and a small 'carbon footprint'. All new social housing developments must currently comply with Code for Sustainable Homes (Code level 3) however; housing associations are encouraged to bring forward schemes at code level 4. At level 3 CO₂ emissions are improved by 25%, at Code 4 by 44% above current building regulations.

In the coming year 2011/12 for Ards we plan to:

- Carry out Revenue Replacement to 161 Housing Executive properties;
- Carry out Heating Installations to 31 Housing Executive properties;
- Carry out Health and Safety work to 8 Housing Executive properties;
- Carry out 32 demolitions in order to redevelop a site for social housing (Appendix 2);
- Complete 62 Disabled Facilities Grants and 11 Repair Grants;
- Work to improve energy efficiency, promote energy conservation and help to alleviate fuel poverty;
- Continue to promote good standards of housing design and practice across all tenures;
- Conclude a full review of our emergency response plans, based upon lessons from the severe weather of December 2010.

3.3 Objective 2 – Promoting independent living

Our aim is to help people live independent lives by developing services and housing solutions tailored to each person's circumstances. A number of existing housing strategies are directed at vulnerable groups such as our Homeless Strategy and our Supporting People Strategy. This support to vulnerable groups is delivered through our Supporting People Programme, homeless services and our housing support and adaptation services. We are working on developing a new Supporting People Strategy to take account of the Bamford Review and changing homelessness responsibilities to 16 and 17 year old homeless people. This report is due to be published in summer 2011.

In Ards Borough in the past year:

- We spent approximately £0.7 million during 2010/11 providing assistance to vulnerable people through Supporting People Services. A similar level of funding has been budgeted for 2011/12;
- The existing funding delivers 26 supported housing accommodation-based schemes in the Ards area, providing services to a range of client groups. In addition, there are 3 floating support providers working in the borough.

The Housing (Amendment) Act 2010 confers upon the Housing Executive a duty to publish a homelessness strategy every 5 years, the first to be produced by July 2011. We are currently in the process of finalising a draft strategy following which an extensive consultation process will begin. The strategy will concentrate on reviewing progress in the provision of homelessness services since 2002 and detail the way forward over the next 5 years. The main themes in relation to future direction will be;

- To review the temporary accommodation portfolio in relation to its strategic relevance and effectiveness;
- To improve housing options primarily in the private rented sector;
- To develop a comprehensive prevention programme around the assessment process, delivery of advice and assistance and developing community advice and education projects;
- To further improve services to a range of vulnerable households.

In the past year within Ards Borough:

- 726 households presented as homeless;
- 455 applicants were assessed as Full Duty Applicants;
- 123 homeless presenters were provided with temporary accommodation;
- Advice booklets on homelessness were made available for those living in rural parts of Ards Borough.

Providing **home adaptations** is an important means of helping people remain independent in their own home. Adaptations are not restricted to people living in Housing Executive homes. People in privately owned housing can have adaptations aided through the Grants scheme. These range from handrails and ramps to stair lifts, heating, showers and extensions. The number that we are able to carry out will be subject to funding.

During 2010/11 we completed 39 Disabled Facilities Grants for the private sector. A total of £840,000 was spent on adaptations to our own stock. Details of this work can be found in Appendix 2. The South East Area as a whole has a total budget of £4.35 million for Disabled Persons Adaptations (DPAs) to our stock for 2011/12 to help vulnerable households. This budget cannot be broken down to district level.

Our staff have been working with the DSD and Health and Social Services to review the adaptations process. At the time of writing the District Housing Plan the report had not been completed.

There is currently no identified need for accommodation to meet the needs of the travelling community in Ards.

Our **financial inclusion and debt prevention strategies** are very important and help people cope with financial insecurity and avoid debt. We have introduced financial advice and counselling services to help our residents cope with difficult financial circumstances.

In the coming year we plan to:

- Continue to improve the quality of housing for people with disabilities in Ards Borough;
- Complete 62 Disabled Facility Grants in Ards Borough;
- Carry out DPAs to Housing Executive stock across South East Area within a budget of £4.35 million;
- Invest £0.7 million to continue to deliver housing support services to vulnerable people in Ards Borough through the Supporting People Programme;
- Provide a range of services to tackle homelessness in line with our homelessness strategy.

3.4 Objective 3 – Fostering urban and rural regeneration

Our work on regeneration makes a lasting contribution to improving the quality of life in some of Northern Ireland's most deprived areas.

Some of our physical regeneration activity has been curtailed by reduced public funding and housing market circumstances. In **urban areas** our work focuses on our Urban Renewal and Estate-Based Strategy programmes, on supporting the DSD's urban regeneration initiatives and on providing strategic direction for housing investment. We will assess the impact on our support of any changes arising from DSD's review of its urban regeneration policy and Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy.

We will also deliver the DSD Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy funding 17 areas in Northern Ireland through the Small Pockets of Deprivation programme (SPOD).

It is important to recognise the positive impact of locally-based community development and community cohesion programmes in preventing decline and details of these can be found in Objective 5.

Rural regeneration actions are described in our Rural Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2009/10 – 2012/13. The dispersed nature and smaller scale of rural communities presents us with different challenges. We work to ensure that our policies reflect the needs of people living in rural areas. Our approach to rural regeneration is based on the premise that any efforts to provide houses or improve properties not only provides decent homes but has a ripple effect in supporting schools, businesses etc – thus aiding rural regeneration and rural development.

During 2010/2011 there were 302 new units of social housing commenced in rural areas across Northern Ireland the highest outturn in at least 10 years and in line

with our rural housing target for new build (27 of these rural units were in Ards Borough).

DARD has particular responsibility for rural areas and where possible we work with them to support rural regeneration. During 2010/11 DARD has been rolling out a Maximising Access to Services, Grants and Benefits' service in rural areas. This partnership between the public and community sector targets the more vulnerable households in rural areas; through home visits, it helps those in need to access a range of services. Housing Executive staff contributed to this initiative and at 2nd February 2011 a total of 4,121 visits had been completed across Northern Ireland. This resulted in referrals to the Warm Homes Scheme, benefit entitlement checks, home safety checks, rural community transport, and other services.

In **Ards** Borough we are supporting physical and community regeneration through a number of activities. This activity centres around a number of estates identified under the DSD Areas at Risk Programme and the Small Pockets of Deprivation Programme. The Areas at Risk Programme was established in 2006 to identify and intervene in areas at risk of slipping into a spiral of decline. The Small Pockets of Deprivation Programme (SPOD) was established to address the needs of deprived areas that have very small populations and are therefore too small to allow an effective integrated regeneration strategy to be developed:

- The Scrabo Estate, Newtownards was identified as an Area at Risk under the DSD's Areas at Risk Programme in 2008. The two year funding programme will complete in August 2012. The Scrabo Residents Association, with the support of the Housing Executive, the Ards Development Bureau and Community Network and other partners developed an action plan detailing a range of projects to improve the physical environment and address concerns highlighted by local residents in an estate wide survey;
- The Beechfield/Ashfield Estate, Donaghadee was identified as an Area at Risk under the DSD's Area at Risk Programme in 2009. The Housing Executive worked in partnership with the Ards Development Bureau and Community Network, the Beechfield Residents Association and other partners to draw up an action plan based on the results from an in-depth survey of the area carried out by the Housing Executive's Research Department in 2009. A number of environmental improvements have already been carried out in the estate by the Housing Executive. It is hoped funding will be released in 2011 to enable the implementation of projects from the action plan;
- Three estates in Newtownards; Westwinds, Bowtown and Glen have received SPOD funding for the past four years. SPOD funding has enabled the Westwinds, Bowtown and Glen estates to deliver a wide range of projects including the employment of development workers and major environmental

improvement schemes. The SPOD Programme is set to continue for a further four years which will allow this work to be further developed.

In the coming year we plan to:

- Continue to work with our partners and the local communities in the Scrabo and Beechfield Estates to successfully deliver projects as part of the Areas at Risk Programme;
- Continue to work with the communities in the Westwinds, Bowtown and Glen estates to identify projects that could be delivered with the help of SPOD funding available for the next four years;
- Continue to upgrade our housing stock where funding permits;
- Continue to monitor housing conditions in the Ards Borough Council area;
- Implement the Rural Housing Strategy – ‘Rural Homes and People’.



Private housing development, Ballygowan.

3.5 Objective 4 – Promoting affordable housing

We are working in a number of ways to promote and widen the range of affordable housing options. Details of programmes are shown in Appendix 3.

In the past year in Ards:

- There was one general needs and two category one elderly social housing schemes completed delivering an additional 31 units of housing;
- There were 17 general needs social housing schemes on site (started 2009/10 and 2010/11) which will deliver a further 222 units, a significant contribution to addressing housing need in Ards Borough. Details can be found in Appendix 3;
- There were seven schemes which were deferred or did not commence. Reasons for delay included planning issues, site not suitable or site could not be purchased;
- We supplied DOE Planning Service with an annual housing needs assessment;
- Locations of housing need were identified on our 'Unmet Need Prospectus' to direct Housing Associations to areas of need, where schemes have not been programmed. This will help align future delivery of the Social Housing Development Programme against the Northern Ireland Housing Executive's Strategic Guidelines;
- We finalised a joint protocol with Planning Service detailing procedures for Housing Associations when applying to build social housing under Policy CTY 5 of Planning Policy Statement 21 - Housing in the Countryside;
- We continued to implement the House Sales Scheme, which provides an opportunity for tenants to own their own home. The number of our tenants availing of this scheme has dropped in recent years due to current housing market conditions. During the past year there were 27 new applications received, 23 offers were made during the year but only 8 sales were completed.

The Social Housing Development Programme is formulated using our housing need assessments and strategic guidelines. The primary purpose of the guidelines is to allocate programme share geographically on an equitable basis.

When formulating a housing mix for individual schemes we take into consideration a number of factors such as household types, current stock, wheelchair users needs, and where need has been identified, bespoke properties for those with complex needs.

Details of year one of the draft Social Housing Development Programme, approved by the Housing Executive Board, are shown in Appendix 3 and is subject to the Department for Social Development's approval.

In addition to the three-year Social Housing Development Programme, **an Unmet Housing Need** Prospectus will be published on our website. Further details of unmet need by location can be obtained by clicking on the hyperlink www.nihe.gov.uk/index/www_home/unmet_need_prospectus.htm

There is also a search facility for the Social Housing Development Programme.



Habinteg new build social housing scheme, The Brae, Ballygowan

The Equity Sharing Scheme provides an option for those tenants who wish to buy their homes through a part own/part rent approach as they are unable to afford the full cost. Further information on this can be found by clicking on www.nihe.gov.uk/house_sales_incorporating_equity_sharing_tenants_guide.pdf

The Department for Social Development (DSD) in conjunction with the Housing Executive are examining the potential for delivering affordable intermediate housing on surplus NIHE sites. DSD are developing policy, detailing procedures on how this pilot proposal could be delivered;

We are working with DSD to examine four inter-connected aspects of the Common **Selection Scheme** and will consult on proposals for change during the year ahead.

We are also beginning pilot schemes of choice-based lettings for difficult to let properties in five districts where properties have been identified as void with no prospective tenants available. Downpatrick District Office will pilot this scheme for South East Area but this scheme is not yet operational in Downpatrick.

The DSD has completed consultation on its document "Building Sound Foundations – A strategy for the private rented sector". We look forward to the review findings and we will continue to work to support the further development of private renting as a critical element in affordable housing.

In the coming year we plan to:

- Assess the need for new social housing in the borough. The current five year housing need assessment indicates a need for a further 771 units to 2015;
- Formulate a Social Housing Development Programme and manage delivery by housing associations. The programme for 2011/12 contains 7 schemes which will deliver 113 units;
- Provide DOE Planning Service with an annual housing need assessment;
- Promote the private rented sector as a decent and affordable housing option; we are using feedback from a pilot Private Landlord Scheme in the development of a Northern Ireland rent guarantee scheme, under the DSD private rented strategy 'Building Sound Foundations';
- Manage our social housing stock to minimise empty dwellings;
- Promote affordable home ownership through our house sales scheme;
- Examine the potential to develop intermediate housing on surplus NIHE sites;
- Continue to work with DSD and DOE Planning Service to deliver developer contributions for affordable housing via the planning system;
- Work with housing associations to ensure delivery of new housing;
- Explore opportunities presented by Planning Policy Statement 21 (PPS21) to develop social housing outside designated settlements.

3.6 Objective 5 – Building a stronger community

We have a role to help make Northern Ireland a better place to live. Our community strategies are set out below.

We recognise the impact that anti-social behaviour can have on communities and our **Community Safety Strategy** sets out our approach to community safety. The implementation of this strategy has proved successful in limiting the number of properties repossessed each year.

Services to address reported anti-social behaviour (ASB) are accessed through our district offices.

The number of reported incidents in 2010/11 increased by 8.6% from the previous year. Most reports relate to low level anti-social behaviour. District office staff are involved in a number of ways to help address anti-social behaviour before legal action is taken. In 2010/11 there were 188 ASB cases registered. As a result of anti-social behaviour complaints, investigations and legal proceedings one property was repossessed and three cases were referred to mediation services. During the year 184 ASB cases were addressed and closed without the need for legal action (this number included cases registered in 2009/10).

Table 6: Newtownards District Office: ASB Performance 2010 / 2011

No. of ASB cases received	No. of properties repossessed	No. of injunctions	No. of cases referred to mediation	No of ABC* agreed	No. of cases closed without legal action
188	1	0	3	0	184

*Acceptable behaviour contracts

- The District Manager sits on the Ards Community Safety Partnership;
- The Neighbourhood Officer and Housing Officers monitor and report non occupation and misuse of houses and have brought a number of dwellings back into stock;
- Representatives from Newtownards District Office sit on the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) which meets monthly, dealing with domestic violence and its consequences. Partners include PSNI, Women’s Aid, Probation and Social Services;
- In addition to these formal partnerships regular contact is maintained between the Newtownards District Office, the PSNI Ards and Ards Borough Council to

address issues of common concern in relation to ASB 'hotspots' and individuals engaged in behaviour which causes nuisance and annoyance;

- Input from local people and community groups is central to Newtownards approach to Community Safety. Speed ramps were recently installed at East Street, Newtownards following a campaign supported by local people and political representatives together with support from the Housing Executive.

Our [Community Involvement Strategy](#) demonstrates our commitment to giving the community a voice. We will review the strategy during the year and prepare a new **Community Involvement Strategy** 2011-2014.

Local Offers is a regulatory requirement in England but not in Northern Ireland. However, the Housing Executive is developing pilot 'local offers', in one location in each Area. A local offer is an agreement between the local community and landlord/s on how a service is delivered.

The Newtownards District Office works with 21 community groups and contributes to a wide range of partnerships and inter-agency groups. The Housing Community Network (HCN) meets bi-monthly and during 2010 received presentations on a number of issues.



Newtownards District representatives with representatives from the East End Residents Association

Our [Community Cohesion Strategy](#) addresses the main themes of:

- Flags, emblems and sectional symbols;
- Transitional areas;
- Shared Future housing schemes;
- Youth engagement;
- Interface areas;
- Our good relations activity;
- Race relations.

We await the final publication of the Northern Ireland Executive's Cohesion, Sharing and Integration Policy to help direct the delivery of good relations work across all agencies.

Our approach to developing greater community cohesion locally includes:

- Our **Shared Future** Housing Initiative which involves creating new housing where prospective residents sign up to a set of Shared Future principles;
- The third phase of the **Shared Neighbourhood Partnership** which started in 2010 and vital funding was received from the International Fund for Ireland;

Our **race relation** policy promotes good relations between and within ethnic groups. It aims to ensure that the increasingly diverse community enjoys full and fair access to housing services. To assist this aim, we work with the Inter Community Network, the HCN and Supporting Communities Northern Ireland.

In Ards:

- The district office works with its partners to promote and support good relations, including working with other agencies providing support to ethnic groups and migrant workers;
- The district office is represented on the Ards Inter-Cultural Forum and has participated in a number of information days for ethnic groups and migrant workers held throughout the borough.



Access to Services Information Afternoon held in Comber Leisure Centre February 2011

The quality of housing has direct links to people's quality of life. Our [Housing and Health Strategy](#) and Action Plan involve us in work with a range of health bodies through initiatives such as the Investing for Health Partnerships and our Supporting People Programme.

In the coming year we plan to:

- Increase the number of Community Participation Compacts. Currently 7 groups have signed up to Community Participation Compacts within the borough and we would seek to see that number increase;
- Implement and report progress on the Community Involvement Strategy;
- Work in partnership with the statutory, community and voluntary sectors in developing and delivering improved community safety at estate level;
- Continue to work with the East Down Rural Community Network to engage with groups along the Ards Peninsula providing support and assistance when this is required;
- Implement the recommendations of the Housing and Health Strategy;
- Implement the regional Good Relations BRIC programme which aims to "put good relations at the heart of social housing";
- Continue to implement the Race Relations Action Plan.

3.7 Objective 6 – Delivering better public services

We aim to deliver services that meet the needs of our customers, whilst ensuring that we achieve value for money. We continually strive to improve the quality and efficiency of our services.

Housing research plays a vital role in helping us meet our objectives. We have a statutory responsibility to regularly examine housing conditions and housing need, but we also research customer satisfaction. Our research programmes help us to develop better public services and housing policies. Details of the programme of work being undertaken by our research department can be found on our website at www.nihe.gov.uk.

To understand our customers' needs we use techniques such as customer surveys while also comparing the quality and efficiency of **our services** with other organisations. This helps us to identify areas for improvement and:

- We accredit the performance of our services through a number of frameworks such as Customer Service Excellence, external validation from the European Foundation for Quality Manager; Investors in People; and we hold a number of ISO 9001 accreditations;
- We operate a two-stage Complaints Scheme for our customers. Our complaints system has been a valuable resource in measuring how well we deliver our services and helping us to make improvements;
- Over the last three years we have radically changed the ways in which we deliver services through our Modernising Services Programme;
- We are continuing to work on service improvement using techniques such as 'Continuous Improvement (LEAN)' and better use of information and communications technology. During 2010/11 we implemented the Private Sector Management System in our Grants Offices and during 2011/12 we will be upgrading our housing management computer systems.

Our **Sustainable Development** Policy is based on the Government's Sustainable Development Strategy for Northern Ireland ([Everyone's Involved](#)). We have responded to the Government's consultation on the draft Sustainable Development Action Plan and we look forward to publication of the final plan. Details of our environmental policy can be found on our website at www.nihe.gov.uk.

The **South East Customer Service Unit** delivers a repair and grounds maintenance reporting service for customers in Ards Borough. The unit also provides a telephony service to facilitate the processing of housing and transfer applications and arrange appointments for domiciliary visits. Housing Benefit and Rent Accounting Units in the Area office are now responsible for the administration of Housing Benefit and Accounts functions for Ards Borough.

The weather conditions experienced over the Christmas period were some of the worst on record and affected virtually all services including roads, public transport, air travel and water. It also impacted on many of our dwellings which had heating issues and burst pipes. The Housing Executive received tens of thousands of calls during the holiday period with the South East Customer Service Unit answering 10,410 queries during the month of December 2010 and 10,441 queries during the month of January 2010 compared to an average of 7,500 calls per month. We will review, report and update our major incident plan as part of Corporate Objective 1. This will include improved communication and services for our customers.

Our targets and performance for the South East Area Business Units are set out below.

Table 7: South East Area Business Units Performance at March 2011

Total	Target (M)	Actual (M)
Total Rent Arrears	£3.298	£3.079
Clear new Housing Benefit claims	Within 25 days	Within 24.4 days
Clear Housing Benefit change of circumstances	Within 10 days	Within 5.6 days

Newtownards District Office continues to provide key services such as housing, homelessness, response maintenance, estate management, community development and partnerships. Relationships between the district office and the new service units in Court Street, Newtownards continue to develop with debt management and Housing Benefit advice being enhanced.

Our tenants can nominate a member of staff who they feel has provided exceptional service. As a result six staff from the Newtownards District Office received nominations over the past year.

Locally we:

- Aim to process at least 95% of housing applications within 20 working days;
- Aim to process 95% of emergency, urgent and routine repairs within the agreed time scales of 24 hours, 4 days and 4 weeks respectively;
- Operate a number of housing "surgeries" in the large estates in Newtownards. These are manned by our neighbourhood officer;

- Deal with an average of 7,500 customers per month for local services which are being streamlined and enhanced to meet our customers changing needs;
- Provide tenants with an annual publication of Housing News which highlights local projects and performance.

Table 8: Newtownards District Office Performance at March 2011

Total	Target	Actual
Housing Applications	Process in < 21 days	100%
Homeless Applications	Process in < 34 days	99%
Maintenance		
Emergency	90/95%	97%
Urgent	85/95%	96%
Routine	85/95%	99%
COT	85/90%	98%
Relet turnaround time	<26 days	28 days



Fold Housing Association new social housing scheme, Dunsy Way, Comber

South East Area **Grants Office** is based in Lisburn. It has implemented the new grants management system which involves a more customer focused approach to processing applications which included the introduction of a new computer system. The new system has led to many improvements some of which include;

- Designation of a Pro Active Case Officer for all applications. The Case Officer is now the customers' main contact point with the Grants Office;
- Case Officers now contact customers at key stages of their applications to ensure they are aware of what they need to do next;
- All case files are electronic which ensures documentation is stored safely and letters are issued quickly and accurately;
- Grants Officers use mobile technology to record information on site visits;
- Payments are processed to our Finance Department electronically which makes the process quicker and more cost efficient.

Following a major review and consultation exercise, a revised structure has been implemented across the **Private Sector Improvement Service**. The outcome of this review resulted in the closure of the Ballyclare, Craigavon and Dundonald Grants offices with their workload redistributed within our new office structure. The new grants structure consists of six offices, namely Belfast, Derry, North East (based in Ballymena), South (based in Newry), South East (based in Lisburn), and West (based in Omagh with a sub office in Fermanagh). To ensure we can meet our targets for inspecting and registering Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO), a small HMO sub-office has been created in Craigavon to assist the Regional HMO office in Coleraine. The Belfast HMO office will now only manage HMO properties in the Belfast City Council area.

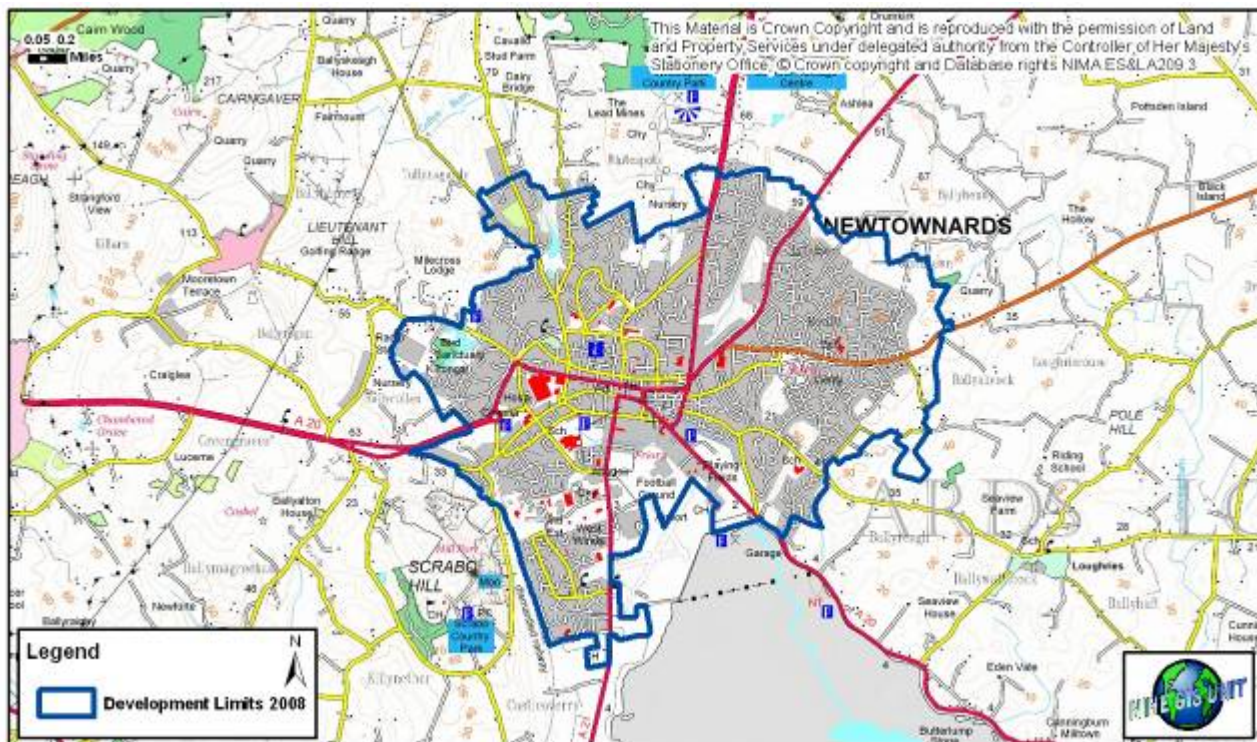
In the coming year we will continue to:

- Provide tenants with an annual publication of Housing News;
- Provide grant applicants with copies of our Grants Newsletter;
- Provide high quality and responsive services to all customers;
- Manage services in a cost effective manner;
- improve services through the modernising services programme and information technology;
- Maintain an excellent, well-trained and highly motivated workforce.



APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Newtownards Town profile

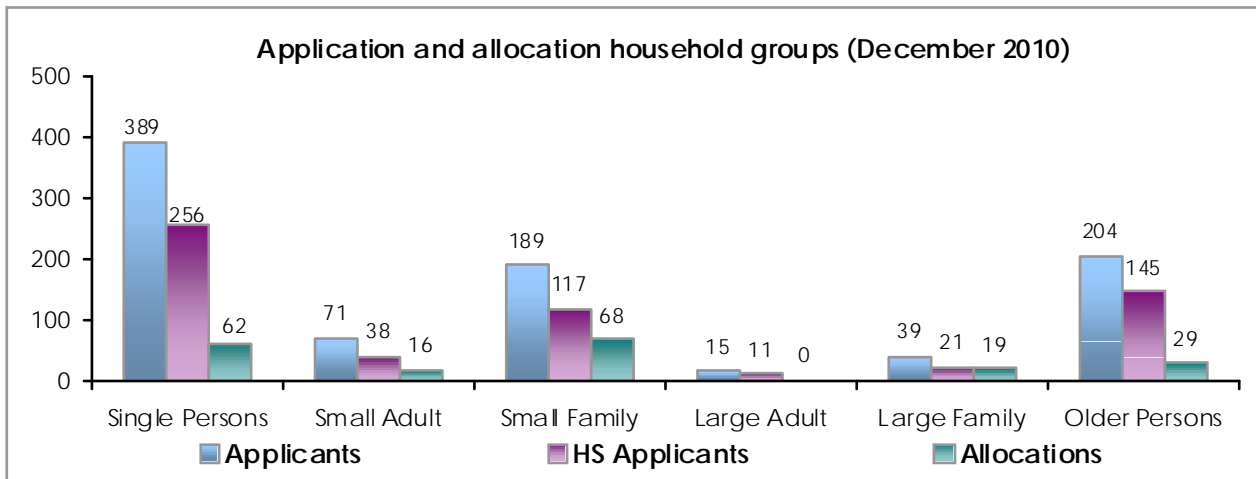
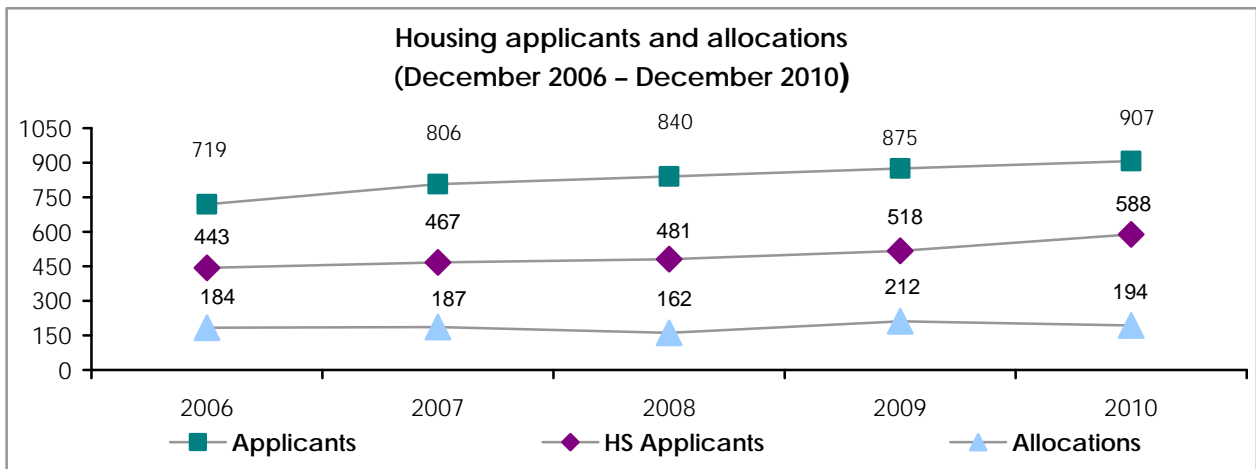


Newtownards town comprises both the town centre and peripheral estates; Movilla, Scrabo, Bowtown, Glen and Westwinds. The number of housing applicants and those in housing stress in Newtownards has risen steadily since 2006. At December 2010, 65% of housing applicants were in housing stress. Single persons and older persons were the largest groups in housing stress. The number of allocations across Ards Council area has increased significantly but the number of allocations in Newtownards town decreased to 194 in 2010 compared to 212 in 2009. The level of housing need is high for virtually all parts of Newtownards with the Bowtown estate identified as the only estate in which new build is not required at this time.

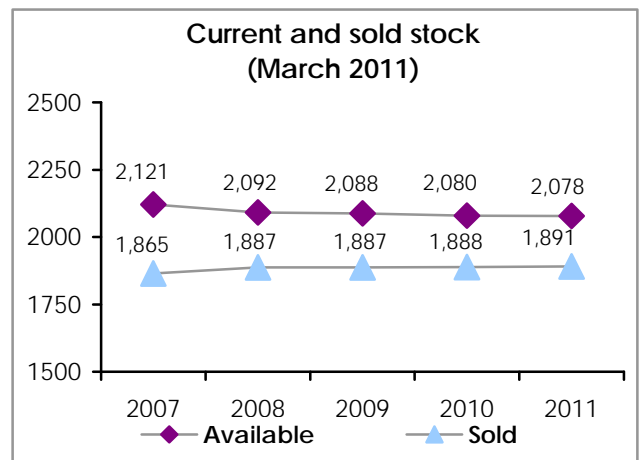
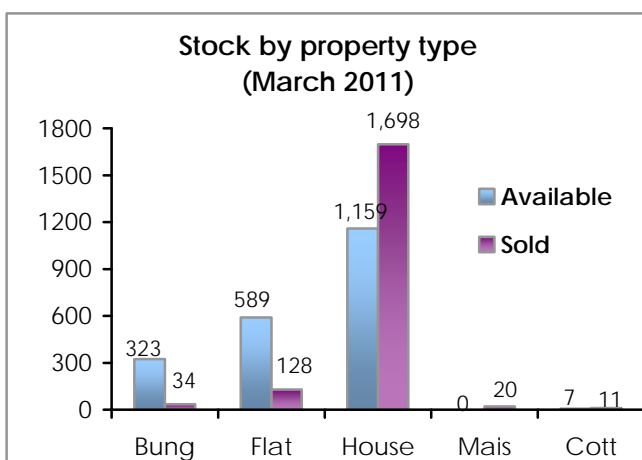
A large portion of Housing Executive stock has been sold in the town, 1,891 dwellings at March 2011 leaving 2,078 dwellings. The House Sales scheme is a method of providing an affordable housing option to first time buyers however the decline over the past 4 years can be attributed to general uncertainty in the housing market and the reluctance of lending institutions to provide finance.

The level of new social housing in Newtownards has increased significantly in recent years through the new build social housing programme. In 2010/11, 20 category 1 elderly units were completed in Church Street, Newtownards. A further 6 schemes for 120 units were on site at 31st March 2010 and 4 schemes are programmed in 2011/12 to provide 86 units of housing.

Newtownards Town social housing waiting list analysis



NIHE Housing stock analysis



Appendix 2: Improvements, maintenance & adaptations to Housing Executive stock & Private Sector Grants

Schemes completed 1st April 2010 – 31st March 2011

Work Category	Scheme	Units
IMPROVEMENT		
Multi Element Improvement	Westwinds 3	54
PLANNED MAINTENANCE		
Revenue Replacement	Movilla 1988 Kitchens	72
External Cyclical Maintenance	Greyabbey/Kircubbin	171

Schemes started between 1st April 2010 and 31st March 2011

Work Category	Scheme	Units
IMPROVEMENT		
Estate Infrastructure	Windyridge, Ballywalter Ballyfrenis Laneway, Millisle 39/40 Bristol Park, Westwinds	-
PLANNED MAINTENANCE		
Heating Installation	Comber	70
	Donaghadee/Millisle open fires	40
External Cyclical Maintenance	Ards Town	214
Smoke Alarms	Ards District smoke alarm replacements	234
	Ards District smoke alarm installations	417

Programme of work for 2011/12

Work Category	Scheme	Units
IMPROVEMENT		
Estate Infrastructure (Septic tanks)	41 Magherascouse Road, Ballygowan Ballyblack Road, Portaferry 16 Ballykeigle Road, Comber Newcastle Road, Portaferry	-
Demolition	Lysander Park, Westwinds	24
	Rathmullan Drive flats & shops	8
Revenue Replacement	Scrabo kitchens	161
Heating Installation	Millisle roomheaters	31
Health & Safety	Block 18 Cuan Place, Scrabo fire doors	8

Reserve programme for April 2011 – March 2012 subject to funding

Work Category	Scheme	Units
PLANNED MAINTENANCE		
Revenue Replacement	Portavogie/Portaferry/Kircubbin Kitchens	104
Heating Installation	Ballywalter/Kircubbin	95
External Cyclical Maintenance	Glen Estate & Comber (window replacement)	316
Special Revenue	Glen Estate roofs	120
Health & Safety	Ards District medium rise flats fire doors	36

Analysis of adaptations to Housing Executive stock 2010/11

Type of adaptation	Adaptations commenced April 2010 to March 2011	Adaptations spend April 2010 to March 2011 (£k)
Extension to dwelling	10	551
Change of heating	16	100
Lifts	11	61
Showers	49	124
Hard standings	-	4
Total	86	840

Grants Performance

Grant Type	No Approved	Approval Value £	No. Completed	Completion Value £
Mandatory Grants				
Disabled Facilities	32	£523,000	39	£820,000
Repairs	11	£8,000	11	£8,000
Discretionary Grants				
Renovation	0	0	8	£50,000
Replacement	0	0	0	0
Home Repairs Assistance	-	£1,000	-	£1,700

Definition of improvement and planned maintenance work categories	
Health and Safety (HS)	Specific works where health and safety issues have been identified.
External Cyclical Maintenance (ECM)	Work to the external fabric of a dwelling and its immediate surrounding area.
Revenue Replacement (RR1)	Replacement of obsolete internal elements, e.g. sanitary ware and kitchen units.
Smoke Alarm Installation (SAI)	Installation of hard wire smoke alarms.

Appendix 3: Social Housing Development Programme Schemes Completed April 2010 – March 2011

Scheme	No of units	Client Group	Housing Association	Policy theme
29 Laburnum Drive, Comber (DPF)	1	General needs	Clanmil	Urban need
38 Belfast Road, Comber	10	Category 1 Elderly	Trinity	Urban need
Church Street, Newtownards	20	Category 1 Elderly	Trinity	Urban need
Total	31			

Schemes on site at 31st March 2011

Scheme	No of units	Client Group	Housing Association	Policy theme
Weir Court, Comber	15	Category 1 Elderly	Alpha	Urban need
Blenheim Drive, Newtownards (T)	15	General needs	Apex Housing	Urban need
Moss Road, Millisle	10	General needs	Apex Housing	Rural need
29 Laburnum Drive, Comber (DPF)	1	General needs	Clanmil	Urban need
81 Castle Meadows, Cloughey	1	General needs	Clanmil	Rural need
Abbey Row, Main Street, Greyabbey	3	General needs	Clanmil	Rural need
McBriar Meadows, Main St, Carrowdore	4	General needs	Clanmil	Rural need
Ringbouy Cove, Cloughey	2	General needs	Clanmil	Rural need
St Marks, Thomas Street, Newtownards	3	General needs	Clanmil	Urban need
51 Newtownards Road, Comber (T)	12	General needs	Connswater	Urban need
73 Bangor Road, Newtownards	4	General needs	Connswater	Urban need
Church Avenue, Kircubbin	7	General needs	Rural	Rural need
Rosevale Avenue, Newtownards*	15	General needs	Connswater	Urban Need

Scheme	No of units	Client Group	Housing Association	Policy theme
Dunsy Way, Comber*	33	General needs	Fold	Urban Need
The Brae, Ballygowan*	14	General needs	Habinteg	Urban Need
Regent Street, Newtownards*	43	General needs	Helm Housing	Urban Need
31-33 Donaghadee Road, Newtownards*	40	General needs	Connswater	Urban Need
Total	222			

* Schemes commenced 2009/10 and were still on site 2010/11.

Schemes deferred / not commenced at 31st March 2011

Scheme	No of units	Client Group	Housing association	Policy theme
2-4 Londonderry Avenue, Comber	8	General needs	Connswater	Urban need
41 Movilla Street, Newtownards	12	Cat 1 Elderly	Connswater	Urban need
West Street, Newtownards (OS)	24	General needs	Helm	Urban need
The Square, Portaferry	13	General needs	Oaklee	Rural need
High Street, Portaferry	6	General needs	Oaklee	Rural need
Beverley Avenue, Newtownards	38	General needs	Trinity	Urban need
Glenbrook Road, Newtownards (TF)	7	General needs	Ulidia	Urban need
Total	108			

New Build schemes programmed April 2011 - 2012 (subject to DSD approval)

Scheme	No of units	Client Group	Start date	Housing association	Policy theme
Main Urban Centre					
Newtownards Town					
Killard Special School, North Road, Ards	40	General needs	2011/12	Clanmil	Urban need
41 Movilla Street Newtownards (T)	12	General needs	2011/12	Connswater	Urban need
Glanbrook Road Newtownards (T)	10	General needs	2011/12	Ulidia	Urban need
Loch Cuan Newtownards Replacement	24	Elderly	2011/12	Apex Housing	Supported Housing
Local Towns					
Comber					
2 – 4 Londonderry Avenue (T)	8	General needs	2011/12	Connswater	Urban need
Villages					
Carrowdore					
Manse Road (T)	8	General needs	2011/12	Ark	Rural need
Portaferry					
High Street	11	General needs	2011/12	Fold	Rural need
Total	113				

Appendix 4: Social Housing Need Assessment (HNA) 2010-2015

All settlements

Settlement	5 Year Projected Social Housing Need*
Main Town	
Newtownards town	416
Other Towns	
Comber	152
Donaghadee	60
Villages	
Ballygowan	26
Ballyhalbert	5
Ballywalter	10
Carrowdore	15
Cloughey	5
Greyabbey	5
Killinchy	10
Kircubbin	7
Millisle	20
Portaferry	25
Portavogie	10
Small Settlements	
Ballydrain	0
Cottown	0
Loughries	0
Lisbarnet	5
Total	771

* Projections baseline at March 2010

Appendix 5: Household composition of housing applicants at December 2010

Common Landlord Area	Type	Single person	Small adult	Small family	Large adult	Large family	Older person	Total
Main Urban Centre								
Newtownards Town	Applicant	389	71	189	15	39	204	907
	App (HS)	256	38	117	11	21	145	588
	Alloc App	62	16	68	0	19	29	194
Local Towns								
Comber	Applicant	94	26	74	4	12	70	280
	App (HS)	55	10	31	2	6	47	151
	Alloc App	2	6	13	1	1	19	42
Donaghadee	Applicant	76	10	25	0	8	50	169
	App (HS)	47	5	15	0	3	34	104
	Alloc App	13	1	12	0	2	1	29
Villages								
Ballygowan	Applicant	12	3	14	0	4	6	39
	App (HS)	7	1	6	0	3	4	21
	Alloc App	1	1	1	0	0	0	3
Ballyhalbert	Applicant	2	0	2	0	1	1	6
	App (HS)	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
	Alloc App	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Ballywalter	Applicant	22	2	11	0	3	7	45
	App (HS)	12	0	3	0	1	3	19
	Alloc App	13	3	8	0	0	1	25
Carrowdore	Applicant	11	1	10	0	1	1	24
	App (HS)	8	1	7	0	0	0	16
	Alloc App	2	0	0	0	0	2	4
Cloughey	Applicant	5	1	3	0	0	2	11
	App (HS)	1	0	2	0	0	0	3
	Alloc App	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Greyabbey	Applicant	10	2	4	1	1	3	21
	App (HS)	6	2	4	0	1	1	14
	Alloc App	2	1	0	0	0	0	3
Killinchy	Applicant	9	0	1	0	1	1	12
	App (HS)	8	0	0	0	1	0	9
	Alloc App	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Kircubbin	Applicant	17	2	6	0	2	5	32
	App (HS)	10	1	2	0	2	2	17
	Alloc App	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
Millisle	Applicant	26	5	11	2	5	9	58
	App (HS)	12	2	5	1	3	8	31

Common Landlord Area	Type	Single person	Small adult	Small family	Large adult	Large family	Older person	Total
Portaferry	Alloc App	3	0	5	0	2	2	12
	Applicant	37	8	20	2	4	11	82
	App (HS)	18	7	7	1	0	2	35
Portavogie	Alloc App	5	0	4	0	2	2	13
	Applicant	8	1	8	1	2	4	24
	App (HS)	3	0	3	1	1	1	9
	Alloc App	3	0	1	0	0	0	4

Small Settlements

Ballydrain	Applicant	4	0	1	0	0	1	6
	App (HS)	2	0	1	0	0	0	3
Cottown	Alloc App	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
	Applicant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Loughries	App (HS)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Alloc App	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Lisbarnet	Applicant	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
	App (HS)	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Lisbarnet	Alloc App	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Applicant	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
DISTRICT TOTAL	App (HS)	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
	Alloc App	1	0	1	0	0	1	3
DISTRICT TOTAL	Applicant	724	132	379	25	83	378	1721
	App (HS)	448	67	203	16	42	249	1025
	Alloc App	111	29	114	1	27	57	339

Applicant – Housing Applicant

App (HS) – Housing Stress Applicant

Alloc App – Annual Allocations for year ending December 2010

Definition of Household composition of housing applicants at December 2010

Definition of household types	
Single person	1 person 16-59 years old
Older person	1 or 2 persons aged 16 or over, at least 1 over 60
Small adult	2 persons 16-59 years old
Small family	1 or 2 persons aged 16 or over, with 1 or 2 children
Large family	1 or 2 persons aged 16 or over, and 3 or more persons 0-15, or 3 or more persons 16 or over and 2 or more persons aged 0-15
Large adult	3 or more persons aged 16 or over with or without 1 person aged 0-15

Appendix 6: Housing Executive stock at March 2011

Common Landlord Area	Bung (i)	Flat	House	Mais (ii)	Cottage	Total	Void*
Local Towns	N.B. Sold stock in bold						
Movilla	46	99	206	0	0	351	5
	3	27	446	0	0	476	
Scrabo	68	255	184	0	7	514	10
	5	87	504	0	11	607	
West Winds	63	220	218	0	0	501	41
	3	13	351	0	0	367	
Glen	43	9	279	0	0	331	3
	8	1	214	20	0	243	
Bowtown	103	6	272	0	0	381	8
	15	0	183	0	0	198	
NEWTOWNARDS TOWN TOTAL	323	589	1,159	0	7	2,078	67
	34	128	1,698	20	11	1,891	
Comber	181	18	208	0	5	412	4
	67	13	623	0	62	765	
Donaghadee	116	131	160	0	4	411	4
	35	28	271	1	20	355	
LOCAL TOWNS TOTAL	297	149	368	0	9	823	8
	102	41	894	1	82	1,120	
Villages							
Ballygowan	35	0	35	0	5	75	1
	42	0	140	0	25	207	
Ballyhalbert	6	0	2	0	3	11	0
	15	0	9	0	8	32	
Ballywalter	49	6	57	0	21	133	1
	20	0	134	0	14	168	
Carrowdore	41	0	32	0	9	82	0
	13	0	50	0	23	86	
Cloughey	11	0	1	0	9	21	0
	19	0	15	0	10	44	
Greyabbey	32	0	24	0	15	71	3
	47	0	82	0	12	141	
Killinchy	18	0	3	4	1	26	0
	32	0	30	12	10	84	
Kircubbin	49	0	52	0	15	116	0
	61	0	122	0	38	221	
Millisle	51	11	74	0	8	144	0
	34	1	113	0	41	189	
Portavogie	47	7	14	0	13	81	0
	76	1	58	0	10	145	
Portaferry	103	8	61	0	12	184	5
	86	0	263	0	67	416	
VILLAGES TOTAL	442	32	355	4	111	944	10
	445	2	1,016	12	258	1,733	

Common Landlord Area	Bung (i)	Flat	House	Mais (ii)	Cottage	Total	Void*
Small Settlements							
Ballydrain	7	0	4	0	3	14	1
	20	0	11	0	2	33	
Cottown	4	0	11	0	11	26	0
	4	0	26	0	17	47	
Loughries	9	0	3	0	1	13	0
	31	0	26	0	10	67	
Lisbarnet	11	0	2	0	0	13	0
	11	0	32	0	2	45	
SMALL SETTLEMENT TOTAL	31	0	20	0	15	66	1
	66	0	95	0	31	192	
DISTRICT TOTAL	1,093	770	1,902	4	142	3,911	86
	647	171	3,703	33	382	4,936	

*Of the Total Stock these properties are void and do not include properties for sale or demolition
(i) Bungalow (ii) Maisonette

Appendix 7: Contact details

Office	Contact	Contact Information
All Enquiries Tel: 03448 920 900 Type Talk Tel: 18001 02890240 588		
Headquarters Housing Centre 2 Adelaide Street Belfast, BT2 8PB	General Enquiries	Fax No.028 9031 8008 www.nihe.gov.uk
Newtownards District Office Strangford House 28 Court Street Newtownards BT23 7NX	Mr Owen Brady District Manager	Fax No. 028 9182 5139 newtownardsDistrict@nihe.gov.uk
South East Area Office Strangford House 28 Court Street Newtownards BT23 7NX	Mr Stephen Graham Area Manager	Fax No. 028 9182 2494 southeastarea@nihe.gov.uk
	Mr Norman Hagan Area Planner	Fax No. 028 9182 5191 norman.hagan@nihe.gov.uk
	Mr Gerry Watson Information Officer	Fax No. 028 9182 2494 gerry.watson@nihe.gov.uk
	Mr John Nelson Programme & Housing Manager	Fax No. 028 9182 2494 john.nelson@nihe.gov.uk
	Mr Danny Simpson Service Unit Manager – Rent Accounting/Customer Service Unit	Fax No. 028 9182 2494 danny.simpson@nihe.gov.uk
	Mr Gervase McGuigan Land and Property Manager	Fax No. 028 38341 264 gervase.mcguigan@nihe.gov.uk
	Mr Michael Taylor Service Unit Manager – Housing Benefit	Fax No. 028 9182 2494 michael.taylor@nihe.gov.uk
South East Grants Office 4-6 Graham Gardens Lisburn, BT28 1XE	Mr Paul Muir Grants Manager	Fax No. 028 9182 9096 southeast.grants@nihe.gov.uk
Regional HMO Sub- Office – Craigavon Marlborough House Central Way Craigavon, BT64 1AJ	Mr Paul Ahern HMO Manager	Fax No. 028 3831 5736 hmo.craigavon@nihe.gov.uk

Office	Contact	Contact Information
Rural Housing Unit Housing Centre 2 Adelaide Street Belfast, BT2 8PB	Mr Michael Conway Rural Housing Co-ordinator	Fax No. 028 9031 8775 michael.conway@nihe.gov.uk
Supporting People 3rd Floor Housing Centre 2 Adelaide Street Belfast, BT2 8PB	Mr Donal Brereton South East Area Lead Officer	Fax No. 028 9031 8391 supportingpeople@nihe.gov.uk

Office	Contact Information
During Business Hours: Housing Benefit Repairs Line Grants	Tel No. 03448 920 902 Tel No. 03448 920 901 Tel No. 03448 920 900
After hours emergency phone Number: Repairs Line Homelessness	Tel No. 03448 920 901 Tel No. 028 9446 8833
Energy Saving Trust Advice Centre	Free Phone Tel No. 0800 512012
NIFHA (Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations)	www.nifha.org Tel No. 028 9023 0446
Department for Social Development: Housing Operations Branch	www.dsdni.gov.uk Tel No. 028 9081 9147
Warm Homes	Free Phone Tel No. 0800 9880559

Detailed information on the work of housing associations can be obtained from the websites of the Department for Social Development (www.dsdni.gov.uk) and the Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations, the trade body for housing associations in Northern Ireland (www.nifha.org).

Choice of Energy Supplier in Northern Ireland

Many householders in Northern Ireland now have a choice of energy suppliers. There are two companies offering to supply electricity to households in Northern Ireland - NIE Energy www.nieenergy.co.uk and Airtricity www.airtricity.com. In relation to natural gas there are two suppliers, Phoenix Natural Gas www.phoenixgroupni.com and Firmus Energy www.firmusenergy.co.uk in the Greater Belfast area. There are over two hundred individual supply companies for home heating oil and a number of oil price comparison websites to help you find the best price. Examples include www.oilpricecheck.co.uk and www.cheapestoil.co.uk

Appendix 8: Useful Documents

Housing News

http://www.nihe.gov.uk/newtownards_housing_news_2010.pdf

House Condition Survey 2006

www.nihe.gov.uk/housing_conditions_survey_2006.pdf

Northern Ireland Housing Market Review and Perspectives 2011-2014

[http://www.nihe.gov.uk/housing_market_review_perspectives_2011-2014.pdf - adobe acrobat standard.pdf](http://www.nihe.gov.uk/housing_market_review_perspectives_2011-2014.pdf_adobe_acrobat_standard.pdf)

Northern Ireland Housing Market: Drivers & Policies

www.nihe.gov.uk/northern_ireland_housing_market_drivers_and_policies_2007.pdf

Annual Report 2009-2010

http://www.nihe.gov.uk/annual_report_2009-10.pdf

Corporate Plan 2010/13

http://www.nihe.gov.uk/corporate_plan_2010-11.pdf

Mapping BME & Migrant Worker Communities in NI

http://www.nihe.gov.uk/black_and_minority_ethnic_and_migrant_worker_mapping_update_february_2011.pdf

Wheelchair User Housing Study

www.nihe.gov.uk/wheelchairreport.pdf

Second Homes Report

www.nihe.gov.uk/second_homes_final_report.pdf

Home Energy Conservation Report 2010

www.nihe.gov.uk/home_energy_conservation_report_2010.pdf

Rural Matters – January 2011

http://www.nihe.gov.uk/rural_matters_january_2011.pdf

Strategy Documents

The Homelessness Strategy

www.nihe.gov.uk/homelessness_strategy.pdf

Independent Living

www.nihe.gov.uk/index/sp_home/strategies/independent_living-2.htm

Health

www.nihe.gov.uk/housing_health_review_action_plan_2008-2011.pdf

Supporting People Strategy 2005-2010

www.nihe.gov.uk/supporting_people_strategy2005.pdf

Older Person Housing Policy Review Action Plan 2008-2010

www.nihe.gov.uk/older_people_housing_policy_review_action_plan_2008-2010.pdf

Community Safety

www.nihe.gov.uk/building_safer_communities_community_safety_strategy_2008-11.pdf

Race Relations

www.nihe.gov.uk/racerelationspolicy.pdf

Good Relations

www.nihe.gov.uk/index/sp_home/strategies/community_cohesion-2.htm

Grants

http://www.nihe.gov.uk/dundonald_grants_newsletter_2010.pdf

Energy

www.nihe.gov.uk/index/sp_home/strategies/energy.htm

Rural Action Plan 2010

http://www.nihe.gov.uk/rural_action_plan_2010.pdf

Travellers

www.nihe.gov.uk/travellers_accommodation_needs_assessment_2008.pdf

Newtownards Masterplan

http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/urcdg-urban_regeneration/regional_dev_office/regdv-publications/newtownards-masterplan-300611.htm



This document is available
in alternative formats.

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