

STRABANE

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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 some key stakeholders in the local housing market. The purpose of the consultation exercise 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 very valuable source of information when 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](http://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 Strabane housing market analysis

It should be noted that House condition survey figures at 2009 (HCS) are for **Strabane and Derry** council areas.

#### Planning

- There is remaining potential for 3,545 units of new housing (private and social) to 2015 - DOE Planning Services land availability monitor 2010;
- The Strabane Area Plan 2001 sets out the adopted planning policy for the district;
- The recently published Strabane Town Centre Masterplan provides non-statutory guidance for the regeneration of the town centre to 2020.

#### Socio-economic statistics

- The population is projected to increase by 5.8% by 2019; the number of households are increasing, however, the average household size is decreasing;
- The largest numerical increase is in the working age group (16-64 years);
- The number of children in the district is projected to decline by 2019;
- The District's population has become more diverse; net international migration is decreasing;
- The Council area is the second most deprived in Northern Ireland (NI), according to the most recent NI Multiple Deprivation Index;
- The percentage of people unemployed at March 2011 is 7.1%, which is higher than the Northern Ireland average;
- The number of households in fuel poverty was 43.1% in 2009, which is just below the Northern Ireland average of 43.7% (Source HCS).

#### Housing market statistics

- The total housing stock in Strabane and Derry is 58,060; owner occupation remains the largest tenure (Source HCS);
- The social housing sector at 21.5% is among the highest in Northern Ireland (15%);

- Housing unfitness in Strabane and Derry is below the Northern Ireland average of 2.4% (Source HCS);
- In 2006, the average house price in Strabane was £147,600 (NI average £174,178), and at 2010 had dropped to £135,045 (NI average £156,746);
- NIHE housing stock at March 2011 totalled 2,208 units with 3,099 units sold to date (of which 2,318 were houses);
- At December 2010, there were 577 social housing applicants of which 213 (37%) were in housing stress;
- There is a growing waiting list for the district but this trend may be a short-term reaction to uncertainty in other housing sectors. Housing need continues to be met by the turnover of existing stock;
- An average of 190 allocations were made annually over the past five years;
- There were 204 homeless applicants of which 84 (41%) were awarded full duty status;
- The housing market in Strabane District continues to be impacted by the downturn in the local economy. Market confidence is weak and market adjustments are still occurring;
- House building has practically stalled as a result of the credit squeeze on both the development sector and the mortgage market;
- The private rented sector remains popular, and according to local estate agents, demand continues to outstrip supply. However recent changes to Housing Benefit, may create affordability pressures for some private sector tenants. This situation will require careful monitoring as it may impact on the social housing waiting list;
- Despite falling house prices, affordability will remain an issue particularly for first-time buyers, with growing unemployment, reducing spending power, and restrictive lending practices;
- There are 36 registered HMOs in the district.

### Section 3 Strabane Local Housing Strategy

In the past year (2010/2011) in Strabane we spent £2.959 million. Performance for 2010/2011 is given along with programmes for 2011/2012 and is reported under our Corporate Objectives.

#### Corporate Objective 1 delivering the decent homes standard

- During 2010/2011 we completed 48 heating installations;
- External cyclical maintenance was started to 145 dwellings, heating installation to 56 dwellings and installations of smoke alarms to 555 dwellings;
- During 2011/12 we plan to start kitchen improvements to 25 dwellings, and external cyclical maintenance to 154 dwellings;
- There were 22 renovation grants and three replacement grants completed in 2010/11;
- The anticipated grant expenditure during the year for Strabane district will be in excess of £770,000;

- In addition to heating installations to our own stock in Strabane we manage the Warm Homes Scheme. In the year to March 2011, 434 homes in the private sector were insulated, 6 had heating installations and 22 had both insulation and heating installed.

### **Corporate Objective 2 promoting independent living**

- During 2010/2011 there were 57 disabled facilities grants completed in the private sector and 47 adaptations were completed to our own stock;
- £508,000 was spent during 2010/2011 on providing supporting people services. An increased level of funding (£529,000) has been budgeted for 2011/2012;
- 12 supported housing schemes were funded in 2010/11 for a range of client groups;
- We will continue to assess the need for new wheelchair housing. During 2010/2011 two units were commenced for complex need applicants;
- We will provide a range of services to tackle homelessness in line with our homelessness strategy;
- During 2010/2011 Strabane District office placed a total of 26 homeless applicant households into temporary accommodation;
- Alternative sites are currently being investigated to accommodate a number of Traveller families at Greenbrae which will be affected by the A5 transportation corridor.

### **Corporate Objective 3 fostering urban and rural regeneration**

- We will continue to participate in the Neighbourhood Renewal programme in Strabane;
- Ensure housing issues continue to be identified in the regeneration of Strabane town centre as envisaged in Town Centre Masterplan;
- Implement the rural housing strategy;
- Work with ARC North West on the implementation of the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme in rural Strabane;
- Continue to upgrade our housing stock where funding permits;
- Continue to monitor housing conditions in Strabane District.

### **Corporate Objective 4 promoting affordable housing**

- During 2010/2011 one general needs social housing scheme was completed for 19 units with a further scheme on site for six units at the former PSNI site, Sion Mills;
- Promote the private rented sector as a decent and 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;
- 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;
- 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;
- Work with the DSD to review the Common Selection Scheme and will consult on proposals for change during the year ahead.

**Corporate Objective 5 building a stronger community;**

- Strabane District office staff participate in the Community Safety Partnership (CSP), an inter-agency forum which meets five times a year to address anti-social behaviour;
- The need for Community Safety Wardens has recently been identified by CSP, and part-funded by the Housing Executive they will work to build relationships with the community in an effort to reduce anti-social behaviour;
- Recorded incidents of anti-social behaviour have increased in the past year;
- Our Neighbourhood Officer service works directly with local communities on issues which affect their daily lives. This has helped to avoid mismanagement of housing stock;
- During 2010/2011 one property was repossessed, and four cases referred to mediation services;
- The District currently work with 19 community groups on a range of community issues under the Housing Community Network (HCN);
- Peace III funding continues to benefit the Strabane area and is administered by the North West Peace III Partnership;
- Continue to work to deliver projects of a cross community nature and to develop a Good Relations plan under the Shared Neighbourhood Programme;
- 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;
- 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.

**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 modernising services programme.

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



# 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 Northern Ireland 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.

## 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 Strabane 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: Strabane District Council Area**



Source: NIHE GIS

The geographical area of Strabane District is detailed in the map above. Strabane town is the largest settlement within the District. There is a substantial rural area in which approximately 48% of the population live. The definition of 'rural' is a settlement of less than 4,500 people. This incorporates all settlements in the District other than Strabane Town.

### 2.2 Planning

#### Physical Planning

The strategic planning context of Strabane is set out in the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) for Northern Ireland 2025: "Shaping Our Future", which is a guide for the future development of Northern Ireland up to 2025. The RDS describes Strabane town as a main hub and part of the northwest corridor linking to Londonderry/Derry, Limavady and Letterkenny. The Housing Growth Indicators set

by the Department for Regional Development (DRD) show the new build requirement for the district during the period 1998-2015 as 4,300 additional dwellings.

The Northern Ireland Housing Land Availability Report for 2010 prepared by DOE Planning Service states that 2,646 new dwellings were completed in the district during the period January 1999 to July 2010, with a potential for a further 3,545 dwellings within the remaining urban footprint.

The specific planning context for Strabane District is detailed in the Strabane Area Plan 2001. Although this plan has now expired, it remains a material consideration until it is superseded.

There are a number of **regeneration** initiatives across the district, in both urban and rural areas. Prominent among these is the Strabane Town Centre Masterplan, published in September 2010. Commissioned by the Department for Social Development (DSD), this is a non-statutory document which provides strategic guidance for the regeneration of the town centre to 2020. It includes advice on the nature, scale and timing of work, and the extent of physical intervention needed to enable this regeneration to take place. The development of opportunity sites is a key objective of the Masterplan, together with supporting interventions such as public realm improvements and changes to traffic movement and access.

The DSD Neighbourhood Renewal Programme continues to deliver improvements for the residents of Strabane town through the Strabane Neighbourhood Partnership. The Housing Executive participates in this partnership of community groups and stakeholders. In the past year, funding of £530k was spent in Strabane under the programme targeting areas of most need.

Future investment in the town's environment includes the Melvin Bridge project which will provide an alternative river crossing for cyclists and pedestrians. In March 2011, DSD announced £3 million for this project. It is also to be funded by Strabane District Council and Sustrans.

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.

### Socio economic Planning

The population of the district increased by 5.4% between 1999 and 2009 and is projected to increase by a further 5.8% by 2019. In the same ten year period to 2019 the number of households is projected to increase by 11.9%. Changing demographic trends are important factors in planning for new housing. Changing age profiles and a reduction in the average household size indicate a greater need for smaller household groups.

The A8 population residing in the district in 2009 was approximately 400 persons, representing 1% of the district's population compared with the Northern Ireland average of 2%. However the number of new migrant workers in the district 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 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 Strabane. The Housing Executive continues to work 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 percentage of the working population unemployed at March 2011 was 7.1%, which was greater than the Northern Ireland average of 5.2%. Strabane was also the second most deprived council area in Northern Ireland according to the Multiple Deprivation Measure (2010) after Belfast City Council. This underlines some of the socio-economic challenges facing the district.

Strabane suffered disproportionately as a result of the recession given its economic base was comparatively less robust than that of other districts. This was due in part to an over-reliance on the construction and agricultural sectors which were detrimentally affected. Nevertheless, until recently the Strabane economy benefited from its cross border location for retail and commercial growth.

New house building activity has virtually stalled in the district due in part to the restrictive lending practices by banks and mortgage lenders. The number of sales transactions is reported by estate agents as "slow to static". Income and job security are deterring potential first-time buyers from making investment decisions in the housing market whilst many who have bought in the boom years are experiencing negative equity.

Table 1: Socio economic statistics

Population	Mid Year Estimate 1999	Mid Year Estimate 2009	Projected 2019
Population	37,820	39,871	42,181
Household	-	14,300	16,000
Household Size	-	2.78	2.62
No. of children	10,056 (27%)	9,178 (23%)	8,908 (21%)
No. of working age	22,659 (60%)	24,337 (61%)	26,090 (62%)
No. of older people	5,105 (13%)	6,356 (16%)	7,183 (17%)

Estimated Net International Migration	July 2006/ June 2007	July 2007/ June 2008	July 2008/ June 2009
Strabane	- 2	74	- 35

N.I. Multiple Deprivation Measure 2010	LGD Rank 1 – 26 (1 most deprived)	Most deprived *SOA	Least deprived SOA
Strabane	2	East	South 2

Source: NISRA

\*Super Output Area

Unemployment Benefit	March 2009	March 2010	March 2011
No of unemployment benefit claims	1,449 (6%)	1,715 (7.1%)	1,808 (7.1%)

Source: DETI NI

Housing Benefit	March 2009	March 2010	March 2011
NIHE tenants in receipt of Housing Benefit	1,902	1,961	1,915

Source: NIHE

Fuel Poverty	Strabane HCS 06	Strabane/Derry HCS 09	NI HCS 09
% in Fuel Poverty	40.8%	43.1%	43.7%

Source: NIHE House Condition Survey

Information collected for Strabane and Derry City Council areas indicated 43% of households were in **Fuel poverty** in 2009. Rises in energy prices have contributed to the increase in fuel poverty. Income is a major factor in the level of fuel poverty with pensioners particularly vulnerable given their high level of welfare dependency.

### 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, combining the **Strabane District and Derry City Council** areas. This change of boundary means that figures cannot be compared with previous surveys.

The housing stock in the Strabane and Derry area is approximately 58,060 units. The **tenure share** of the stock shows that 16% are in the private rented sector compared with 21.5% social houses. The Northern Ireland figures are similar for the private rented sector (16.8%) but are significantly lower at 14.9% for social housing stock. The percentage of all vacant stock at 7.7% is higher than the Northern Ireland figure of 5.9%.

**Housing conditions** continue to improve with the latest figures for unfit (2009) for the Derry and Strabane area below the regional average. Also the percentage of dwellings that failed the decent home standard was significantly below the Northern Ireland average for the Derry and Strabane areas.

Within the **private sector**, the drop in construction of new dwellings is demonstrated with 382 in 2006 compared to 169 in 2010, a decrease of 55.8%. Local estate agents have reported a virtual cessation in new development starts due to the fall in demand. Many developers are therefore completing remaining developments on a sale-by-sale basis as well as single house dwellings in the countryside. During the financial year 2010 there were 15 new build property sales in the district.

**Owner occupation** continues to be the most popular tenure in the district. Ongoing economic uncertainty and restricted lending practices will continue to limit construction and transactions. This tenure group's share of the overall housing market is not anticipated to increase in the next few years.

In 2006, the **average house price** in Strabane District was 15% less than the Northern Ireland average but by 2010 the difference had narrowed marginally to 14%. The brief recovery in the property market that had begun during 2009 has not been sustained with market adjustment on-going. 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 private rented housing is an indication of the difficulties in accessing the owner-occupied market.

Northern Ireland **Co-ownership** Housing Association assists those on low income to access the owner occupied sector. A total of 171 properties have been purchased through the scheme in Strabane, three 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. The number of Housing Executive house sale transactions has dropped considerably in this sector since 2007. In the year ending March 2011, eight houses were sold to tenants under the House Sales scheme.

The **private rented sector** has grown significantly in Northern Ireland since 2001. Local estate agents confirmed that this tenure demonstrates a strong demand within the district and reported a shortage of properties to let. Private sector Housing Benefit claims continue to increase. Since 2007 the increase reflects both the economic climate 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, single person households who face affordability pressures.

**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 36 registered HMOs in the district the majority of these are situated in Strabane town.

**Table 2: Housing statistics (Stock Information)**

	Owner Occupied	Social Stock	Private Rented	Vacant	Total
Strabane HCS 2006	10,140	2,840	1,060	980	15,020
Strabane/Derry HCS 2009	31,800	12,490	9,320	4,450	58,060
NI HCS 2009	461,800	110,200	124,600	43,400	740,000

Housing Conditions (all stock)	Strabane 2006	Strabane/Derry 2009	NI 2006	NI 2009
Unfitness	3.2%	0.6%	3.4%	2.4%
Fail Decent Homes Std	22.6%	6.9%	23.0%	15.1%

Source: NIHE House Condition Survey

Private Sector Activity	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Strabane New Build Starts	382	289	132	125	169
NI New Build Starts	13,946	12,488	7,879	6,140	6,339
Strabane Average House Price	£147,600	£204,563	-	-	£135,045
NI Average House Price	£174,178	£233,415	£218,145	£160,855	£156,746

Source: NHBC & University of Ulster

Private Housing Benefit Strabane	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
No. of Claims	1,375	1,399	1,577	1,931	2,064

**Local Housing Allowance for 3 bedrooms = up to £96.20 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 Strabane District Council area with Derry District Council area. This change of boundary means that figures cannot be compared with previous surveys.

## 2.4 Social housing

In 2010 the number of applicants and those deemed to be in housing stress reached their highest since 2006 at 577 and 213 respectively.

The rise in the waiting list may reflect the current 'credit crunch' and the associated difficulties in accessing the property ladder coupled with the shortage of available private rented accommodation.

During the twelve months to December 2010, there were 181 allocations. This level of allocations, while lower than in the previous two years, makes a significant contribution to meeting housing need within the district.

Single person households continue to dominate the waiting list, and at December 2010 they accounted for approximately 62% of all applicants in housing stress. Small families and elderly households each account for approximately 15% of applicants in housing stress.

The changes in the waiting list over the past year may be a short-term trend given the uncertainty in other housing sectors. The waiting list trends will therefore continue to be monitored closely.

Although waiting list numbers have risen in the past year, there is no additional requirement for **social housing** in Strabane District to 2015. Housing need, which is revised annually, is based on 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.

Current **Housing Executive stock** for Strabane is 2,208 dwellings, the majority (96%) of which are houses and bungalows. Since the introduction of the House Sales Scheme around 58% of Northern Ireland Housing Executive properties have been purchased. The remaining stock is managed to ensure that vacancies are kept to a minimum. At the end of December 2010 ten properties were vacant of which eight were flats in a difficult to let area. Eight of these properties are in the Lisnafin area of Strabane town, which have become unpopular due to anti-social behaviour.

**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 since last year. The reasons for applicants presenting as homeless in Strabane District are varied and include loss of existing accommodation (social or private) including mortgage default, family or relationship breakdown, domestic violence, civil or neighbourhood disturbance.

Just over 57% of all applicants who presented as homeless in 2010/11 were single households. Of all those who received Full Duty Status 35% were single households. Small family households accounted for 23% of those presenting and 32% of those receiving Full Duty Status. Strabane District Office made a total of 26 placements into temporary accommodation in 2010/11.

**Table 3: Social housing statistics Public sector**

### Strabane Social Housing Waiting List trends

December	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
All Applicants	534	559	499	501	577
Housing Stress	186	195	163	153	213
Allocations	188	163	216	203	181

### Strabane Waiting list sub-set of homeless applicants

	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
Number Presented	146	176	132	165	204
Awarded Full Duty Status	69	93	53	77	84

### Strabane Northern Ireland Housing Executive Sales (NIHE) Information & Housing Association (HA) Starts

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
HA New Build Starts Strabane	21	23	-	22
NIHE House Sales Strabane	17	0	10	8
Average Market Value	£96,676	-	£58,950	£55,849

Source: NIHE



# SECTION THREE

## Section 3 Strabane local housing strategy

### 3.1 Introduction

The housing market analysis identified a number of housing issues within the district, including affordability, homelessness and fuel poverty. There is also a shortage of private rented accommodation which is leading to increasing numbers of applicants in housing stress registered on the social housing waiting list. 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 Strabane District in 2011/12 is £3.439 million, excluding any investment in new-build or in the Warm Homes Scheme.

**Table 4: Strabane District actual and projected spend**

Activity areas	Actual spend - £m		Projected spend - £m
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Capital improvement work	0.241	0.452	0.261
Planned maintenance work	1.324	0.379	0.659
Response maintenance*	1.390	1.473	1.442
Private Sector Grants	1.558	0.753	0.548
Warm Homes	N/A	0.375	**
Supporting People	0.502	0.508	0.530
<b>Total</b>	<b>5.015</b>	<b>3.940</b>	<b>3.440</b>
<b>Investment in New Build***</b>	N/A	2.959	****

Source: NIHE

\*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 normally includes Housing Association Grant funding by Government subsidy but in the case of Strabane district none was issued in 2009/10 and 2010/11.

\*\*\*\* The 2011/12 draft gross social housing programme does not contain any units for Strabane District.

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

**Table 5: West Area actual spend 2009/10 – 2010/11**

Activity areas	Actual spend £m	
	2009/10	2010/11
<b>Grounds Maintenance</b>	1.784	1.720

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 achieved. In the past year we completed:

- 48 Heating installations to Northern Ireland Housing Executive stock;

Additionally a number of schemes had not completed at March 2011:

- Smoke Alarm Installations to 555 dwellings;
- External Cyclical Maintenance to 145 dwellings.

Details of our programmes can be found in Appendix 2.

Providing **Grants** to private sector landlords and owner occupiers has been an effective tool in maintaining properties in good condition and preventing them from falling 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 the past year we completed:

- 22 Renovation grants;
- 3 Replacement grants;
- 12 Repair grants;
- 57 Disabled Facilities grants;
- 27 Home Repair Assistance Grants

**Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)** are an important part of the private rented sector. Within Strabane, there were 36 properties identified by the Housing Executive as Houses in Multiple Occupation. Ongoing identification of potential HMO's, 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. In the past year, one Article 80 Notice (fit for number of occupants) and five Article 79 Notices (management standards) were served in Strabane District. A HMO Strategy has been developed to not only ensure compliance, but also to provide advice to tenants and prospective tenants of HMO's 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 highlighted in Appendix 6.

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:

- 478 homes were insulated;
- 11 homes had heating installations;
- 22 had both insulation and heating installed.



A Department for Social Development Scheme

Housing Executive



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 11 schools were visited in Strabane district.

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. The PSNI site at Sion Mills which commenced in 2010/11 will accommodate six social housing units and is designed at Code 4 Level.

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

- Commence 25 Cavity Wall Insulation installations to Housing Executive stock (Appendix 2);
- Commence External cyclical maintenance schemes to 54 properties Housing Executive stock (Appendix 2);
- 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.



Private Sector New Build 'Magheramason'

### 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 Homeless duties to 16 and 17 year old homeless people. This report is due to be published in summer 2011.

#### In Strabane District in the past year:

- We spent approximately £508k during 2010/11 providing assistance to vulnerable people through **Supporting People services**. A similar level of funding (£529k) has been budgeted for 2011/12;
- Funding for 2010/11 delivered 12 supported housing schemes in the Strabane District, providing services to a range of client groups. In addition, one floating support service was provided;
- Strabane Association for Temporary Homeless Accommodation has merged with First Housing Aid and Support Services and in partnership they will continue to provide temporary homeless service in the Strabane Area to both singles and families. Additionally the service will administer a homeless floating support service;
- Apex Housing Association are currently building new accommodation to replace Iona house in Strabane and when completed will provide 12 bed spaces for people with a learning disability.

The Housing (Amendment) Act 2010 confers upon the Housing Executive a duty to publish a homelessness strategy every five years, with 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 five 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 Strabane District:**

- 204 homeless applications were received;
- 84 were assessed as Full Duty Applicants;
- 26 were provided with temporary accommodation;
- We are developing an Area Homelessness Strategy which will take account of each district's local requirements;
- Advice booklets on homelessness are available for those living in rural parts of Strabane District.

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. Adaptations range from handrails and ramps to stair lifts, heating, showers and extensions. The number of adaptations that we are able to carry out will be subject to funding.

During 2010/11 we approved 27 disabled facilities grants for the private sector and 57 were completed. Approximately £274k was spent on adaptations to our own stock. Details of this work can be found in Appendix 2. The West Area has a budget of £4.036 million for Disabled Persons Adaptations (DPAs) to our stock for 2011/12 to help vulnerable households, but this budget cannot be broken down to district level.

Our staff has been working with the DSD and Health and Social Services to review the adaptations process and the report is expected later in the year.

Accommodation for **Traveller** families is incorporated each year into the Social Housing Development Programme when required. Strabane town provides a transit site for Travellers located at Greenbrae which facilitates eight spaces. No further need has been identified to increase the current provision in the District. The proposed route of the new A5 Road would, however have consequences for the site. Housing Executive staff are endeavouring to identify an alternative location to meet the needs of travellers.

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:**

- To improve the quality of housing for people with disabilities in Strabane District;
- Approve Disabled Facilities Grants as appropriate;
- Carry out adaptations to our own stock;
- Invest £529k to continue to deliver housing support services to vulnerable people through the Supporting People programme;
- Provide a range of services to tackle homelessness in line with our homelessness strategy;
- Work to meet the accommodation needs of Travellers.

### **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 funding to 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.

In partnership with DSD small environmental schemes have been funded and completed within Housing Executive owned estates in Strabane. These small schemes contribute significantly to the local environment and where possible are carried out in conjunction with local community groups.

Groundwork Northern Ireland was commissioned to provide alternative layouts to the current difficult area to access in the Springhill estate. When funding is available it is hoped this project will proceed. Strabane District Council has indicated that they will work with the Fountain Street partnership to secure funding to redevelop the Patrician Villas site. The proposed refurbishment has been designed by Groundwork Northern Ireland.

During the past year the play park at Springhill Estate was completed through funding received from the DSD Neighbourhood Renewal funding. The total amount of spending by the DSD in the Strabane Neighbourhood Renewal Area during the past financial year was in excess of £530K.

**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. Within Strabane District work has commenced on the construction of 12 units in rural areas in the past year and includes the redevelopment of two cottages and the provision of dwellings to facilitate families with complex needs.

In Magheramason a community survey has been completed within Housing Executive estates. The survey has identified a number of matters that the residents seek to see changed. An interagency group which includes the community will meet to discuss the issues identified and seek to address them within a specified time frame.

During 2010/2011 302 new units of social housing commenced in Rural Northern Ireland, the highest outturn in at least 10 years, and in line with our rural housing target for new build.

**DARD** has particular responsibility for rural areas and where possible, we work with them to support rural regeneration. Our work also aims to complement the work of the ARC North West which is responsible for the administration of AXIS 3 of the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 within the rural areas of Strabane, Derry, Limavady and Omagh.

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 and rural community transport, and other services.

In **Strabane** District we are supporting physical and community regeneration through a number of activities:

- The District Manager is a participant in the DSD funded Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership. The Partnership has invested £0.8 million in the last three

years on a variety of projects. A number of the projects have been match funded by contributions from the Housing Executive and other statutory bodies, thus increasing the benefit to the communities. Funding has been provided by the DSD for three major capital projects within the neighbourhood renewal area;

- Newtownstewart town centre was designated a Town Centre Living Initiative (TCLIA) in April 2008 for a period of five years. Grant aid will be offered in this area to encourage the improvement of living accommodation and the conversion of non residential properties to dwellings under the LOTS (Living Over The Shop) initiative;
- We continue to support Strabane town centre regeneration;
- A number of environmental schemes have been undertaken in the District over the past year and plans have been made to continue with similar projects for the year ahead;
- The Housing Executive has provided support for the redevelopment of the former PSNI site by Oaklee Housing Association at Sion Mills for social housing. This scheme which commenced in March 2011 will be a significant contribution to town centre regeneration;
- Many of the Housing Executive's mainstream activities support regeneration, and the Housing Executive will continue to play its role in community regeneration where funding allows.

**In the coming year we plan to:**

- Continue to implement a Neighbourhood Renewal Programme (in support of the DSD Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy);
- Implement the Rural Housing Strategy – 'Rural homes and People';
- Work with ARC North West on Axis 3 of the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme in the Strabane area;
- Continue to upgrade our housing stock where funding permits;
- Work with Strabane Council on the Implementation of the Strabane Town Centre Masterplan;
- Continue to improve the local environment of our housing estates where possible through environmental improvement schemes;
- Continue to monitor housing conditions in Strabane District.

### 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 Strabane:**

- A general needs social housing scheme for 19 units was completed in Strabane Town;
- New social housing schemes commenced at Sion Mills, Iona House Strabane and Newtownstewart and will provide 22 units in a mixture of supported and general needs housing;
- We supplied DOE Planning Service with an annual housing needs assessment;
- We assisted in promoting private rented sector accommodation as an affordable housing option;
- We published 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 housing market conditions. During the past year 37 applications were received; 31 offers made and eight sales 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.

Following the completion of an in-depth analysis of each settlement in Strabane district no housing need has been identified for the next five years. A review of housing need will be carried out later this year.

Appendix 3 details the schemes completed last year and those schemes under construction at 31 March 2011.

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](http://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 **Housing 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.

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:**

- Continue to assess the need for new social housing in the district;
- Provide DOE Planning Service with an annual housing need assessment;
- Promote the private rented sector as a decent and affordable housing option;
- Manage our social housing stock to minimise empty dwellings;
- Promote affordable home ownership through our house sales scheme;
- Continue to work with DSD and DOE Planning Service to deliver developer contributions for affordable housing via the planning system;
- Examine the potential to develop intermediate housing on surplus NIHE sites;
- Explore opportunities presented by Planning Policy Statement 21 (PPS21) to develop social housing outside designated settlements;
- Work with the DSD to review the Housing Selection Scheme and will consult on proposals for change during the year ahead.

### 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 is a 30.1% increase on the previous year. Most reports relate to low level anti-social behaviour; there has been a decrease of four cases in the number of serious/complex incidents. District office staff are involved in a number of ways to help address anti-social behaviour.

The need for Community Safety Wardens was identified and recently a two year programme commenced by the Strabane Community Safety Partnership at a cost of £120,000. The wardens will work 3/4 evenings per week and act as a conduit to build relationships between local communities and the key partner agencies. The Housing Executive will contribute £20k to this project.

**Table 6: Strabane 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
121	1	0	4	0	122

\*Acceptable behaviour contracts

- The District Manager participates on the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and on an interagency anti social behaviour forum that meets five times per year;
- The CSP has been responsible for a number of local youth initiatives, including drink related issues and a project called "Where is your Child Tonight"?
- Neighbourhood Officers monitor and report non occupation and misuse of houses and have facilitated a number of dwellings brought back into stock;
- In partnership with the council a Junior Warden programme has been provided to two local schools. This has involved the children in litter picking, a poster

competition and receiving a lesson on environmental awareness. Further schools will be involved in a similar project this year;

- A local Anti Social Behaviour Forum in Strabane meets five times per year and brings together the relevant statutory agencies in each area to discuss common themes.

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 at least one location in each Area. A local offer is an agreement between the local community and landlord/s on how a service is delivered. In West Area, pilot schemes, based on estate inspections are currently being undertaken in Omagh and Cookstown districts.

The District Office works with 19 community groups and contributes to a wide range of partnerships and inter-agency groups. The Housing Community Network meets bi-monthly and during 2010 received presentations on a number of issues including the role of the night warden in Strabane town and the Housing Executive Customer Service Unit. During the past year the local office has been successful in encouraging three new rural groups to participate in the HCN. This gives the local group a better balance between rural and urban based community groups.

The Housing Executive Neighbourhood Officers currently provide clinics at six different locations on a weekly basis. These clinics provide tenants the opportunity to identify issues or problems that they are experiencing.

Strabane Council in conjunction with Derry and Omagh Councils formed a North West Cluster to deliver Priority 1.1 of the **Peace III Programme** (2007-2013) - Building Positive Relations at a local Level. The aim of this theme is to challenge attitudes towards sectarianism and to support conflict resolution and mediation at the local community level. Housing Executive staff participate on the partnership board which comprises social partners, elected members of the councils and representatives from statutory agencies.

Some of the projects funded in Strabane through the Peace III programme include;

- Castledearg Sports Capacity Programme;
- Castledearg Communities Together;
- Strabane Fair Day;
- Donemana inclusive Play Area;
- Border Arts Programme;
- Education Programmes;

- Strabane Council – Understanding Our Past and Present.

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 with vital funding received from the International Fund for Ireland;
- Sion Mills remains the only community in the District that has signed up to a shared neighbourhood.



Sion Mills 25th Anniversary Celebration funded through Shared Neighbourhood programme

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.

The District Office continues to be involved in the Hate Incident Practical Actions (**HIPA**) scheme, together with the PSNI and the Community Safety Unit of the Northern Ireland Office. The scheme aims to tackle the consequences of hate incidents through the provision of personal and physical home protection measures. As a result of our involvement we produce and promote our own Hate Crime Procedures leaflet, providing additional information for callers to the District Office.

To follow on from the Shared Neighbourhood Programme the Housing Executive has now formed a partnership with Tides Training and the Rural Development Council to deliver a project that will develop institutional capacity within the Housing Executive, as well as delivering good relations programmes across a further 80 NIHE estates. This **BRIC** (Building Relationships in Communities) programme will be rolled out over the next three and a half years and it is hoped it will leave a lasting legacy within not just the Housing Executive but also the communities in which we work. The BRIC project will be delivered under the following themes: Changing Minds, Sharing Visions, and Crossing Borders.

A new **Immigration Advice Service** introduced by the Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities will operate once a week in Strabane. This is funded by DSD Neighbourhood Renewal.

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

During the past year, the Western Investing for Health Partnership has led out a number of significant projects within the West Area. In the Strabane district the projects included:

- Strabane Community Allotments;
- Strabane Outdoor Exercise Trail.

**In the coming year we plan to:**

- Continue to deliver projects of a cross community nature and work in partnership with housing associations to implement the Shared Future Housing Programme;
- Support the community of Sion Mills in its aspirations for a Good Relations Plan under the Shared Neighbourhood Programme;
- Continue to participate in the Community Safety Partnership in addressing anti-social behaviour across the district;
- Implement and report progress on the Community Involvement Strategy;
- Build upon the success of the Housing Community Network in addressing housing and community issues, and encourage new associations to join;
- Work in partnership with the statutory, community and voluntary sectors in developing and delivering improved community safety at estate level;
- 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](http://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 'LEAN' and better use of information and communications technology. During 2010/2011 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](http://www.nihe.gov.uk).

The **West Customer Service Unit** delivers a repair and grounds maintenance reporting service for customers in Strabane District. 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 these functions for Strabane District.

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 West Customer Service Unit answering 9,454 queries during the month of December 2010 compared to an average of 5,614 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.

The Emergency Services Unit has increased capacity to ensure that customers will be able to have calls answered 'out of hours'. The West Area Customer Service Unit will have the capacity to provide a service to handle incoming customer telephone calls 'out of hours' by the use of appropriately trained staff from other areas of the Housing Executive.

Should an emergency arise which requires a local response, district offices will provide a service outside normal working hours and will be supported by the Customer Service Unit.

The Housing Executive website already provides its customers with the facility to report repairs online, it is planned to improve this service by offering guidance to customers on dealing with particular situations and to communicate up to date information as an emergency escalates.

The Housing Executive also proposes to use its valuable links with community representatives, to communicate information and receive updates to and from local communities.

Our targets and performance for the West Area are set out below.

**Table 7: Performance at March 2011**

Total	Target	Actual
<b>Total Rent Arrears West Area</b>	£2.344 million	£2.262 million
<b>Clear Housing Benefit new claims – West HB Unit</b>	Within 25 days	18.6 days
<b>Clear Housing Benefit change of circumstances – West HB Unit</b>	Within 10 days	9.3 days

**Strabane 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 at Derry/Londonderry 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 two staff from Strabane District Office received nominations over the past year.

**Locally we:**

- Aim to process at least 90% 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;
- Deal with an average of 1,000 customers per month who call to our district office;
- Provide tenants with an annual publication of Housing News which highlights local projects and performance.
- We will review, report and update our major incident plan.

**Table 8: Strabane District Office Performance at March 2011**

Total	Target	Actual
<b>Housing Applications</b>	Process in < 21 days	100%
<b>Homeless Applications</b>	Process in < 34 days	100%
<b>Maintenance</b>		
<b>Emergency</b>	90/95%	98%
<b>Urgent</b>	85/95%	99%
<b>Routine</b>	85/95%	99%
<b>COT</b>	85/90%	99%
<b>Relet turnaround time</b>	<26 days	14 days

The **Grants Office** at Derry/Londonderry 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 who is the 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.

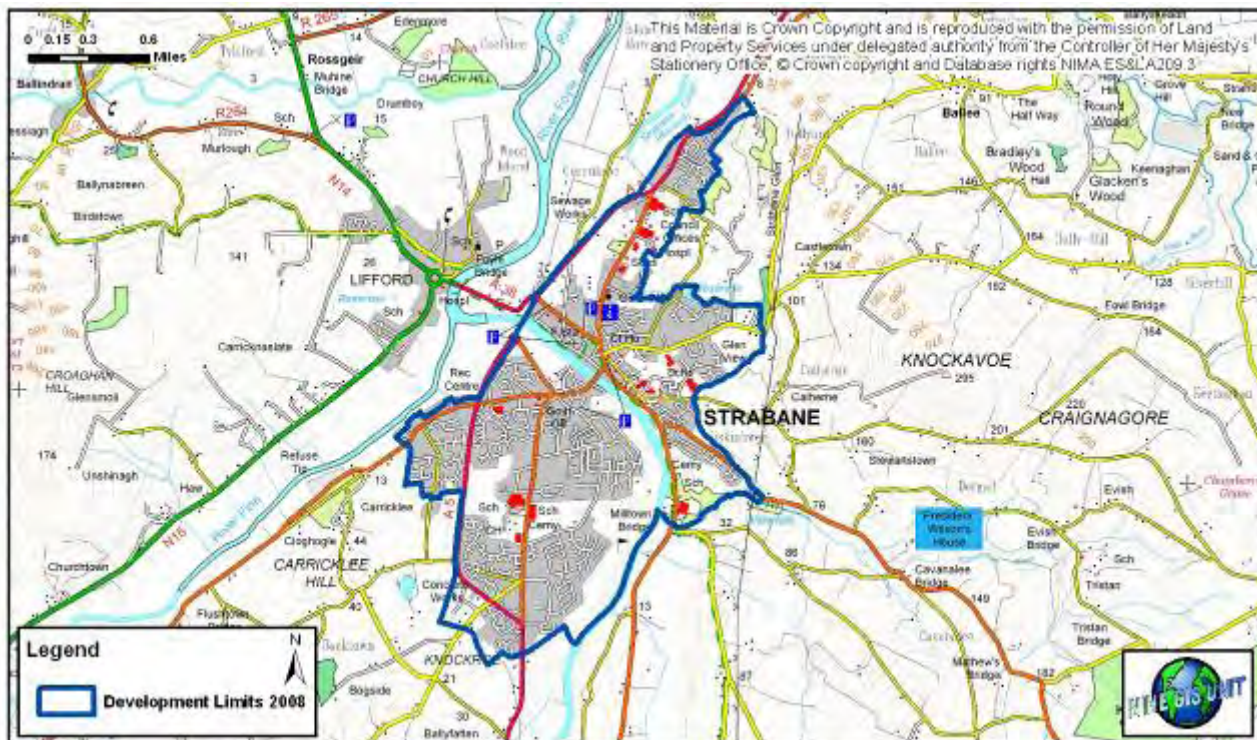
**In the coming year we plan to:**

- 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;
- Continue to improve services through the modernising services programme and information technology;
- Maintain an excellent, well-trained and highly motivated workforce.



# APPENDICES

## Appendix 1: Strabane Town profile



Strabane town comprises five common landlord areas; Ballycoleman, Carlton Drive, Fountain Street, Lisnafin / Old Trust and Springhill / Newton Street.

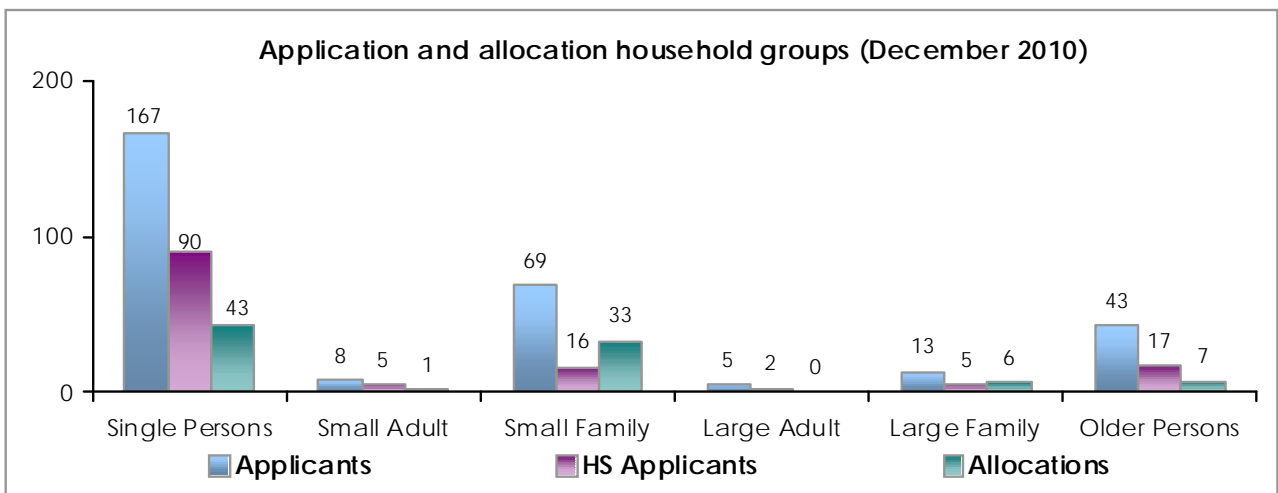
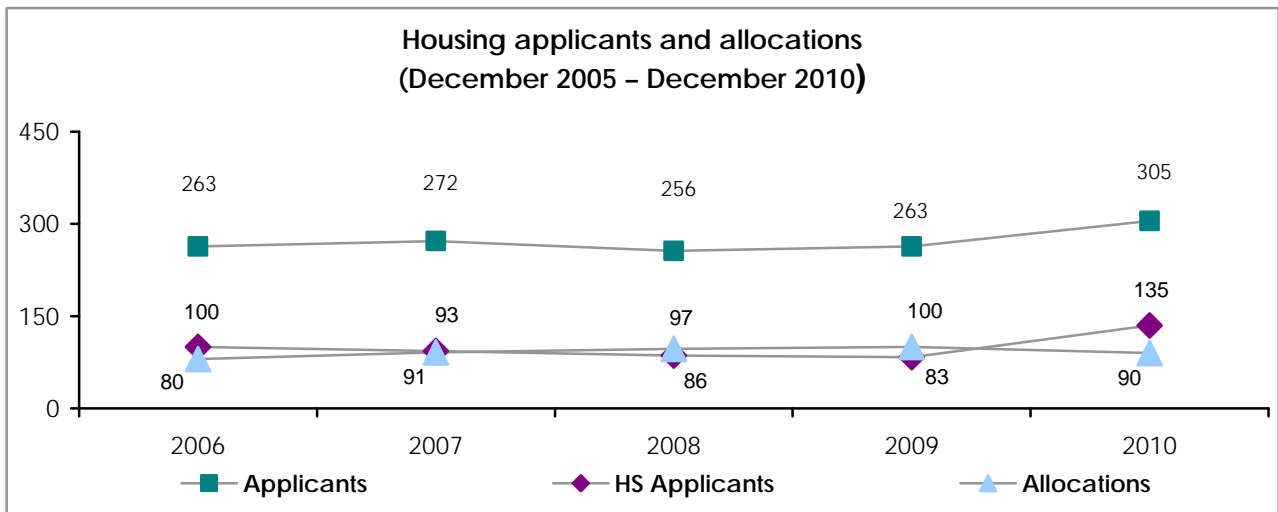
The completion of 19 new houses at Church Street in 2010/11 together with the turnover of existing stock will meet the current social housing need for Strabane Town. At December 2010, 66.7% of applicants in housing stress were single households, with the elderly and small families making up the bulk of the remainder.

The number of applicants in housing stress had increased to its highest figure in the past five years at December 2010. With the completion of Church Street the number of allocations had also increased but still left a margin between housing stress and allocations. We will review housing need for Strabane later this year and if appropriate add additional new build units to the development programme.

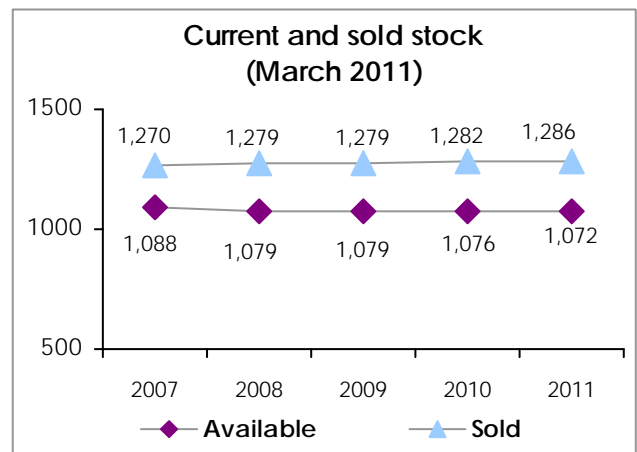
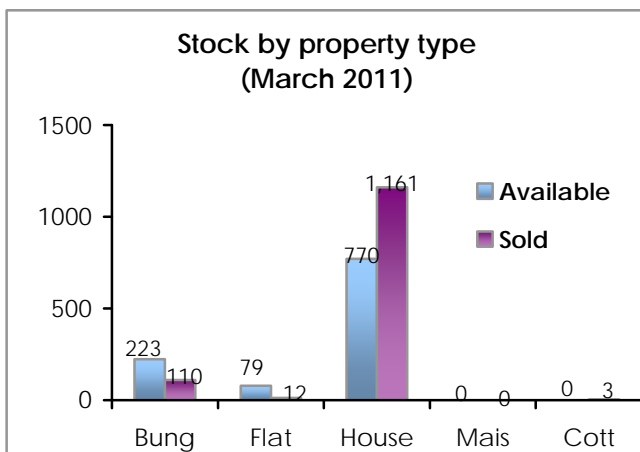
Estate Agents locally have reported that the supply of affordable private rented accommodation has decreased and in instances they have now developed waiting lists for this tenure. This change in the private rented sector may account for a percentage of the growth in social housing waiting lists at December 2010.

A large portion of Housing Executive stock in Strabane Town has been sold to existing tenants (1,286 dwellings) over the last two decades, leaving 1,072 dwellings comprising mainly of houses.

### Strabane Town social housing waiting list analysis



### NIHE Housing stock analysis



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

### Schemes completed 1st April 2010 – 31st March 2011

Work Category	Scheme	Units
<b>Heating Installation</b>	Ardstraw/Clady/Sion Mills	42
	Strabane Clean Air Conversion	6

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

Work Category	Scheme	Units
<b>External Cyclical Maintenance</b>	Glebe Park/Millbrook Gardens	145
<b>Heating Installation</b>	Ardstraw/Clady/Sion Mills	48
	Strabane Clean Air Conversion	8
<b>Smoke Alarm Installation</b>	Smoke Alarm Installation	555

Note some schemes may start and complete in year.

### Programme of work for 2011/12

Work Category	Scheme	Units
<b>Kitchen Improvement and Cavity Wall Insulation</b>	Killen Park/Melmount Villas	25
<b>External Cyclical Maintenance</b>	LAP Castlederg/Sion Mills	54

### Reserve programme for April 2011 – March 2012 subject to funding

Work Category	Scheme	Units
<b>Revenue Replacement</b>	Glebe Gardens/Glebe Ulster Cottages Sion Mills	58

### 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 (£)
<b>Extension to dwelling</b>	8	140,084
<b>Change of heating</b>	10	72,559
<b>Lifts</b>	3	9,332
<b>Showers</b>	26	51,848
<b>Total</b>	47	273,823

### Grants performance

Grant type	No Approved	Approval Value (£k)	No. Completed
<b>MANDATORY GRANTS</b>			
<b>Disabled Facilities</b>	27	234.6	57
<b>Repairs</b>	8	11.5	12
<b>DISCRETIONARY GRANTS</b>			
<b>Renovation</b>	32	221.6	22
<b>Replacement</b>	2	63	3
<b>Home Repairs Assistance</b>	19	53.2	27

### Definition of improvement and planned maintenance work categories

<b>External Cyclical Maintenance</b>	Work to the external fabric of a dwelling and its immediate surrounding area.
<b>Revenue Replacement</b>	Replacement of obsolete internal elements, e.g. sanitary ware and kitchen units.
<b>Smoke Alarm Installation</b>	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
<b>Church Street, Strabane</b>	19	General Needs	Habinteg	Urban Need
<b>Total</b>	19			

#### Schemes on site at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011

Scheme	No of units	Client Group	Housing Association	Policy theme
<b>Iona House (Phase 1), Strabane</b>	12	Learning Disabilities	Apex Housing	Urban Need
<b>PSNI Melmount Road, Sion Mills</b>	6	General Needs	Oaklee	Rural Need
<b>Forthill Walk, Newtownstewart</b>	4	Complex Needs	Rural	Rural Need
<b>Total</b>	22			

## Appendix 4: 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
<b>MAIN URBAN CENTRE</b>								
Ballycolman	Applicant	26	0	19	0	6	5	56
	<b>App (HS)</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16</b>
	Alloc App	2	1	13	0	2	0	18
Carlton Drive	Applicant	15	3	10	0	0	2	30
	<b>App (HS)</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>
	Alloc App	2	0	6	0	2	3	13
Fountain Street	Applicant	19	1	4	0	0	1	25
	<b>App (HS)</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>
	Alloc App	3	0	3	0	0	0	6
Lisnafin / Old Trust	Applicant	44	1	22	0	2	23	92
	<b>App (HS)</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>49</b>
	Alloc App	22	0	1	0	1	4	28
Springhill / Newton St	Applicant	63	3	14	5	5	12	102
	<b>App (HS)</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>44</b>
	Alloc App	14	0	10	0	1	0	25
<b>LOCAL TOWNS</b>								
Castledearg	Applicant	25	1	13	3	4	14	60
	<b>App (HS)</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>14</b>
	Alloc App	8	0	2	0	0	5	15
Sion Mills	Applicant	26	6	14	1	8	5	60
	<b>App (HS)</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>14</b>
	Alloc App	6	0	3	0	1	0	10
Newtown-stewart	Applicant	16	5	10	0	2	5	38
	<b>App (HS)</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>
	Alloc App	8	1	7	0	3	3	22
<b>LOCAL VILLAGES</b>								
Ardstraw	Applicant	5	0	0	0	0	2	7
	<b>App (HS)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
	Alloc App	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Artigarvan	Applicant	3	0	3	0	1	0	7
	<b>App (HS)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
	Alloc App	7	0	1	0	0	0	8
Bally-magorry	Applicant	6	2	4	0	2	4	18
	<b>App (HS)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>
	Alloc App	2	0	0	0	1	0	3
Clady	Applicant	4	0	3	0	0	3	10
	<b>App (HS)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	Alloc App	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Donemana	Applicant	6	0	5	0	0	1	12
	<b>App (HS)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>
	Alloc App	6	0	1	0	0	2	9

Common Landlord Area	Type	Single person	Small adult	Small family	Large adult	Large family	Older person	Total
Douglas Bridge	Applicant	5	0	6	0	1	2	14
	<b>App (HS)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>
	Alloc App	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Erganagh	Applicant	5	0	0	0	0	0	5
	<b>App (HS)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>
	Alloc App	2	0	2	0	0	0	4
Glebe	Applicant	6	0	6	1	1	0	14
	<b>App (HS)</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>
	Alloc App	1	1	2	0	0	0	4
Killen	Applicant	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	<b>App (HS)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	Alloc App	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Killeter	Applicant	2	0	1	0	0	0	3
	<b>App (HS)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>
	Alloc App	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Maghera-mason	Applicant	7	0	4	0	0	1	12
	<b>App (HS)</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>
	Alloc App	2	0	1	0	0	0	3
Plumbridge	Applicant	4	1	1	0	0	0	6
	<b>App (HS)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>
	Alloc App	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Spamount	Applicant	2	1	0	0	0	2	5
	<b>App (HS)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>
	Alloc App	3	0	2	0	1	0	6
District Total	Applicant	289	24	139	10	32	83	577
	<b>App (HS)</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>213</b>
	Alloc App	89	4	56	0	12	20	181

Applicant – Housing Applicant

App (HS) – Housing Stress Applicant (i.e. 30 points or more)

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 5: Housing Executive stock at March 2011**

Common Landlord Area	Bung (i)	Flat	House	Mais (ii)	Cottage	Total	Void*
<b>MAIN URBAN CENTRE</b>							
	<b>N.B. Sold stock in bold</b>						
Ballycolman	55	2	261	0	0	318	0
	<b>48</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>541</b>	
Carlton Drive	37	0	91	0	0	128	0
	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>80</b>	
Fountain Street	14	0	168	0	0	182	0
	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>89</b>	
Lisnafin/Old Trust	74	61	129	0	0	264	8
	<b>27</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>431</b>	
Springhill/ Newtown St	43	16	121	0	0	180	0
	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>145</b>	
<b>LOCAL TOWNS</b>							
Castledearg	97	4	122	0	1	224	1
	<b>59</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>385</b>	
Sion Mills	69	0	95	0	2	166	0
	<b>30</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>256</b>	
Newtownstewart	57	0	144	0	1	202	0
	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>207</b>	
<b>LOCAL VILLAGES</b>							
Ardstraw	11	0	12	0	0	23	0
	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>44</b>	
Artigarvan	25	0	23	0	0	48	0
	<b>21</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>95</b>	
Ballymagorry	14	4	27	0	0	45	0
	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>138</b>	
Clady	6	0	13	0	1	20	0
	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>107</b>	
Donemana	53	0	74	0	0	127	1
	<b>30</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>182</b>	
Douglas Bridge	9	0	15	0	1	25	0
	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>41</b>	
Erganagh	7	0	16	0	0	23	0
	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>23</b>	
Glebe	38	0	38	0	0	76	0
	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>63</b>	
Killen	5	0	19	0	0	24	0
	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>36</b>	
Killeter	11	0	9	0	0	20	0
	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>32</b>	
Magheramason	25	0	15	0	0	40	0
	<b>22</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>110</b>	
Plumbridge	20	0	19	0	0	39	0
	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>40</b>	

Common Landlord Area	Bung (i)	Flat	House	Mais (ii)	Cottage	Total	Void*
Spamount	3	0	30	0	1	34	0
	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>54</b>	
<b>DISTRICT TOTAL</b>	673	87	1,441	0	7	2,208	10
	<b>361</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2,318</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>3,099</b>	

\*Of the Total Stock these properties are void and do not include properties for sale or demolition

(i) Bungalow (ii) Maisonette

## Appendix 6: Contact details

Office	Contact	Contact Information
<p>All Enquiries Tel: 03448 920 900                      Type Talk Tel: <b>18001 02890240 588</b></p>		
<p>Headquarters                      Housing Centre                      2 Adelaide Street                      Belfast, BT2 8PB</p>	<p>General Enquiries</p>	<p>Fax No.028 9031 8008  <a href="http://www.nihe.gov.uk">www.nihe.gov.uk</a></p>
<p>Strabane District Office                      40-46 Railway Road                      Strabane, BT82 8EH</p>	<p>Mr Seamus Kelly                      District Manager</p>	<p>Fax No. 028 7138 2637  <a href="mailto:seamus.kelly@nihe.gov.uk">seamus.kelly@nihe.gov.uk</a></p>
<p>West Area Office                      Richmond Chambers                      The Diamond                      Londonderry                      BT48 6QP</p>	<p>Mr Sean Mackie                      Area Manager</p>	<p>Fax No. 028 7126 6678  <a href="mailto:sean.mackie@nihe.gov.uk">sean.mackie@nihe.gov.uk</a></p>
	<p>Mrs Hazel Faithfull                      Information Officer</p>	<p>Fax No. 028 7130 6329  <a href="mailto:hazel.faithfull@nihe.gov.uk">hazel.faithfull@nihe.gov.uk</a></p>
	<p>Mr Kevin McDowell                      Customer Service Unit                      Manager</p>	<p>Fax No. 028 7126 6678  <a href="mailto:kevin.mcdowell@nihe.gov.uk">kevin.mcdowell@nihe.gov.uk</a></p>
	<p>Mr Gerry Deeney                      Land and Property Manager</p>	<p>Fax No. 028 7130 6128  <a href="mailto:gerry.deeney@nihe.gov.uk">gerry.deeney@nihe.gov.uk</a></p>
<p>Mr Michael Dallat                      Service Unit Manager –                      Housing Benefit</p>	<p>Fax No. 028 7126 6678  <a href="mailto:michael.dallat@nihe.gov.uk">michael.dallat@nihe.gov.uk</a></p>	
<p>West Area Planning                      3 Horace Street                      Londonderry                      BT48 6JS</p>	<p>Mr Brendan Adams                      Area Planner</p>	<p>Fax No. 028 7130 6133  <a href="mailto:brendan.adams@nihe.gov.uk">brendan.adams@nihe.gov.uk</a></p>
<p>Grants Office                      3 Horace Street                      Londonderry                      BT48 6JS</p>	<p>Mr William Carlin                      Grants Manager</p>	<p>Fax No. 028 7130 6133  <a href="mailto:derrygrants@nihe.gov.uk">derrygrants@nihe.gov.uk</a></p>
<p>HMO West                      Regional HMO Office                      19 Abbey Street                      Coleraine                      BT52 1DU</p>	<p>Mr Paul Ahern                      HMO Manager</p>	<p>Fax No. 028 3831 5736  <a href="mailto:hmo.craigavon@nihe.gov.uk">hmo.craigavon@nihe.gov.uk</a></p>
<p>Rural Housing Unit                      Housing Centre                      2 Adelaide Street                      Belfast                      BT2 8PB</p>	<p>Mr Michael Conway                      Rural Housing                      Co-ordinator</p>	<p>Fax No. 028 9031 8775  <a href="mailto:michael.conway@nihe.gov.uk">michael.conway@nihe.gov.uk</a></p>

Office	Contact	Contact Information
Supporting People 3rd Floor Housing Centre 2 Adelaide Street Belfast, BT2 8PB	Mrs Louise Clarke West Area Lead Officer	Fax No. 028 9031 8391 <a href="mailto:supportingpeople@nihe.gov.uk">supportingpeople@nihe.gov.uk</a>

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)	<a href="http://www.nifha.org">www.nifha.org</a> Tel No. 028 9023 0446
Department for Social Development: Housing Operations Branch	<a href="http://www.dsdni.gov.uk">www.dsdni.gov.uk</a> 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](http://www.dsdni.gov.uk)) and the Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations, the trade body for housing associations in Northern Ireland ([www.nifha.org](http://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](http://www.nieenergy.co.uk) and Airtricity [www.airtricity.com](http://www.airtricity.com). In relation to natural gas there are two suppliers, Phoenix Natural Gas [www.phoenixgroupni.com](http://www.phoenixgroupni.com) and Firmus Energy [www.firmusenergy.co.uk](http://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](http://www.oilpricecheck.co.uk) and [www.cheapestoil.co.uk](http://www.cheapestoil.co.uk)

## Appendix 7: Useful Documents

NIHE Grants Newsletter

[http://www.nihe.gov.uk/derry\\_grants\\_newsletter\\_2010.pdf](http://www.nihe.gov.uk/derry_grants_newsletter_2010.pdf)

Housing News

[http://www.nihe.gov.uk/strabane\\_housing\\_news\\_2010.pdf](http://www.nihe.gov.uk/strabane_housing_news_2010.pdf)

Housing News Special Winter Edition January 2011

[http://www.nihe.gov.uk/housing\\_news\\_special\\_winter\\_edition\\_2011.pdf](http://www.nihe.gov.uk/housing_news_special_winter_edition_2011.pdf)

House Condition Survey 2009

[http://www.nihe.gov.uk/index/sp\\_home/research-2/house\\_condition\\_survey.htm](http://www.nihe.gov.uk/index/sp_home/research-2/house_condition_survey.htm)

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

Corporate Plan 2009/12

[http://www.nihe.gov.uk/corporate\\_plan\\_2010-11.pdf](http://www.nihe.gov.uk/corporate_plan_2010-11.pdf)

Mapping BME & Migrant Worker Communities in NI

<http://www.nihe.gov.uk/equality.htm>

Wheelchair User Housing Study

[www.nihe.gov.uk/wheelchairreport.pdf](http://www.nihe.gov.uk/wheelchairreport.pdf)

Second Homes Report

[www.nihe.gov.uk/second\\_homes\\_final\\_report.pdf](http://www.nihe.gov.uk/second_homes_final_report.pdf)

Home Energy Conservation Report 2010

[www.nihe.gov.uk/home\\_energy\\_conservation\\_report\\_2010.pdf](http://www.nihe.gov.uk/home_energy_conservation_report_2010.pdf)

Rural Matters – January 2011

[http://www.nihe.gov.uk/rural\\_matters\\_january\\_2011.pdf](http://www.nihe.gov.uk/rural_matters_january_2011.pdf)

Grants Newsletter 2010

[www.nihe.gov.uk/derry\\_grants\\_newsletter\\_2010.pdf](http://www.nihe.gov.uk/derry_grants_newsletter_2010.pdf)

## Strategy Documents

The Homelessness Strategy

[www.nihe.gov.uk/homelessness\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.nihe.gov.uk/homelessness_strategy.pdf)

Independent Living

[www.nihe.gov.uk/index/sp\\_home/strategies/independent\\_living-2.htm](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.nihe.gov.uk/older_people_housing_policy_review_action_plan_2008-2010.pdf)

Analysis of future need and demand for appropriate models of accommodation and associated services for older people (feb 2011)

[http://www.nihe.gov.uk/analysis\\_of\\_the\\_future\\_need\\_and\\_demand\\_for\\_appropriate\\_models\\_of\\_accommodation\\_and\\_associated\\_services\\_for\\_older\\_people\\_published\\_february\\_2011.pdf](http://www.nihe.gov.uk/analysis_of_the_future_need_and_demand_for_appropriate_models_of_accommodation_and_associated_services_for_older_people_published_february_2011.pdf)

Community Safety

[www.nihe.gov.uk/building\\_safer\\_communities\\_community\\_safety\\_strategy\\_2008-11.pdf](http://www.nihe.gov.uk/building_safer_communities_community_safety_strategy_2008-11.pdf)

Race Relations

[www.nihe.gov.uk/racerelationspolicy.pdf](http://www.nihe.gov.uk/racerelationspolicy.pdf)

Good Relations

[www.nihe.gov.uk/index/sp\\_home/strategies/community\\_cohesion-2.htm](http://www.nihe.gov.uk/index/sp_home/strategies/community_cohesion-2.htm)

Energy

[http://www.nihe.gov.uk/2009\\_heca\\_report.pdf](http://www.nihe.gov.uk/2009_heca_report.pdf)

Rural Action Plan 2009/10 – 2012/13

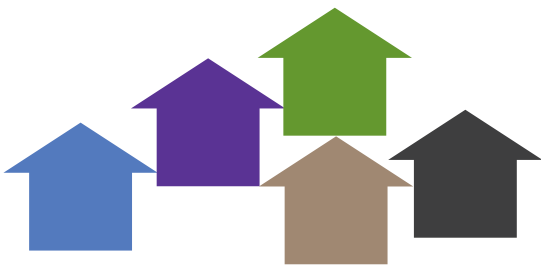
[http://www.nihe.gov.uk/rural\\_action\\_plan.pdf](http://www.nihe.gov.uk/rural_action_plan.pdf)

Travellers

[www.nihe.gov.uk/travellers\\_accommodation\\_needs\\_assessment\\_2008.pdf](http://www.nihe.gov.uk/travellers_accommodation_needs_assessment_2008.pdf)

A Masterplan for Strabane Town Centre, September 2010

[http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/strabane\\_masterplan.pdf](http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/strabane_masterplan.pdf)



This document is available  
in alternative formats.

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Fax: (028) 9031 8775  
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[www.nihe.gov.uk](http://www.nihe.gov.uk)