

Area Housing Plan - Cowdenbeath 2023-26



Welcome to the Cowdenbeath Area Housing Plan.

We have produced a Housing Neighbourhood Plan with our customers for each of the 7 Areas in Fife, and this is yours, covering;

- Cowdenbeath, Lumphinnans
- Crossgates, Kelty, Lochore, Crosshill & Hill of Beath
- Lochgelly, Cardenden & Ballingry

The Cowdenbeath area is covered by Electoral Wards 7 & 8.

Our aim is to provide everyone with access to good quality, affordable decent housing that meets their need and aspirations.

The purpose of the Area Housing Plan is to show how we work with partners and local communities to improve housing services in the Area.

You told us about your concerns and issues where you live, and together we have identified what needs done.

We looked at how well we are doing managing your homes to prioritise which services we need to improve.

We work closely with tenants, residents and elected members. We included your ideas in our finished plan where we could. The Area Housing Plan was approved by Cowdenbeath Area Committee on 14th June 2023.

The diagram below shows links between this aim and the strategies, policies and plans supporting it.

The plan contributes to the [Plan4Fife](#), which is a 10-year plan, putting fairness at the heart of everything we do, bringing services and communities together in new ways.

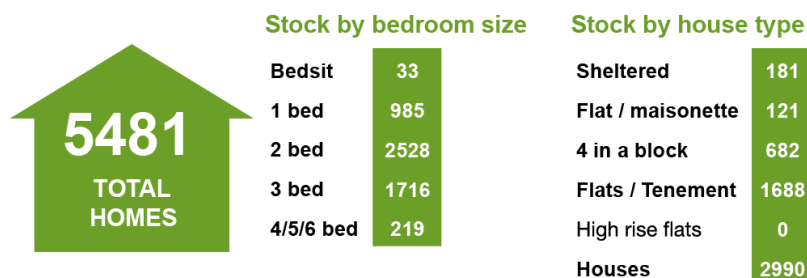
We also have a [Cowdenbeath Local Community plan](#), which outlines areas of focus.

Tenants and residents are interested in how we allocate our homes. We are in the process of developing Local Lettings Plan, which will provide more allocation information at a local level. Commitment has been made to have the revised Local Lettings Plan taken to Area Committee on 6th September 2023.



Housing in the Cowdenbeath Area

Stock April 21



The above information is provided for Fife Council Stock only. You can use our new [property map](#) to see the areas where the Fife Housing Register partners have properties.

This map will let you know the number of properties that we have in each area so that you can make an informed decision about your preferred areas of choice when you submit your Fife Housing Register application.

Allocations 2020/21



Letting Plan

Our annual Letting Plan sets out the profile of properties we expect to become available over the following year and how we intend to distribute those properties between different groups of applicants. These include:

- Homeless
- Transfer
- Waiting

Managed Tenancies



Anti Social Behaviour

Our Anti Social Behaviour policy sets out our approach for managing antisocial behaviour in Fife. We aim to provide a firm and fair approach to tenants (including their family members and visitors) who do not comply fully with the terms of their tenancy agreement, so that all residents can enjoy their homes free from antisocial behaviour.

New Builds

Over recent years, in Cowdenbeath, the Council has delivered affordable homes in Lochgelly, Cowdenbeath and Lumphinnans.

Our Affordable Housing Programme is one of the largest in Scotland. We currently have 2,700 new build homes throughout Fife. Our target was to build at least 3,500 more by 2024 thereafter to be determined.

We provide access to much needed new homes for our tenants and housing applicants. Together, we are delivering modern, fit-for-purpose, energy-efficient homes. New-build council homes benefit current tenants and generations to come.

You can find out more about what is planned in Cowdenbeath Area by viewing our [Strategic Housing Investment Plan projects](#).

Investing in your home

Over the next 3 years we will continue to improve our existing homes to meet the expectations of our tenants. These include:

- Kitchens
- Central Heating
- Bathrooms
- Roofs
- Rewiring
- Smoke detectors
- Secure door entry
- Structural works
- Electrical Testing
- External Walls

Rate your estates: What we found

We compared our housing in the Cowdenbeath Area with the rest of Fife, and with other landlords in Scotland. This showed what our neighbourhood priorities should be.

Most of our homes are two/three bedroomed houses, which is what people like. We also have some less popular sizes and types. We have a low demand for 3-bedroom flats particularly in Kelty, Benarty & Lochgelly. However we have a low stock of 5/6 bedroomed houses for large families

Housing stock turn over, has slowed with a reduction of council owned properties turning over in the last year. Most of the area is in relatively high demand, making access to affordable housing more difficult for those in housing need. We have difficulty allocating properties in very specific areas where there is low demand.

Housing Options Officers work hard to meet a range of housing needs providing a balance of allocations to existing tenants, those who are homeless and applicants on the waiting list.

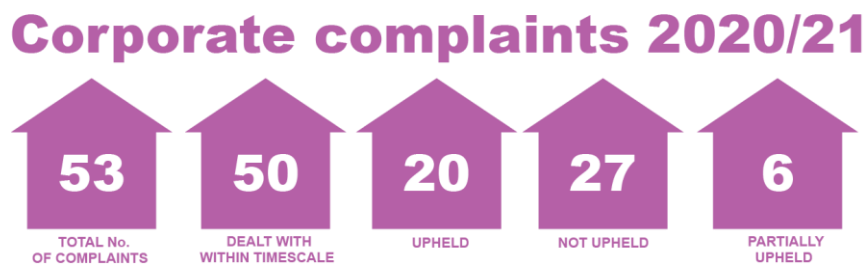
Our tenants need more assistance with support in sustaining their tenancies with money advice and fuel poverty advice. Rent arrears are still an area of concern. The cost of living crisis and economic uncertainty which is making it difficult for some households to pay basic bills or access benefits.

There is a Fife wide commitment to achieve the highest possible standard of housing through programmes to replace kitchens, bathrooms, windows, doors etc.

Rate your estates: What you told us

We have carried out estate walkabouts, spoken with local Councillors and tenant groups where this has been possible, listened to customer comments and complaints and by investing in our patch-based officers we are talking to customers more directly about estate issues and matters which directly affect our customers. We have incorporated specific issues brought to our attention into an Action Plan.

Corporate Complaints received in the Cowdenbeath Area during 2020/21



Housing Complaints are handled in accordance with [Fife Councils Complaints procedure](#) and should in the first instance, be investigated locally.

Complaints are a valuable source of information about our services, which can help to identify recurring or underlying problems.

We use complaints to make improvements to the way we deliver services, this can be through training and development or changes to policy and procedures.

The top 5 reasons for all complaints in the Cowdenbeath Area (with numbers of complaints) were recorded as follows;

Top 5 reasons for all Complaints 2020-21

Complaint Reasons

Dissatisfaction with policy / current delivery arrangements eg timescales, priorities, criteria

12

Delays in Start / Completion

7

Dispute with Neighbours

6

Poor communications including lack of notice, consultation & engagement

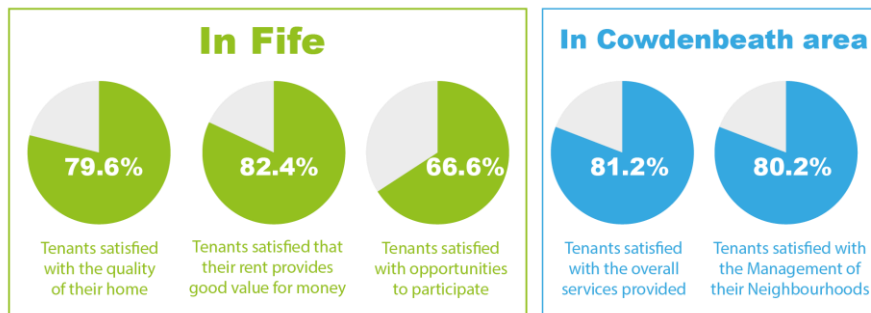
6

Dissatisfaction with policy / current arrangements including allocations criteria

4

Customer satisfaction

As well as consulting locally and addressing complaints, we carry out customer satisfaction surveys as part of our [annual performance reporting](#) and you have told us;



Tenant Participation

Our tenants should be involved in the housing services they receive. We ask you to share your views and take part in decision making. We want to work alongside you to provide for the community.

Getting involved gives you a greater voice. Our [tenant participation and customer engagement handbook](#) tells you more.

Our quarterly magazine, [Down Your Street](#), is also a good way to keep up to date with what we are doing and how you can get involved.

For more information on how to get involved, have a look through our [Tenant Participation](#) page on our website.

We currently have 4 active TRAs in the Cowdenbeath Area, these are:

- Cardenden
- Ore Valley, Cardenden
- Cedar House, Lumphinnans
- Sunnyside Court, Cowdenbeath

FIFE FEDERATION OF TENANTS AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION (FFOTRA)

9a Hunter Street, Kirkcaldy, KY1 1ED.

01592 641968

enquiries@ffotra.co.uk

Local Issues Action Plan

Issues	Where ?	Proposed Action	Timescale/ Updates
Lack of Affordable Housing	All Cowdenbeath Areas	Liaise with Affordable Housing Team to build larger family homes	97 Affordable homes completed by Winter 2024
		Best Use of Stock through tenant incentive scheme	Target of 6 per financial year.
	Ballingry	Completion and identification of regeneration sites	1 identified demolition site ongoing. completion Target Spring 2024
Improving Estates	All Cowdenbeath Areas	Consider requests for replacement fencing based on guidance and available funding streams	Target of 2 per financial year
		Identify Estates Action Areas – inclusive Estates walk-about	Annual Review
		Liaise with waste management and Grounds Maintenance to reduce litter and debris in open spaces	
Lack Of Parking	All Cowdenbeath Areas	Demolition and upgrade programme of Lock-up sites	
		Small parking projects to be identified (Maximum of 2 per financial year)	Target of 2 per financial year.
Anti-Social Behaviour	All Cowdenbeath Areas	Continue close partnership working to reduce Anti-Social Behaviour	
		Increase the number of Housing First Tenancies in the Cowdenbeath Area	Target of 10 per year
		Through Anti-Social Behaviour policy, take robust action against perpetrators of antisocial behaviour	
Repairs and Maintenance	All Cowdenbeath Areas	Increased visual inspections to identify properties for external	

Measuring Success

The [Cowdenbeath Area Committee](#) will monitor how well we are doing against the local commitments outlined in this leaflet. Our plans will be reviewed and refreshed every three years to make sure they continue to reflect local priorities.

Your Area Housing Team

Supporting the plan and delivering services to tenants is your local Housing Team, led by Housing Manager Amanda Cathrew and Lead Officers Janet Scade, Leanne Dunn and Lewis Henderson.

We have 9 Housing Options Officers who manage the empty houses and allocate to new tenants. They provide advice and guidance for anyone faced with homelessness as well as provide housing options advice. They have a wide range of knowledge about [housing options](#) and can meet with tenants and applicants to explain these.

In the last few years, we have recruited additional Housing Management Officers and now deploy **23** in total who are the main point of contact for tenants, and their job is to link you in to all the [services you need](#) whether repairs, money advice, coping with heating bills, problem neighbours, contacting local job clubs. The list is as long as you need!

In Cowdenbeath we also have Very Sheltered Housing Officers, Retirement Housing Officers and Revenues Officers we can call on to provide extra help. During 2019-20 we created specialist posts to assist tenants who have issues with Universal Credit.

Come and speak to us at the following offices

[Benarty Customer Service Centre](#)

[Cowdenbeath Customer Service Centre](#)

[Cardenden Customer Service Centre](#)

[Lochgelly Customer Service Centre](#)

[Kelty Customer Service Point](#)

Useful contacts

Online:

<https://www.fife.gov.uk/>

By phone:

Faults and repairs (housing, roads, streetlights) - **03451 550011**

Environment (bins, bulky uplifts, pests) - **03451 550022**

Housing information and advice - **03451 550033**

Council tax and housing benefit - **03451 551155**

Passes and concessions (myfife cards, blue badges) - **03451 550066**

Social Work enquiries - **03451 551503**

Out of hours - **03451 550099** For social work, housing and flooding emergencies - after 5pm week days, 24hrs weekends and public holidays.

Calling 03 numbers costs the same as calling landlines starting with 01. 03 numbers are included in pre-paid phone packages and monthly call allowances. Customers should check tariffs with their phone providers.