

Buy-Back Strategy 2021 - 2026

1. Strategic Aim

The Right to Buy Scheme that was active between 1980 and 2016 resulted in thousands of social rented properties being sold.

This strategy aims to outline Shire Housing Association's approach to buying back these properties within the East Ayrshire (EA) area.

The current Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) of East Ayrshire Council (EAC) that supports the Affordable Housing programme (AHP) by purchasing properties from the open market and directly from owners, includes provision for Shire concluding 3 buy-backs annually to:

Augment the supply of affordable housing in high demand areas to consolidate Shire Housing Association's stock and to respond to identified community care needs.

Subsequently, this strategy seeks to apply a purchasing approach in areas of greatest demand to assist those in the greatest need of housing.

The focus will be for these to be former social rented properties however, in certain circumstances such as particular housing need, other properties may be considered.

All properties that are purchased will be improved to meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) & Energy Efficiency Standard for Scottish Social Housing (EESSSH 1 & 2).

2. Objectives

- Meet demand (including community care needs) in the areas of most need as reported in the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment (HNDA).
- Assist in the delivery of the EACs Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan.
- Identify properties on the open market or through speculative requests from owners.
- Assist EAC in delivering the Affordable Housing programme.
- Raise the standard of housing in EA by improving all properties to meet SHQS & EESSSH.
- Work alongside EACs Empty Homes team to identify potential properties to acquire to bring back into use.

3. Criteria



- A property will be considered under the process where it meets at least one of the
- following criteria:
- Resolve a Homeless Situation / Prevent Homelessness
- To help meet housing need where there are significant pressures and limited opportunities to build new homes
- To facilitate Estate Action or Regeneration Schemes
- To facilitate New Build Schemes
- To meet specific tenant's' housing needs for more smaller sized or adapted properties by adopting a transfer-led approach to maximise housing opportunities
- To extend affordable, social housing options with diversification of Shires stock portfolio throughout East Ayrshire and surrounding areas.

It is recognised that this strategy should address the need to for social housing tenants to have the opportunity to upsize, downsize or move to more suitably adapted or adaptable properties.

4. Cost and Value for Money (VFM)

Shire HA shall seek to ensure costs are appropriate and VFM is achieved with any property purchase, using appropriately qualified persons in the valuation and acquisition of any property.

The price paid will not exceed the valuation unless in exceptional circumstances. A pre-requisite for agreement to purchase will be that an estimate of repairs and improvements costs to meet the SHQS and the EESSH will be obtained through a condition survey.

These costs plus the purchase price should not normally exceed the valuation and / or new build benchmark costs for the property type.

The Scottish Government's maximum grant of £30k per property in East Ayrshire, shall be applied.

5. Budget

The Head of Corporate Services is responsible for the Capital Budget to finance purchases of private properties.

The budget for the Scheme is set each financial year and includes application for funding to Scottish Governments Housing and Regeneration Programmes.

The Head of Housing will manage and maintain a budget monitor.

J. Allison August 2021

