

29th August 2023
Agenda Item No.

Area Housing Plan 2023-26

Report by: John Mills, Head of Housing Services

Wards Affected: 9, 10, 11 and 12

Purpose

The report seeks area committee approval for a revised area housing plan which sets out area performance, service delivery and highlights key housing issues following consultation with key stakeholders.

Recommendation

Members are asked to consider and approve the Kirkcaldy Area Housing Plan for 2023 – 2026.

Resource Implications

Work is taking place within agreed HRA local and capital budgets.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no legal / risk implications arising from this report.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA (Equality Impact Assessment) is not required because the report does not propose a change or revision to existing policies and practices.

Consultation

An online consultation form was developed and shared with key stakeholders from 10/04/2023 - 21/05/2023, extended until 18/06/2023.

Identified key stakeholders

- Tenants & Resident Groups
- Fife Federation of Tenants & Residents Associations
- Elected Members / MP / MSP
- Community Councils
- People & Place Leadership Group
- Tenant Participation Team social media to target local tenants & residents
- Safer Communities social media to target local tenants & residents
- Our Kirkcaldy social media to target local tenants & residents

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Council has a vision to create a fairer Fife where all residents live good lives, make informed choices and have a sense of control so that they can reach their full potential and where all children are safe, happy and healthy. At the heart of the Plan for Fife is the aim to reduce inequalities and to promote fairness in everything that we do. It is recognised that having a fairer Fife will benefit everyone. Housing Services, as the largest landlord in Fife, can improve the lives and opportunities of its tenants through effective neighbourhood management and community led improvement initiatives.
- 1.2 The Area Housing Plan shows how we work with partners and local communities to improve housing services in the area. Tenant and residents have told us their concerns and issues where they live and together we have identified what we can do to address these issues. We have looked at how well we are doing managing our homes to prioritise which services we need to improve.
- 1.3 The plan links into different policies and strategies across Fife including; Plan 4 Fife, Local Housing Strategy, Kirkcaldy Local Community Plan, Area Lettings Plan and Pathway to Improvement.

2.0 Development of the Area Housing Plan

- 2.1 The previous Area Housing Plan covered the period 2019 - 2021. Since then, we have lived with the restrictions of the coronavirus pandemic which included our inability to have meaningful consultation to inform our Area Housing Plan and the production of a new Plan would have been difficult during this time of uncertainty.
- 2.2 In order to consult with our communities for this new Plan, we developed an online consultation form to gather the views of key stakeholders. We asked people what the three main housing issues are in their opinion and for any ideas that would help in addressing these issues. Despite being widely publicised, we only received 75 responses.
- 2.3 Tenant participation is a key part of our housing strategy. Being part of organised groups gives our tenants and residents a greater voice when talking about local issues. We are getting back into our local communities to gain a better understanding. We have therefore developed an online consultation to gather feedback as well as meeting with local TRA's and FFOTRA.
- 2.4 We also consulted separately with elected members and used ongoing communications with Community Councils to gain an understanding of what was important to the people they represent in the communities. The Local Issues Action Plan (Appendix 1 of the Area Housing Plan) has been developed as a result of this consultation and feedback. Updates on the Local Issues Action Plan will be given at quarterly Ward meetings and annually at Kirkcaldy Area Committee ensuring Housing Services are held accountable for the local issues identified.
- 2.5 The Area Housing Plan highlights performance and states tenants in Kirkcaldy Area are 81% satisfied with the overall service provided. 78% of tenants are satisfied with the management of their neighbourhoods. Through actions in our Local Issues Action Plan, we aim to increase these satisfaction rates.
- 2.6 Over recent years, in Kirkcaldy, the Council has delivered Affordable Housing in Kirkcaldy. We have linked in our Strategic Housing Investment Plan to give readers the opportunity to explore potential new builds sites across Fife.

- 2.7 We have highlighted the role of our investment programme and our intention to continue to invest in our homes. Investments include; kitchens, central heating, bathrooms, roofs, rewiring, smoke detectors, secure door entry systems, structural works, electrical testing and external walls.

3.0 Local Issues Action Plan

- 3.1 The consultation highlighted the need for more affordable housing in the Kirkcaldy Area and we will provide an update to the Area Committee on planned new build projects for the Area, and the number of properties purchased through our Property Acquisitions Policy. Lack of family housing / specific needs housing was recognised as a key housing issue throughout the area. We will provide feedback on the number of tenants who have downsized using the Tenant Incentive Scheme, we will build larger family homes, we will ensure 30% of the affordable housing programme is for specific needs customers including 5% for wheelchair housing and will carry out adaptations to existing homes to keep tenants at home where feasible.
- 3.2 The consultation highlighted the need for additional parking as a key housing issue. We will demolish underoccupied lock ups or where they are uneconomical to repair, and replace with marked parking bays or greenspace where appropriate.
- 3.3 Condition of estates was identified as an important housing issue. We are committed to a number of projects throughout the area which will see improvements to the communal areas of some of our flatted properties. We have also committed to carrying out more estate walkabouts so that we can work together with the tenants and residents to identify further issues that they feel are important to address.
- 3.4 We will continue to work in partnership with Safer Communities and take robust action against perpetrators of anti-social behaviour. We will utilise allocation discretion where appropriate and increase the number of "Housing First" tenancies within the area.
- 3.5 The consultation also identified tenants were concerned about the standard of their homes. We will utilise the information from the environmental sensors to give a better understanding of how tenants use their homes and how to prevent damp and mould. We will increase visual inspections to identify areas for external maintenance.

4.0 Area Lettings Plan

- 4.1 Fife Council have increased the number of properties by 74 since the last plan with 2 developments due back this year comprising of an additional 49 properties. FHR partners have increased their stock by 199 properties.
- 4.2 There are more people looking for rehousing in the Kirkcaldy Area than we have housing becoming available. There is a lack of larger properties within the Area and we are committed to identifying areas for development to include larger family homes.
- 4.3 We continue to offer housing options advice which provides applicants with information on all tenure types which are available, maximising their opportunities for re-housing.

- 4.4 The Home Swap scheme continues to see increased number of households registering their interest in moving to more suitable properties with 46 completed exchanges taking place last year.
- 4.5 We will look at 3 Community Lettings Initiatives for the area outlined in the plan with 6 monthly reviews where relevant, to ensure the desired outcome is being achieved.

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 Through the Area Housing Plan, we have identified local issues and have set out an action plan to highlight / address these. This is intended to encourage member scrutiny of our work to address those concerns and demonstrate improved outcomes.
- 5.2 The Area Lettings Plan sets out the stock profile, identifying where there is housing need and how we intend to improve the lack of larger family homes, as well as a plan to create a balanced community.

List of Appendices

1. Kirkcaldy Area Housing Plan 2023 - 26 (see also link to online document below)
2. Local Issues Action Plan
3. Lettings Plan

Report Contact

Elaine Campbell
Kirkcaldy Area Housing Manager
Town House, Kirkcaldy
Email: elaine.campbell@fife.gov.uk

Area Housing Plan - Kirkcaldy 2023-26



Welcome to the Kirkcaldy 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;

- Auchtertool
- Burntisland
- Dysart
- Kinghorn
- Kirkcaldy

Our aim is to provide everyone with access to good quality, affordable 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 Kirkcaldy Area Housing Plan was **approved by Kirkcaldy Area Committee on _____**

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 [Kirkcaldy 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.



Housing in the Kirkcaldy Area

Stock April 23



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 2022/23



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:

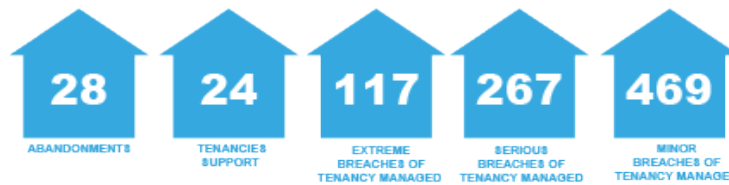
Homeless

Transfer

Waiting

We have 2572 applicants within Fife requesting housing in the Kirkcaldy Area, while there are 2681 applicants living in the Kirkcaldy area requesting to be rehoused.

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 Kirkcaldy, the Council has delivered affordable homes in Kirkcaldy and Kinghorn.

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 Kirkcaldy by viewing our [Strategic Housing Investment Plan projects](#).

Investing in your home

Over the next 2 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 Kirkcaldy with the rest of Fife, and with other landlords in Scotland. This showed what our neighbourhood priorities should be.

Around 65% of our homes throughout the area are flat style properties which include 6 high rise blocks. Our overall stock consists mainly of two/three properties and have only 2.7% of larger family homes of 4+ bedrooms.

Housing stock turnover 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.

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.

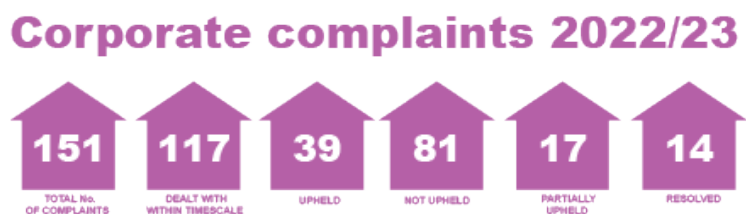
There is a Fife wide commitment to achieve the highest possible standard of housing through programmes to replace kitchens, bathrooms, windows, doors etc.

Insight 6

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 Kirkcaldy during 2022/23



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 Kirkcaldy (with numbers of complaints) were recorded as follows;

Complaint Reasons

Poor communications including lack of notice, consultation & engagement

18

Failure to respond to previous complaint / request for service / enquiry / reported fault

19

Inappropriate staff attitude / behaviour

4

Rubbish

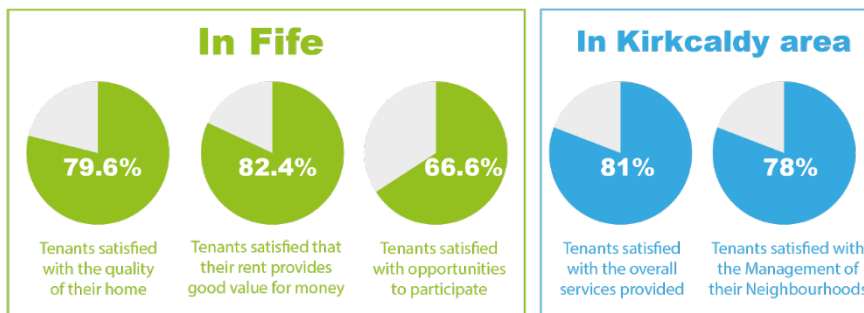
17

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

10

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 9 active TRAs in Kirkcaldy, these are:

- Turriff Place TRA
- Lindores & Katrine TRA
- Central Burntisland TRA
- Allan Court Tenants Association
- Highlands & Islands TRA
- New Linktown TRA
- Inveriel TRA
- Forth View TRA
- Ravensraig TRA

FIFE FEDERATION OF TENANTS AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION (FFOTRA)
9a Hunter Street, Kirkcaldy, KY1 1ED.
01592 641968 enquiries@ffotra.co.uk

Your Area Housing Team

Supporting the plan and delivering services to tenants is your local Housing Team, led by Housing Manager Elaine Campbell and Lead Officers Laura Back, Laura Beveridge, Lisa Taylor and Fiona Matthew.

We have 14 Housing Options Officers who manage the empty houses and allocate to new tenants. 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 **25** 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 Kirkcaldy we also have Caretakers, Very Sheltered Housing Officers, Retirement Housing Officers, Homeless 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:

[Kirkcaldy Customer Service Centre \(Town House\)](#)

Useful contacts

Online:

www.fifedirect.org.uk/doitonline

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.

Measuring Success

The [Kirkcaldy 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 two years to make sure they continue to reflect local priorities.

Appendix 2 – Local Issues Action Plan

Issue	Where?	Solutions from consultation survey / Area Housing team	How will we report updates?
Lack of Affordable Housing	All areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with Affordable Housing Team to build larger family homes • Completion and identification of regeneration sites • Purchase ex council homes through our Property Acquisitions policy 	6 Monthly to Area Committee
Lack of family housing / specific needs	All areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make better use of tenant incentive scheme to get larger properties back • Build bigger properties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 10 new properties in 2023/24 of which 8 are 4+ bedrooms (excluding 39 two-bedroomed flatted properties in the High Street development) • Ensuring 30% of the affordable housing programme is for specific needs customers including 5% for wheelchair housing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 49 new properties in 2023/24 of which 20 are specific needs with 3 being wheelchair housing • Carry out adaptations to existing homes to keep tenants at home 	6 Monthly to Area Committee
Improving Estates	All areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify Estate Action plans through estate walk-about • Liaise with Waste Management and Grounds Maintenance to reduce litter and debris in open spaces • Regularly inspect tenants garden to ensure they are up to standard • Regularly inspect properties for choked gutters, vegetation, and maintenance issues. • Regular maintenance of trees, shrubs, weeds, and grass cutting on Housing land. 	6 Monthly to Area Committee
Lack of parking	All areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify under occupied lock up sites that have been void for 6 months or more and have no waiting lists or are uneconomical to repair. • Demolish and replace with parking bays where required on a phased approach 	6 Monthly to Area Committee
Anti-Social Behaviour	All areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue close partnership working to reduce anti-social behaviour • Take robust action against perpetrators of anti-social behaviour • Expand Housing First cases from Under 25's category to include Over 25's, providing support to help sustain tenancies 	6 Monthly to Area Committee
Repairs & Maintenance	All areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased visual inspections to identify properties for external maintenance • Monitor readings from Environmental Sensors within homes 	6 Monthly to Area Committee



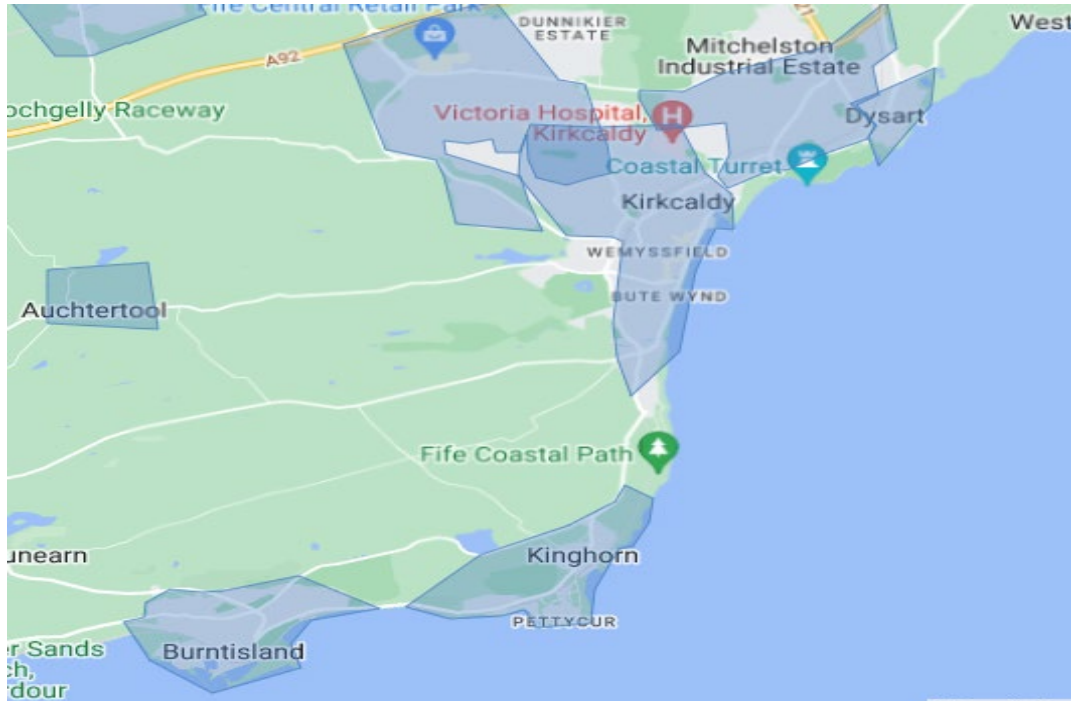
Kirkcaldy Area Lettings Plan

August 2023 – August 2026

Welcome

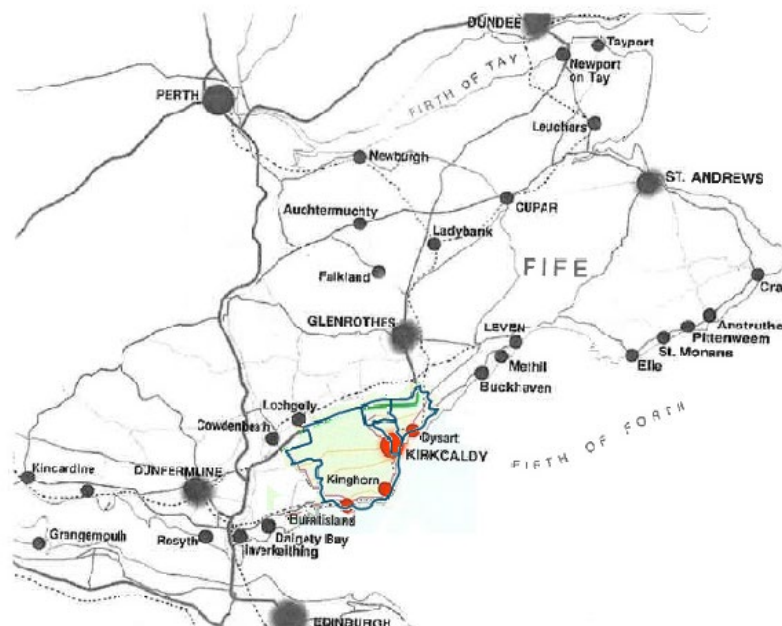
Welcome to the Kirkcaldy Area Local Lettings Plan. We have produced a Housing Area Plan with our customers for each of the 7 Areas in Fife.

The Kirkcaldy Area Local Lettings Plan covers 7 lettings areas across the 4 Area Committee wards. These include Burntisland, Kinghorn, Auchtertool, Kirkcaldy Central, Kirkcaldy West, Kirkcaldy East and Dysart.



This plan sets out how we aim to make the best use of housing available, respond to Council pressures and challenges as well as plan for new build and other changes within the housing stock in the area.

We will give annual updates on progress with the plan to the Committee, and in between times we will update <https://www.fife.gov.uk/kb/housing> with events, progress and completed actions.



Link to other Documents:

Allocations Policy – https://www.fife.gov.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0023/163436/Housing-allocations-policy-March22.pdf

Area Housing Plan [Kirkcaldy Area Housing Plan](#)

About the Kirkcaldy Area

The table below details the housing stock by property type and size in all lettings areas within the Kirkcaldy area with information available July 2023.

Fife Council has a total of 6952 properties in the Kirkcaldy area. The chart below details the breakdown of the housing stock by property type and number of bedrooms.

Fife Council Stock	Bedsit	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	5 Bed	6 Bed	8 Bed	Totals
Sheltered Bungalow		131	21						152
Bungalow		323	46	16	1				386
Ground 4 in block	23	244	622	187	38				1115
Ground Floor Flat	33	250	313	4					600
Ground floor sheltered	5	94	1						99
House	1		916	732	93	13	5	1	1760
Maisonette		1	347	148	8				504
Multi-Storey		111	224						335
Upper 4 in block		218	580	214	34				1051
Upper Flat	5	301	569	53					928
Upper Floor sheltered		22							22
Total	67	1695	3639	1355	174	14	5	1	6952

The following is a link to a map on the FHR website which gives the total stock profile by all FHR partners for reference. <https://www.fifehousingregister.org.uk/properties-map>

Fife Housing Registers Partners

The Fife Housing Register is made up of 13 organisations with Fife Council being the largest partner.

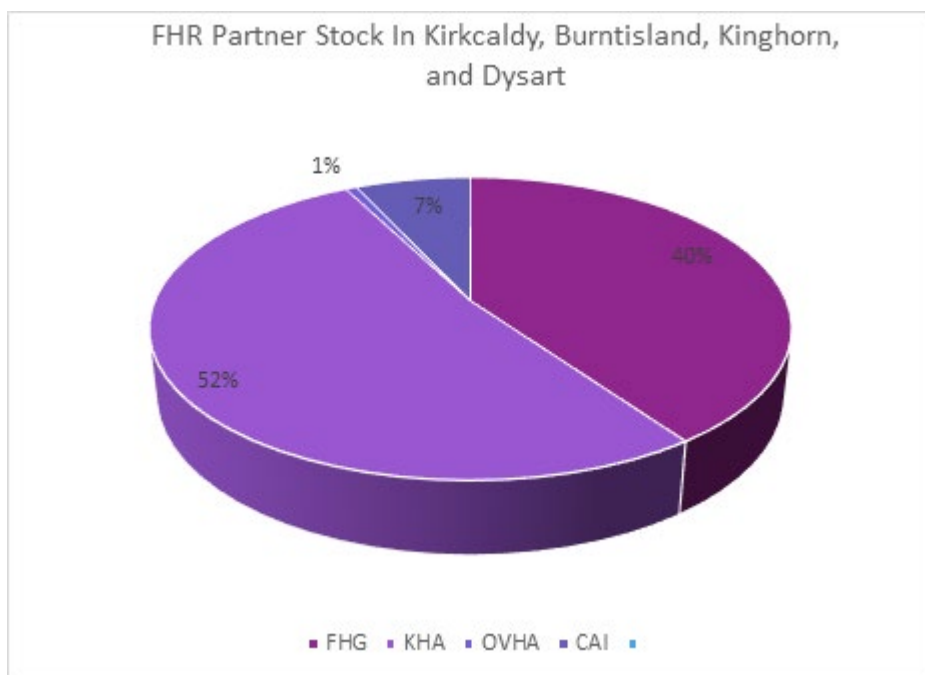
Fife Housing Register partners who have housing in the Kirkcaldy area are:

- Fife Council
- Kingdom Housing Association
- Fife Housing Group
- Ore Valley Housing Association
- Cairn Housing Association

The chart below details the breakdown of the housing stock by property type and number of bedrooms for our five Housing Register Partners combined housing stock in the Kirkcaldy Area (excluding Fife Council).

FHR Partner Stock	Bedsit	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	5 Bed	Totals
Sheltered Bungalow			2				
Bungalow			6	46	2	1	55
Ground 4 in block			3	41			44
Ground Floor Flat	1	70	77		1	1	150
Ground floor sheltered			34	0			34
House			1	121	282	25	430
Maisonette			0	2			2
Multi-Storey			0	0			0
Upper 4 in block			3	41			44
Upper Flat	1	123	180		17		321
Upper Floor sheltered			13				13
Total	2	255	508	302	27	1	1176

- Kingdom have the highest stock levels of FHR partners with 625 properties
- 35% of Kingdom's stock are upper flats – 35% of their overall stock
- Fife Housing have the largest stock of 3+ properties with 216 – 46% of their overall stock
- Fife Housing have 466 in Kirkcaldy – 61% of these are house types
- 43% of Cairn Housing stock is retirement/sheltered housing
- 81% of Cairn Housing's stock are 1 bedrooms.
- Ore Valley only have 6 properties in Kirkcaldy



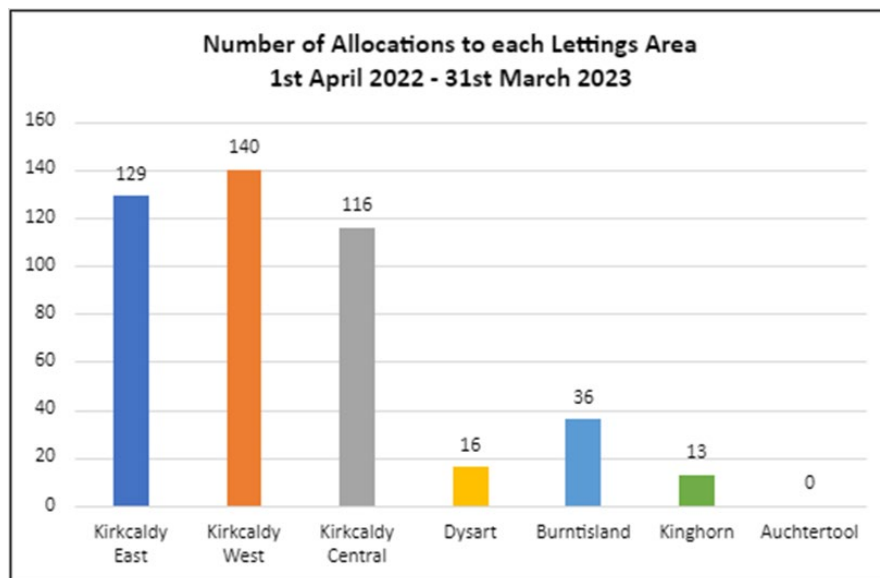
Alternative Housing Providers in the Kirkcaldy Area

There are also other housing providers in the Kirkcaldy Area who may meet housing needs. These organisations are:

- Viewpoint Housing Association
- Trust Housing Association
- Link Group

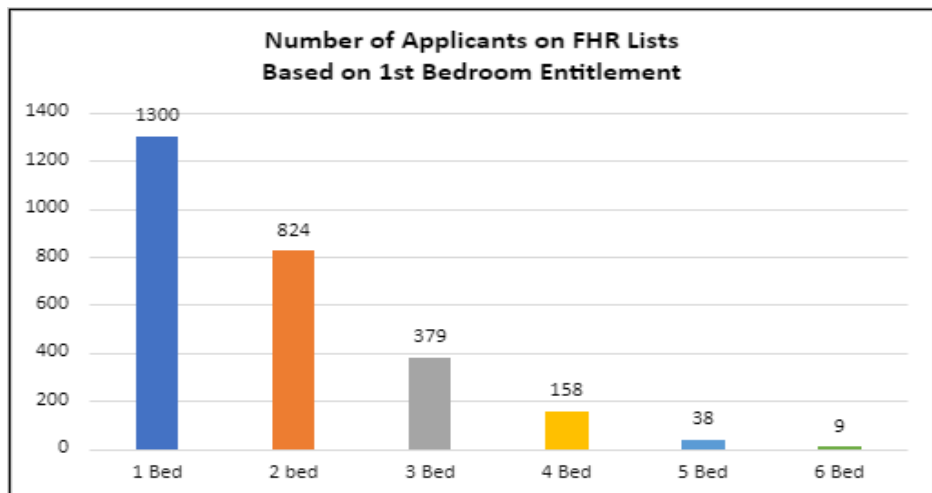
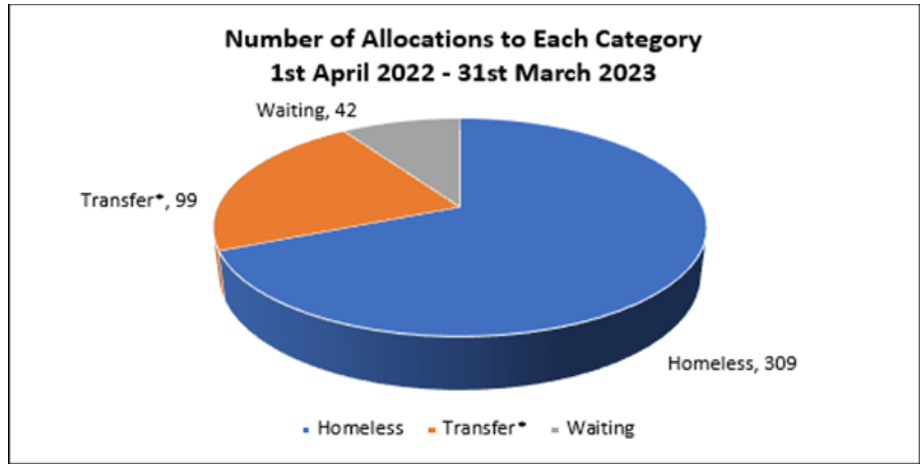
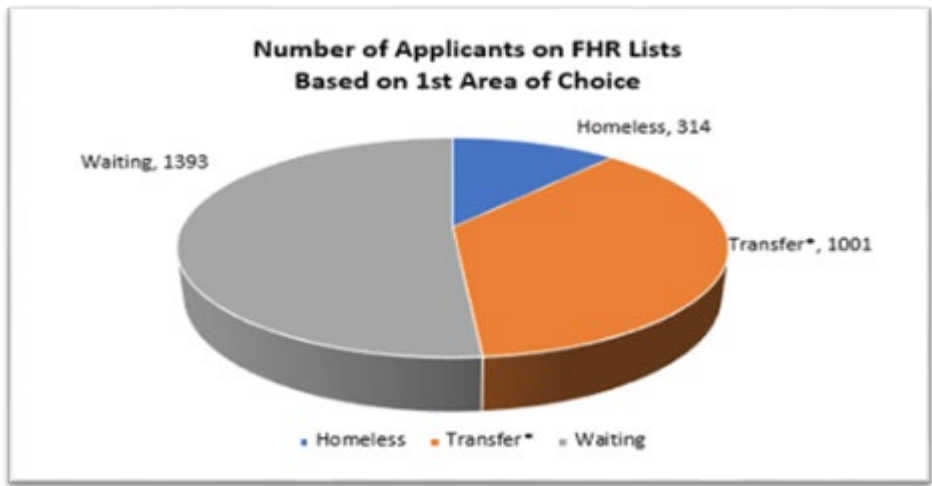
Allocations

Fife Council allocated 450 properties in the Kirkcaldy area between 1 April 2022 and 31st March 2023.

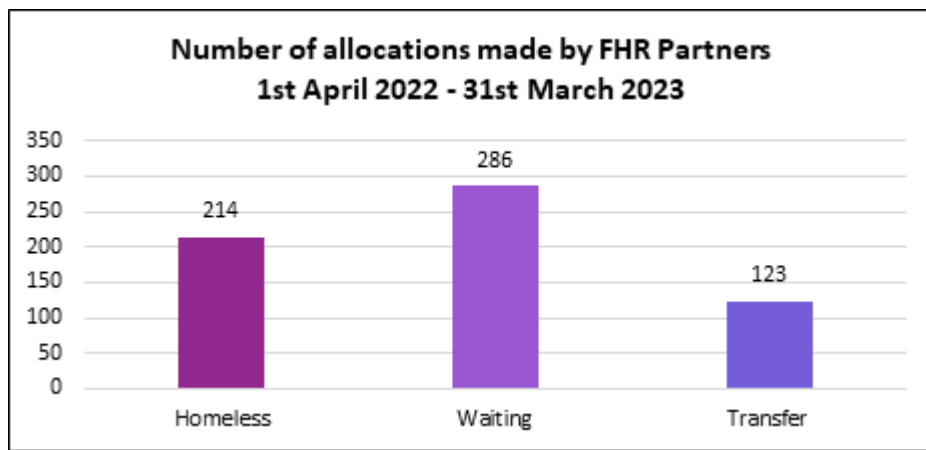


There are more people looking for housing than the number of properties becoming available.

The charts below illustrate the number of applicants (2708) looking to be housed in the Kirkcaldy Area versus the number of allocations carried out to vacant properties (450). Transfer* includes transfer tenants of all FHR partners.



The combined FHR partners made 623 allocations during this time period throughout Fife.



Stock profiles can be identified on FHR Website for all partners:

<https://www.fifehousingregister.org.uk/properties-map>

Housing Options: FHR Partners

Low Cost Home Ownership

There are currently no low cost home ownership opportunities in Kirkcaldy Area at this time.

Mid-Market Rent

Kingdom Housing Association and Ore Valley Housing Association have several Mid-Market Rent opportunities in the Kirkcaldy Area. Mid-Market rent is for those who may have difficulty accessing social rented housing or buying their own home. Rent can be lower than the private rented sector, but higher than social housing. For more information please see the following links:

<http://www.kingdomhousing.org.uk/housing/home-3/mid-market-rent/>

<https://www.orevalleyha.org.uk/mid-market-rent-tenants>

The table below illustrates where and how many Mid-Market rent properties Kingdom Housing Association and Ore Valley Housing Association have in stock.

Street	Type	size	Number of Properties	Landlord
Bakers Lane	Apartments / Flats	2 Bed	9	Kingdom HA
Bakers Lane	Apartments / Flats	3 Bed	3	Kingdom HA
Bakers Lane	House	3 Bed	7	Kingdom HA
John Pitcairn Place	Apartments / Flats	2 Bed	24	Kingdom HA
Junction Road	Apartments / Flats	2 Bed	12	Kingdom HA
Maltings Road	Apartments / Flats	2 Bed	14	Kingdom HA
Overton Road	Apartments / Flats	2 Bed	6	Kingdom HA
Pottery Street	Apartments / Flats	1 Bed	3	Kingdom HA
Pottery Street	Apartments / Flats	2 Bed	36	Kingdom HA
Smeaton Road	Apartments / Flats	2 Bed	8	Kingdom HA
Sunny Braes Court	Apartments / Flats	1 Bed	1	Kingdom HA
Sunny Braes Court	Apartments / Flats	2 Bed	14	Kingdom HA
Whytehouse Avenue	House	2 Bed	1	Kingdom HA
Quality Street, Dysart	Apartments / Flats	Mix of 1 and 2 bed	21	Ore Valley HA
Cloanden Place	Apartments / Flats	2 Bed	4	Ore Valley HA

* Figures pending verification

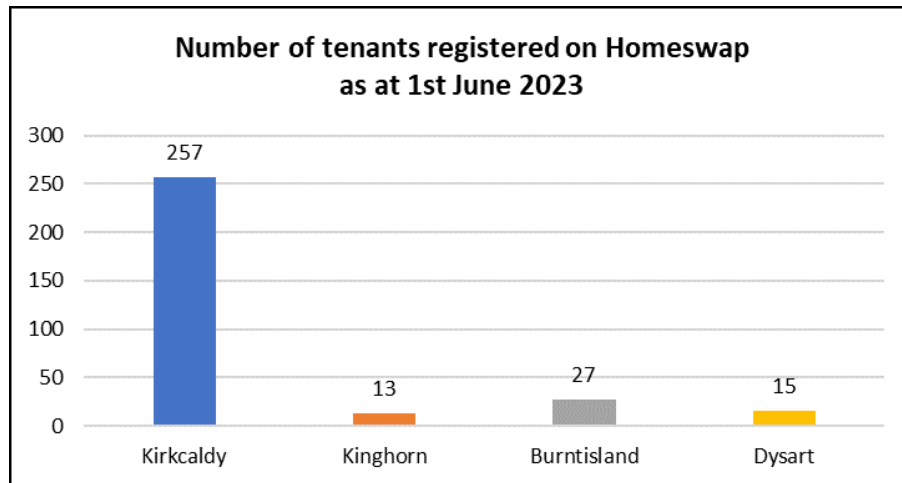
Mutual Exchange (Home Swap)

A mutual exchange between tenants can be an alternative option for those looking to move as housing needs in households change. This can often be quicker than waiting on a transfer through Fife Housing register and can maximise opportunities and choices.

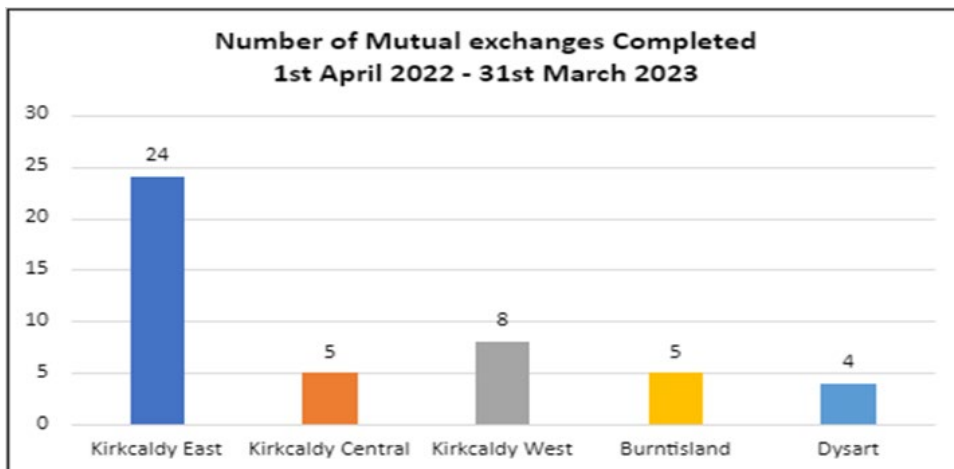
You can mutually exchange with a tenant of the same Local Authority, another Local Authority or a Housing Association if all tenants have a Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement.

To apply go to www.fifedirect.org.uk and select 'Sign-in / Join' (located top right of web page). Log in to your Fife Direct account, or use the prompt provided to create an account if you don't have one. When you are logged in to Fife Direct, the Home Swap option is displayed on your home page. Select Register within Home Swap to create your Home Swap account.

The chart below shows the number of tenants living within the Kirkcaldy Area that are registered on Fife Councils Home Swap site. This includes tenants of all FHR Partners.



The chart below shows the number of mutual exchanges that have taken place in the Kirkcaldy area from 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023



Private Rented Sector

Private rents like mid-market rent provides another alternative to Local Authority Housing. Private rents are generally available through estate and letting agents, local advertisements and social media.

Renting a property from a private landlord is an option for anyone over 16 years of age. Private renting offers varying options of properties for both sole and shared occupancy.

From the 1st of December 2017 all private tenants are issued with Private Residential Tenancy (PRT). Generally, there is a deposit required (usually equal to one month's rent) when renting privately.

The tables below show the number of registered properties and the Local Housing Allowance rates payable.

Table correct as at Feb 2023	Number of registered landlords	Number of registered properties	Number of registered Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMO)
	*4127	3323	23

* where a property is jointly owned by multiple individuals, each will be registered for that property, therefore the number of landlords v properties will be higher.

Table correct as at May 2023	No of Bedrooms	Number of Properties	Average Rent (PCM)	Local Housing Allowance Rate
	1	7	£450	£375
2	12	£595	£475	
3	7	£736	£575	
4	5	£1,180	£850	

Making the best use of our stock

As part of the Plan, we have looked at the needs of those looking for housing in the Area, the Council's legal responsibilities and priorities as well as the housing available in the area. This showed what our Allocations priorities should be.



Pressures on the housing stock: The current Housing stock equates to 6952 properties. There is a lack of 1 bedroomed and 4+ bedroomed larger family homes.



Making the best use of different types of properties:

We actively attempt to make the best use of our housing stock in Kirkcaldy. We encourage tenants in larger family properties where they are under occupying to give consideration to moving to a smaller property. We may also provide assistance through our Transfer Incentive Scheme to assist with moves.



Maximising Access to affordable housing:

Housing Option Interview appointments can be arranged on request. This helps to determine what housing options are available to meet the individual circumstances.



Meeting the Needs of families:

Significant investment in new-build properties has resulted in improved opportunities for families across Kirkcaldy area. We also use the TIS scheme as mentioned above to assist with the turnover of larger homes.



Developing initiatives in response to specific lettings issues:

We work closely with Tenants & Residents groups, Fife Housing Register Partners and other agencies to identify customer led projects in the Kirkcaldy Area.



Complaints and Appeals:

We learn from what our customers tell us through satisfaction results and report our outcomes and findings. We have a complaints and appeal procedure to ensure customers are treated fairly and to improve delivery of services.

Local Housing Access issues

We found	Where	What we will do
High demand for larger family homes with 3 or more bedrooms	Kirkcaldy Area	Build more family sized homes. Promote transfer moves for existing tenants who wish to downsize. We will promote our Tenants Incentive Scheme.
No demand for bedsit properties	Kirkcaldy Area	Identify potential conversions. Advertise properties to generate interest
Low demand for older persons housing complexes	Kirkcaldy Area	Hold open days at older persons housing complexes. Enhance promotion opportunities.

Allocations Priorities

Every year, more people apply for housing than there is available so we have to set priorities. We have to meet our legal duty and respond to a number of other challenges...

Our priority is to prevent homelessness wherever possible. Where this is not possible, through our Lettings Plan we aim to;

- help families with children move through temporary accommodation as quickly as possible
- provide a proportion of two bedroom properties to single people in response mismatches in supply and demand
- link offers of housing with appropriate help, support or care to ensure sustainable tenancies.

We work as part of the Health and Social Care Partnership to;

- Help to prevent people going into hospital and return home as soon as possible
- Help children to move through the care system and sustain independent tenancies
- Assist households affected by domestic abuse to sustain tenancies without the fear of intimidation or harassment

Making the best use of available housing stock

- Support families who are overcrowded or under-occupying to move to more suitable homes
- Assist households affected by illness, disability or other health conditions to live independently within their own home

Community Lettings Initiatives

Lettings Issue	Neighbourhood	We will
Lack of larger family houses	Whole area	Contact tenants in a 5 or 6 apt to see if they are interested in help to move through Tenant Incentive Scheme
Lack of play space and pressures on local schools	High Street, Kirkcaldy (New build flats)	Make sensitive allocations which observe the planning conditions associated with pressures on local facilities and schools. Tenant Led approach as part of the New Build Allocations Policy Review in 6 months
Clash of lifestyles where facilities are shared	Ravensraig High Rise Blocks x 3	Implement a sensitive allocation approach during the Active Housing List Management stage to ensure we: - Create balanced communities - Prevent clash of lifestyles where possible where communal areas such as elevators and laundry facilities are shared. Review in 6 months

Your Community

The Neighbourhood plan is part of the Local Community Plan. Fife Council produces Local Community Plans to help make Fife a better place to live, and cover topics like employment, local facilities, improving health and welfare.

Your community plan is available online at [our.fife.scot - Kirkcaldy Area](https://our.fife.scot)

If you want to know more about it, your Area Housing Team Manager is Elaine Campbell who can be contacted on 03451 555 555 Ext 401509.

Appendix 4 – Normalisation Statement

The Fife Occupancy Agreement for scatter flats (temporary accommodation) was challenged by SHELTER, Scotland and, in March 2022, a Sheriff at Kirkcaldy Sheriff Court ruled that the Occupancy Agreement provided within statutory temporary accommodation was flawed and effectively provides a Scottish Secure Tenancy.

This had the effect that all occupants of sole occupancy temporary accommodation provided by Fife Council (over 600 properties) are effectively secure tenancies. Those booked into temporary accommodation addresses prior to 27th April 2022 were affected.

As a result of this legal judgement, several actions were taken by Fife Council in relation to its housing stock as a response to the legal decision:

- A suspension of the pre-allocations practice within the Council's allocation process.
- Diversion of 70% of all empty properties to replace temporary accommodation.
- The remaining 30% were allocated to priority groups including homeless customers not in scatter flats, care experienced young people, hospital discharge etc.
- The development of a phased and people led 'Tenancy Normalisation' process over a 12 month period to discharge homeless duty.

As a result of these actions, there has been a direct impact on the way in which Fife Council has allocated its stock over this time to allow for the impact of the legal judgement and to balance this with the provision of temporary accommodation and homeless services.