

**AYRSHIRE JOINT STRUCTURE PLAN AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
7 JUNE 2002**

Housing Market Context Statement - Ayrshire, Dumfries and Galloway

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To advise the Committee of the publication by Communities Scotland of a Housing Market Context Statement covering the Ayrshire, Dumfries and Galloway.

BACKGROUND

- 2 The new Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 introduces a new housing planning system, which places a statutory duty on local authorities to prepare local housing strategies. To support the development of these strategies, Communities Scotland has been charged with the preparation of Housing Market Context Statements. These set out a “strategic and environmental context” for an area and will be used “to guide Communities Scotland staff in discussions with local authorities in the course of preparing their local housing strategies”.
- 3 In responding to the consultation document issued earlier this year the Committee were critical of the approach adopted by Communities Scotland which sought to link the Ayrshire housing market with that of Dumfries and Galloway. This linkage could not be substantiated and had consequences on the analysis undertaken and on some of the issues drawn within the document. It was the view of the Committee that in its consultative draft format the Housing Market Context Statement was not particularly useful in meeting the needs of local housing strategies.

COMMENT

- 4 In many ways the final document reflects the content of the previous document and maintains the linkage with Dumfries and Galloway. This is regrettable as the issues highlighted by the Committee in their response remain. However within the finalised Housing Market Statement Communities Scotland have acknowledged the concerns raised by the Committee in respect of the boundary issue and will reconsider the matter when

future HMCS are prepared. On other matters such as the presentation of the information at a more general level a commitment is given to undertake this work if requested by individual authorities.

- 5 The primary purpose however of the Housing Market Context Statement is to present the strategic national priorities that they have identified as relevant to the Ayrshire, Dumfries and Galloway area. These are presented in more detail in the Executive summary, attached to this report (refer paragraph 1.6). They relate in part to matters of social inclusion, the operation of the housing market in Ayrshire, the quality of the existing housing stock and the environment within communities. These impinge directly to the Structure Plan process and will require to be addressed within the context of a forthcoming Structure Plan review. For these reasons it will be necessary to develop a joint understanding, supported by research and information sharing, of strategic housing market issues with Communities Scotland. Their commitment to work in partnership with the authorities within Ayrshire on these matters is therefore welcomed.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6 It is recommended that Committee note the contents of this report.

Ian Johnson
Manager
Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan and Transportation Committee

Person to Contact: John Esslemont – (01292) 673766

APPENDIX - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, HMCS AYRSHIRE, DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY