

The Second Progress Report (2011-2013) On the 2009 Social Housing Plan for Newfoundland and Labrador

SECURE FOUNDATIONS



MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER



Honourable Paul Davis
Minister Responsible for
Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation

As lead Minister for the Social Housing Plan for Newfoundland and Labrador – *Secure Foundations*, it brings me great pleasure to provide an update on the impact that our strategic investments have had in improving housing conditions and assistance for households with lower income.

This is the second progress report on our work to strengthen the social housing system. *Secure Foundations* was released in 2009 and these progress reports ensure the Plan is addressing the needs of households with low income. The Plan has shown strong support for housing needs through increased investments in the social housing stock and home repair programs for homeowners with low and moderate income.

Housing security is a significant determinant of an individual's health that promotes social and economic participation in the community. I would like to express gratitude to all of our partners for their dedication to improving the housing circumstances for the residents of Newfoundland and Labrador. Activities of the Plan continue to be complemented by extensive input from many stakeholder groups who provide valuable input on an ongoing basis. These groups work diligently to ensure housing and support services contribute to housing stability and prevent homelessness.

The goals and strategic action priorities outlined in the Plan demonstrate the Provincial Government's commitment to provide safe, adequate and affordable housing options to residents with low and moderate income. These are priority areas identified by our stakeholders. \$259 million has been committed to address the housing needs of homeowners and renters with lower-income. This investment includes a broad range of initiatives that support the goals of the Plan and the broader strategic directions of the Provincial Government. These include: the provision of wrap-around services for groups helping persons with complex service needs; placing more emphasis on energy efficiency efforts; providing more investment in existing social housing infrastructure; and developing more housing partnerships to develop accessible housing. The Canadian Housing and Renewal Association recently recognized NL Housing as the first provincial housing corporation in Canada to require developers to incorporate Universal Design in all proposals under the Affordable Housing Initiative (AHI).

In 2011, NL Housing ran a radio ad campaign to help reduce the stigma associated with social housing. The ads were based on real life tenants who lent their voices to be part of the campaign. There was a significant positive response to the campaign with favourable opinions of NL Housing tenants increasing from 43% to 53%. Also, of notable mention is that the Supportive Living Community Partnership Program was transferred to NL Housing from the Department of Advanced Education and Skills in 2012/13 and became the Supportive Living Program (SLP). The SLP furthers the goals of the Plan by supporting the integration of housing and other services to promote independent living of clients. The SLP has provided training, consultation and support to community groups and communities to enhance housing stability across the province. The budget for this program has tripled to \$4.8 million since 2009, providing assistance to 26 groups and 28 projects.

We are encouraged by the improvements that we have achieved to date and we look forward to building on these initiatives in future years, by working with our many partners to provide a better quality of life for clients who require housing assistance.

HON. PAUL DAVIS

Minister Responsible for
Newfoundland and Labrador
Housing Corporation

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SOCIAL HOUSING PLAN GOALS

Increased emphasis on individual well-being and strengthened communities: Accessible housing and initiatives that support personal development and community participation.

Strengthened partnerships and management practices: Including enhanced coordination with government partners, strengthening the capacity of community-sector housing delivery partners and enhanced planning and information systems.

Improved housing assistance for those most in need: By expanding rental options (includes development of new affordable housing), improving the quality of the public affordable housing stock, increasing repair assistance for privately owned housing, increased housing assistance for Off-Reserve Aboriginal households, and promoting energy efficiency improvements.

STRATEGIC ACTION PRIORITIES

- Preserving privately owned homes by assisting with the cost of essential repairs;
- Providing quality, affordable rental accommodation through direct delivery programs and partnerships with non-profit and private sector housing providers;
- Promoting the development of new affordable housing;
- Supporting home modifications to address the accessibility needs of seniors and persons with disabilities;
- Promoting renovations by lower-income homeowners to improve energy efficiency and conservation;
- Preserving NL Housing homes to ensure they meet current and future needs while improving overall energy efficiency during renovations; and
- Working with government and community partners in the development of housing options that integrate housing and support services and contribute to housing stability and homelessness prevention.

**SOCIAL HOUSING PLAN - SECURE FOUNDATIONS
SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS TO MARCH 31, 2013**

GOAL - Increased emphasis on individual well-being and strengthened communities

FOCUS

<p>Accessible Housing Supply</p>	<p>2009-2011:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed 25 accessible public affordable housing units. • Provided grant funding for accessibility modifications to more than 1300 homeowners with low incomes (since 2007). • Committed capital funding for 109 fully accessible new Affordable Housing rental units. 	<p>2011-2013:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NLHC recognized nationally for being the first province to require Universal Design standards for all projects developed through the 2011-14 Investment in Affordable Housing Agreement. • Approximately \$3 million invested in a new Home Modification Program. • Provided grant funding for accessibility modifications to 834 clients for a total of 2,134 low-income homeowners (since 2007). • Completed modification to 57 accessible public affordable housing units. • Committed capital funding for 76 fully accessible new Affordable Housing rental units.
<p>Supporting Personal Development and Community Participation</p>	<p>2009-2011:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doubled operating funding for NL Housing Community Centres. • Introduced Education Incentive for NL Housing tenants and their children to continue their education. Almost 1400 individuals received the \$50/month incentive each year in the period 2009-2011. High school attendance increased from 48 percent to 68 percent. 	<p>2011-2013:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tripled operating budgets for Neighborhood Centers • Community Centers working with Neighborhood Centers in sharing Poverty Reduction Strategy funds to partner in the hiring of a shared Coordinator. • Hired a Manager of Community Development December 2012. • Sponsored an NL Housing tenant high school student in 2011, 2012 and 2013 for “Students on Ice” Arctic Expedition. • Partnerships continue with agencies working to strengthen communities (e.g. Vibrant Communities). • About 1500 individuals received the \$50/month Education Incentive each year in the period 2011-2013 • Attendance continued to increase in the period between 2011 and 2013, from 73% to 78% for junior high and

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		from 68% to 70% for high school.
Integration of Housing and Support Services	<p>2009-2011:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduced the Supportive Living Community Partnership Program (SLCPP). Program funding totaled \$3.6 million. 	<p>2011-2013:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transferred the SLCPP to NLHC in 2012/13 and became the Supportive Living Program (SLP). Grants approved for operational funding to provide support to individuals with complex service needs and for community capacity building initiatives aimed at preventing and addressing homelessness. Budget tripled to \$4.8 million since 2009. 26 groups and 28 projects assisted to-date.

GOAL - Strengthened partnerships and management practices

Capacity of Community Partners	<p>2009-2011:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided two technical positions to support non-profit housing organizations plan and manage retrofit and/or development projects. Committed funding for retrofit of 82 community-based housing projects that serve more than 1400 households. Supported Aboriginal organizations in developing a home repair program and training staff. Committed capital funding under the Provincial Homelessness Fund for development of support services space by 15 community organizations. Established a position to coordinate with supportive living community partners in delivering housing assistance to persons with complex service needs. 	<p>2011-2013:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide technical support. The Supportive Living Program (SLP) supports the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing and Homelessness Network (NLHHN) and 10 Provincial Community Advisory Boards on Homelessness. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NLHHN promotes leadership, collaboration and policy development; supports capacity building efforts through training and professional development; facilitates communications, networking and knowledge transfer; and, researches and coordinates data. SLP has provided training, consultation and support to community groups funded by SLP: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Essential Skills training to emergency shelters. Ongoing support to rural housing and rural support workers. Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT) training: training for case planning and
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		<p>prioritization of service delivery. SPDAT helps track the depth of need and service responses to clients over time.</p> <p>iv. Training for five homeless shelters and Housing Support Service Workers including First Aid/CPR, ASIST, Therapeutic Crisis Intervention, Occupational Health and Safety, and Food Handlers Certification.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committed \$2M in capital funding under the Provincial Homelessness Fund for the development of services space. This funding was provided to 26 community organizations in 12 communities.
<p>Strategic Social Policy Alignment</p>	<p>2009-2011:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjusted the rent-geared-to-income scale from 30 percent to a flat 25 percent of income for public affordable housing tenants. This aligns with the strategic direction of the Poverty Reduction Strategy by reducing the depth of poverty experienced by households with low-income. 	<p>2011-2013:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Modification Program complements the provincial strategy for the inclusion of persons with disabilities, <i>Access. Inclusion. Equality.</i>, released in April 2012. The new requirement for Affordable Housing Initiative proposals to include “universal design” principles, and increasing the proportion of NLHC stock with accessibility features also support this strategy. • In Labrador, implementation of specialized, one-time Oil Tank Replacement Program and significant funding for Partner Managed Housing renovations help support the Northern Strategic Plan. • Residential Energy Efficiency Program, partnership with Choices for Youth on retrofitting public housing and overall retrofitting of public housing during scheduled modernization and improvement help support the Climate Change Action Plan. • NavNet: Funded through Newfoundland and Labrador Housing, NavNet is a network of groups that work together to provide access to services and supports required by individuals to live independently. • NavNet supports all persons with complex service

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SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS TO MARCH 31, 2013**

		needs by identifying barriers and gaps in services.
Service Excellence	<p>2009-2011:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed a new software system (Program Delivery System- PDS) to improve delivery of renovation and housing development grants to low-income households and housing delivery partners. 	<p>2011-2013:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program Delivery System (PDS): Significant enhancements to the PDS continued through 2013. Included were improvements to the waitlist and reporting systems. PDS gained the attention of New Brunswick officials who requested to acquire a license to use PDS for their own program delivery needs. Northgate: Implemented RepairFinder. This software program will provide better client service efficiencies when entering maintenance requests. It provides detailed reporting features for executive decision making. Heat Subsidy: A more consistent mechanism for allocation of the heat subsidy was implemented. Efficiencies were realized by using one rate for each bedroom size, regardless of heating type, building type or location. This made it easier to administer and also easier for clients to understand.
Goal – Improved housing assistance for people in greatest need		
Rental Options	<p>2009-2011:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committed Phase 3 capital funding for 52 Affordable Housing projects (total of 448 rental units). Twenty-nine projects (246 units) were completed at March 31, 2011. In 2010-11, completed 10 new units and committed capital funding for another 18. 	<p>2011-2013:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committed Phase 4 capital funding for 32 Affordable Housing projects (a total of 224 rental units). Eight projects (51 units) were completed by March 31, 2013. Contributed over \$4 million for the construction of a new apartment building in Pleasantville. Project is being overseen by the City of St. John's.

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	<p>Committed to reconfiguring four family size units into seven single units in response to changing housing need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanded funding under the Rent Supplement Program by 50 percent to assist an additional 386 low-income renters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Made significant investments to increase the public affordable housing stock. Completed year 2 of the 3 year delivery plan through the Canada-NL Investment in Affordable Housing, which will result in 126 new affordable housing units across the province by 2014. In response to changing housing need, the following conversions took place: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One 5-bedroom unit into a 3-bedroom Nineteen 4-bedroom units into 3-bedroom units Twelve 4-bedroom units into 2-bedroom units Thirty-one 3-bedroom units into 2-bedroom units Four 3-bedroom units into a 1 bedroom unit Reconfiguration of the following took place as well: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two units into four 1-bedroom units. One 3-bedroom unit into two units (1, 2-bedroom and 1-single unit) Two 3-bedroom units into one accessible unit and two 1-bedroom units Expanded the Rent Supplement Program funding by \$2M, bringing the total of new low-income accommodations to over 1700 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2011-12, an additional 396 renters were assisted and 160 units were gained. In 2012-13, an additional 297 renters were assisted and 167 units were gained.
<p>Home Repair Assistance</p>	<p>2009-2011:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Doubled Provincial share of funding for the Provincial Home Repair Program (PHRP). Increased by 43 percent the number of households served annually under PHRP (since 2007). Applications on wait list have 	<p>2011-2013:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assisted 4,375 homeowners with low income who required repairs to their homes through the Provincial Home Repair Program (PHRP program). Provincial Home Repair Program waitlist has been reduced by more than 75%, from 4,300 to 1,000.

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	declined by 68 percent since March 2008.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 834 clients assisted through the Home Modification Program.
Assistance for Off-Reserve Aboriginal Households	<p>2009-2011:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitated \$8.2 million fund with four Aboriginal organizations for major home repairs and new home construction (Northern Coastal Labrador). 746 households have been assisted. • Committed funding for four new public affordable housing units in Nain, Labrador. 	<p>2011-2013:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 new units completed in Nain • 4 new units completed in Hopedale. • Provided financial assistance to homeowners with low income requiring oil tank replacements in Nain, Makkovik, Rigolet, Hopedale and Postville
Quality of Public Affordable Housing	<p>2009-2011:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tripled annual funding commitment for exterior and interior retrofit to \$12 million. More than 1100 units had major retrofits in the period 2007-09. • Increased the annual retrofit budget to an average of \$28.2 million (two-year Economic Stimulus Plan 2009-11). Units upgraded under Plan 2009-11 are just under 2,700. • Continued renewal of three high density neighborhoods. Four new units constructed and four underwent major retrofit. Improvements made to recreation and parking space. Preparatory work done for retrofit of another 52 units. 	<p>2011-2013:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual funding continued to be tripled from historical levels with \$12 M annually committed to funding repairs/renovations. • 2 new units constructed in Corner Brook • Property Acquisition - Purchased one house in St. John's and 2 vacant lots in Hopedale. • Anti-Stigma Ad Campaign: In June 2011, NL Housing developed the initial phase of its campaign to reduce the stigma associated with affordable housing. During this period, advertising ran on the VOCM/CFCB radio network. The ads featured actual NL Housing tenants relaying personal stories and the positive impact that living in social housing has had on their lives. The response to these ads from housing advocates, housing tenants, and the general public has been overwhelmingly positive. A survey conducted by the NL Stats Agency in August 2011 revealed that 15% of those contacted had heard the advertisements and among those who heard the ads, favourable opinions of NL Housing tenants increased from 43% to 53%.

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<p>Energy Efficiency Improvements</p>	<p>2009-2011:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made energy efficiency improvements to 767 public affordable housing units. • Introduced new Residential Energy Efficiency Program and approved grants to 2350 low-income homeowners. Average heating cost savings for households is \$775/year (35 percent). • Partnered with Choices for Youth on youth employment for the Training for Trades initiatives. Youth were given an opportunity to learn how to do home insulation by insulating 40 basements for NL Housing units. 	<p>2011-2013:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committed over \$1.2 million to making energy efficiency improvements to 501 public affordable housing units. • Residential Energy Efficiency Program approved grants to 1,962 clients with low income. Average heating cost savings for households was \$750 per year (33 percent). • In partnership with Choices for Youth, youth learned energy efficiency skills by insulating the basements of an additional 120 NL Housing units.
<p>Home Heating Assistance</p>	<p>2009-2011:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased annual Heating Allowance funding by \$1.2 million (14 percent) to assist low-income NL Housing rental clients. 	<p>2011-2013:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintained annual Heating Allowance funding at increased levels; assisting with \$2.4 M in support of low-income NL Housing rental clients.

SOCIAL HOUSING PLAN – FUNDING COMMITMENTS TO 2013

INITIATIVES	TOTAL (in millions)
Provincial Home Repair Program	\$80
New Affordable Housing (under AHI)	\$31.4
Provincial Homelessness Fund	\$3
Residential Energy Efficiency Program	\$11.9
Improved Quality of Community Based Housing	\$14.7
Improved Quality of Public Affordable Housing	\$72.6
New NLHC Affordable Housing	\$2.2
Reduced Rent for Tenants	\$5.4
Heating Allowance Increase	\$3.6
Education Incentive	\$1.5
Community Centres	\$2.5
Rent Supplement Program	\$17
Supportive Living Program	\$13.2
Total	\$259

PARTNERS

The involvement of many partners is essential to success in achieving better housing outcomes for people and communities. Partner organizations contribute financial and other resources, build capacity, develop housing options, manage projects through the development phase and deliver housing options to clients.

Our primary partners are:

- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
- Provincial Departments of Advanced Education and Skills and Justice
- Private-sector landlords and housing developers
- Community-based housing and support service providers
- Municipalities
- Housing advocates and researchers.

Published under the authority of:

The Honourable Paul Davis

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