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# HOUSING TO 2040





	<b>Foreword by the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government</b>	<b>4</b>
	<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>6</b>
	<b>Chapter 1 Housing in Scotland: A Distinctive Approach</b>	<b>12</b>
	<b>Chapter 2 Looking Ahead</b>	<b>14</b>
	Taking forward Housing to 2040	15
	<b>Chapter 3 The Route Map</b>	<b>16</b>
	<b>Part 1 – More Homes at the heart of great places</b>	<b>16</b>
	A. Affordable home supply	17
	B. Attracting investment	19
	C. Building stronger and more vibrant places	21
	D. Communities at the heart	25
	E. Rural and island communities	27
	F. Taxation	30
	<b>Part 2 – Affordability and choice</b>	<b>31</b>
	A. The right to an adequate home and delivering equality	31
	B. Ending homelessness	34
	C. The rented sector	36
	D. The housing market and home ownership	39
	<b>Part 3 – Affordable warmth and zero emissions homes</b>	<b>43</b>
	A. Zero emissions new homes	44
	B. Zero emissions existing homes	45
	C. Housing’s contribution to the green recovery	48
	<b>Part 4 – Improving the quality of all homes</b>	<b>51</b>
	A. A new Housing Standard	52
	B. Independent living	55
	Housing to 2040 actions and policies	58
	Timeline of key actions	64
	<b>Chapter 4 Housing to 2040’s contribution to the National Performance Framework</b>	<b>69</b>
	<b>Chapter 5 Next Steps</b>	<b>72</b>

# Foreword



For over twenty years and as a result of devolution, Scotland has been empowered to pursue its own housing aspirations. In doing so, we have sought to recognise the central importance of good, safe, secure and warm homes for people's wellbeing. As a result, we have focused on the delivery of affordable homes, taking a world-leading approach to tackling homelessness and improving people's experiences of living in the private and social rented sectors. That approach has paid off, with child poverty rates in Scotland lower than in the rest of the UK directly because there are more affordable housing choices and housing costs here are lower.

Now, as we look twenty years to the future, we know there is still much more to do. The trauma of the past year as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic has shone a spotlight, as if one were needed, on the persistent inequalities that exist in Scotland despite our best efforts.

Housing became an important public health tool as people were asked to "stay at home" to suppress the virus and protect lives and our NHS. And all that was so much easier if you had a secure home, was much more manageable if you had access to good quality outdoor green space and, if you had the room and were connected to the internet, home schooling was far more practical.

Therefore, recovery from this pandemic won't ever be enough if all that ends up happening is reverting back to "normal", when that normality has failed too many for too long – inequality should never be viewed as somehow inevitable.

As we look to develop our approach to housing over the next twenty years, housing will be pivotal to that recovery. And we have an opportunity to ensure that our actions as we rebuild and renew are guided by the principles of social justice, equality and human rights.

Homes have never been simply bricks and mortar – good housing and homes support our health, our wellbeing, our life chances and our job prospects. Everyone should have a home that brings them those chances and opportunities.

We began our work on Housing to 2040 before the pandemic hit, by engaging with over 2,000 people, meeting with people and organisations at 22 events across Scotland and carrying out consultation. Importantly, we also engaged directly with young people who will be emerging into their own adulthood as this twenty-year strategy develops and has impact. It is only right that those who will live longest with this approach shape it from the beginning.

People and organisations alike told us what a good home and a vibrant community looked like, and how it made them feel, and shared with us their aspirations for how we can make that a reality for everyone in Scotland. I am grateful to them for their engagement and enthusiasm and I am grateful to the members of the Social Renewal Advisory Board Housing Policy Circle who helped us understand how we can learn from the experiences of the pandemic.

This collective vision for our homes and communities in 2040, shaped by our partners, our people and our communities, demands that our decisions now and in the future put people and communities first. I hope it is a vision that can be shared across the political spectrum.

Therefore, in response to this, I am proud to set out a route map for how this Government intends to deliver the Housing to 2040 Vision and translate that vision into action.

We will continue to provide affordable homes across Scotland, particularly homes for social rent. Housing to 2040 sets a new ambition to deliver 100,000 affordable homes by 2031/32 which will make an important contribution to tackling child poverty and our continuing work to end homelessness. This ambition will also play a key role in helping Scotland's economy to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, supporting a total investment package of around £16 billion and 12,000 to 14,000 jobs each year.<sup>1</sup> In addition, the total investment required from public and private sources to decarbonise Scotland's domestic and non-domestic buildings is estimated to be in the region of £33 billion over the period to 2045, and is likely to support around 24,000 jobs each year as investment reaches its peak in the late 2020s.<sup>2</sup>

Alongside this, we will take the necessary steps to make the right to an adequate home a reality, tackle high rents and increase stability for those in the private rented sector and give local authorities the tools they need to improve access to housing in their local areas.

We will put place at the heart of our work, investing in our town centres and making it easier for homes to be the heart of strong communities with housing that is well designed, without compromising on the aesthetics. We will take action to stem rural depopulation and help communities in all corners of Scotland to thrive.

We will affirm our commitment to Scotland's climate change targets by taking action to make sure new homes are fit for the future, with zero emissions heating systems. We will adapt and retrofit existing homes so that the people who live in them can benefit from improved energy efficiency and decarbonised heating and we will take the opportunities offered by a green recovery to help drive inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

And we will take action so that our homes are good quality. We will ensure that all homes meet the same quality standards, so that everyone can expect the same from their home no matter where they live. We will redouble our efforts to support people to live independently in a home of their own that meets their needs.

This is a plan for the long term and it needs action from not only the Scottish Government but also the UK Government, local authorities, housing providers, landlords, industry and home owners. It will also need us to be ready to adapt when things change.

I am proud of what we, collectively, have achieved so far.

Now, delivering on the vision and aspiration set out in this strategy will require hard work, collaboration and commitment. But when the prospect of doing so will enable us to realise an equal and fairer Scotland, where everyone has the right to a home, and helps us deliver a greener Scotland with vibrant and flourishing communities, then that effort will be worth it and for the generations to come.

**Aileen Campbell**  
**Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government**

<sup>1</sup> Jobs estimates for the affordable housing and decarbonisation programmes are based on application of input/output multipliers. Note that these are gross, rather than net, jobs supported by the investment spend. For example, as jobs in the low carbon sector scale up, some of these may be filled by workers who transfer from the high carbon sector.

<sup>2</sup> [Heat in Buildings Strategy: Achieving Net Zero Emissions in Scotland's Buildings Consultation - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/consultations/bu/2021/01/achieving-net-zero-emissions-in-scotland-s-buildings-consultation)

# Executive Summary

## Introduction

We all need somewhere to live. And we all want to live somewhere we can call home – which is affordable, warm, meets our needs and is in a thriving community we want to be part of, near the services we rely on.

Our work, age, family and caring needs will influence where we want to live and the kind of home we require. The homes we grow up in may be different from the home we might live in when we study or start our first job. And where we live while we are bringing up a family may be different from where we want to live in our older years.

Over the past 14 years, the Scottish Government has transformed how we view affordable housing, investing in social and affordable homes right across the country. This year, we expect to have delivered 100,000 affordable homes since 2007, with an emphasis on social rented homes. We have invested in council house building for the first time since devolution, along with ending the Right to Buy. We have invested £1.35 billion since 2007 in our shared equity schemes to support over 35,000 people to buy their own home. Since December 2019 we have provided £200 million to the new First Home Fund pilot to help over 8,000 people to buy their first home. We continue to make progress with our plans to end homelessness, supporting those who are

homeless to get into a settled home through rapid rehousing, while Housing First is supporting people who are homeless with other needs.

Now is the time to take stock and consider the vision for housing over a longer time frame. This vision needs to put housing firmly at the centre of our other objectives for people in Scotland, such as tackling poverty and inequality, creating and supporting jobs, ensuring we meet our energy efficiency and fuel poverty targets and tackle the climate emergency, and making sure we have connected, cohesive communities to live in.

Over the past sixty years, housing has changed markedly, from investment in council houses, to selling them off and to investing in social rent again. We need to look ahead to ensure housing is ready for the changes our society is undergoing and that future housing demand can be met. For example, more of us live in single households than ever before. In 1971, there were around 310,000 single person households<sup>3</sup> – now, 50 years later, there are around 900,000, and by 2040 there are projected to be over a million.<sup>4</sup> We are living longer, which is great news, but to live independently means we may need to change our home or have it adapted to our needs. So overall we need to have many more homes than ever before and, no matter whether we live in a rural or urban location or whether in a small flat or large family house, we all need somewhere to call home.

3 <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/household-estimates/he-12/2012-household-est-fig19.xls>

4 <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/households/household-projections/2018-based-household-projections>

Therefore, Housing to 2040 is Scotland's first ever long-term national housing strategy with a vision for what we want housing to look like and how it will be provided to the people of Scotland, no matter where they live and what point in their life they are in. We want to ensure housing in 2040 will support people to live in homes they want to live in which are affordable and meet their needs.

This is not just a job for the Scottish Government. We need to work with our local authority partners, housing providers, landlords and the construction and house building sectors. We need to listen to the voice of tenants and householders as we develop the details of our policies. We also need a mix of funding including Scottish Government and local authority investment and grants and loans to support people to invest in their homes. We need to continue to attract private finance into Scotland's housing system too. And, while housing is devolved, many of the other levers that impact on people's homes, such as many parts of the benefits and taxation systems, remain reserved to Westminster.

By investing in affordable homes, we support people and we support our wider actions for a fairer, greener and stronger Scotland. Good affordable homes in vibrant neighbourhoods lead to reduced poverty and inequality, better health outcomes, improved educational attainment and more cohesive communities. Through the provision of high-quality affordable homes, people can reduce the proportion of their income spent on housing and bills and therefore increase the money available for other essentials in life.

Housing also contributes to economic growth and government programmes can protect activity and jobs in the construction sector from the impact of economic fluctuations. The programmes we set out in Housing to 2040 will therefore be crucial for our recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic because investing in housing means investment in construction, bringing money into our economy and supporting jobs.

By using Scottish Government funding to leverage in funding from our delivery partners, our new ambition for the supply of affordable homes will support a total investment package of around £16 billion, supporting between 12,000 and 14,000 jobs each year over this 10-year period.<sup>5</sup> In addition, the total investment required from public and private sources to decarbonise Scotland's domestic and non-domestic buildings is estimated to be in the region of £33 billion over the period to 2045, and is likely to support around 24,000 jobs each year as investment reaches its peak in the late 2020s.<sup>6</sup> As at 1 January 2021, there were 4,631 modern apprentices in the buildings sector, and 7,487 across the construction sector as a whole.<sup>7</sup> By guaranteeing a pipeline of projects, our housing programmes will give firms in the construction sector the confidence to continue taking on apprentices, ensuring the sector will have the skilled workforce it needs for the future.

Most people decide what kind of home best meets their needs – that could mean renting or buying, but it is a decision driven by what is most appropriate for them. But for those people who want to rent in the social sector, need a helping hand to buy a home or would benefit from affordable mid-market rent options, then the Scottish Government and local authorities have a role to play.

<sup>5</sup> Jobs estimates for the affordable housing and decarbonisation programmes are based on application of input/output multipliers. Note that these are gross, rather than net, jobs supported by the investment spend. For example, as jobs in the low carbon sector scale up, some of these may be filled by workers who transfer from the high carbon sector.

<sup>6</sup> [Heat in Buildings Strategy: Achieving Net Zero Emissions in Scotland's Buildings Consultation – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Skills Development Scotland, Modern Apprenticeship Supplementary Tables, Quarter 3, 2020-21, Table 2](#)

This document outlines how we will take housing policy forward over the long term. It shows how we will continue affordable housing supply, particularly for social rent, and how we will tackle high rents and increase stability for those in the private rented sector. It shows how we will increase standards across all tenures, tackle empty homes and poor housing and increase energy efficiency and tackle fuel poverty.

Housing to 2040 is the culmination of extensive engagement with the housing sector, wider stakeholders and the public to co-produce a vision for what we want Scotland's homes and communities to look like by the end of 2040. The Vision and Principles we have agreed together describe our ambition for everyone to have access to a warm, safe, affordable and energy-efficient home that meets their needs, in a community they feel part of and proud of.

None of this is easy. It is challenging and it is expensive. This strategy will also need to be agile and adaptable and will require to be reviewed and updated regularly throughout its 20 years to respond to emerging challenges and changing contexts. For instance, when we started this process, it was before the COVID-19 pandemic and all the associated harms and impacts that has brought to our society. We need to ensure a housing strategy is resilient in the face of such challenge. Furthermore, the impact of being taken out of the EU against our will is putting new and unnecessary pressure on our businesses and supply chains. Even as we developed this long-term strategy, we have had to test it against enormous challenge, some of which we could have never foreseen. But with the Vision to keep us on track and the Principles giving us the framework to help guide our decision-making, we know we are heading in the right direction to ensure we deliver a robust and strong housing system that delivers fairness and equality for people and communities in Scotland over the next twenty years.



Photo credit: Glasgow Housing Association

## The Housing to 2040 route map – quick summary

### More homes at the heart of great places

Our aim is for everyone to have a safe, high-quality home that is affordable and meets their needs in the place they want to be.

We will:

- Continue to invest in the supply of affordable homes so they are available for the people who need them.
- Attract private investment to help us to deliver more homes and ensure those homes are energy-efficient, use zero emissions heating, are adapted to our future climate and meet the needs of people who live in them.
- Take a place-based approach so that homes and places work together seamlessly and people can live in communities that meet their needs and support their health and wellbeing.
- Make changes so that the whole housing system works well to deliver affordable and good quality homes for everyone.

### Actions to take us there

The COVID-19 pandemic interrupted all sectors of society, affecting the construction and housing sectors' ability to reach our target for 50,000 affordable homes in this Parliamentary term. The programme continues to be impacted by the pandemic and the sector needs time to recover. We will deliver the remaining homes in line with safe working practices as soon as it is possible to do so.

Once these homes are completed, we will break away from the false five-year Parliamentary cycle and bring new stability and commitment to housing by setting a new ambition to **deliver a further 100,000 affordable homes over the following ten years up to 2031/32, with at least 70% of these for social rent**. As well as this ambition to increase the supply of affordable homes, we will continue to take action to ensure those homes help create strong and vibrant places and are high quality and zero emission.

We will deliver 50,000 of these homes by 2026/27 and, following a mid-point review, deliver a further 50,000 homes by the end of 2031/32. In this second phase, we will accelerate funding to bring more existing homes into the programme, as well as building new.

We will focus on where people want to live too. For example, recognising the unique challenges faced by our rural and island communities, we will take **specific action to support housing development in these areas, helping to stem rural depopulation and supporting communities to thrive**.

Through the new National Planning Framework, **the planning system will shift to be more directive about the quality of places**, including by guiding where new development should happen and how those developments can deliver more for new and existing communities. And by developing vacant and derelict land, repurposing existing properties and locating homes closer to services and facilities within 20 minute neighbourhoods, we will support the delivery of homes in town centres and at the heart of communities.

These actions represent continued strong investment in affordable homes and recognise the key role that housing plays in driving inclusive economic growth, addressing child poverty and ending homelessness. There will be an immediate impact on outcomes for people and communities and a strong foundation on which to continue to improve outcomes up to 2040.

### Affordability and choice

Our aim is for everyone to have access to a home that is affordable and choices about where they live, no matter what tenure they live in.

We will:

- Take steps to ensure everyone can realise their right to an adequate home.
- End homelessness and rough sleeping.
- Drive improvements in the rented sector so it offers a range of good-quality homes that are affordable for those who chose to live in it.

- Take action in the housing market so it operates fairly and provides affordable housing options and choices in all communities.

### Actions to take us there

We will improve accessibility, affordability and standards across the whole rented sector, **publishing a new Rented Sector Strategy, informed by tenants, and bringing forward a new Housing Bill early in the next Parliament** to strengthen tenants' rights and **improve the housing rights of people experiencing domestic abuse.**

We will deliver the actions set out in our Ending Homelessness Together action plan to ensure we **prevent and end homelessness for good**, embedding this as an established part of the housing system and wider public services by 2040.

We will take action in the housing market, **legislating for and implementing the short-term lets licensing scheme and tackling the blight of empty homes** by bringing them into use and, where possible, into the social rented sector. We will scale up **opportunities for self-provided housing** so people have more choices about the kinds of home they want to live in.

Starting this year we will carry out a **comprehensive audit of our current housing and homelessness legislation** to understand what more is necessary to ensure people can realise their right to an adequate home.

These are important actions to accelerate and deepen our work to tackle affordability across tenures and will improve the choices people have for an affordable home that meets their needs. This work will make a difference to people experiencing homelessness or facing challenges in the rented sector and in the housing market now, as well as laying important ground work to achieve our aim of everyone being able to realise their right to an adequate home by 2040.

### Affordable warmth and zero emissions homes

Our aim is for housing to contribute to tackling climate change by 2045 by delivering homes that are warm and affordable to heat and reducing the emissions caused by housing and housing construction.

We will:

- Ensure new buildings are fit for the future so those living in them can have confidence that they will not need to be retrofitted later.
- Adapt and retrofit existing homes so their occupants can benefit from improved energy efficiency and decarbonised heating.
- Take action to put housing at the heart of Scotland's green recovery and help to drive inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

### Actions to take us there

As well as important work set out in the draft Heat in Buildings Strategy<sup>8</sup> and the Heat Networks Bill, we will take early action to build the strong foundations needed to put Scotland's homes on the pathway to net zero by 2045.

Leading by example, **all new homes delivered by Registered Social Landlords and local authorities will be zero emissions by 2026.**

This will involve fitting **zero emissions heating systems ahead of the 2024 regulations coming into force, making greater use of offsite construction and introducing a new business model for affordable home delivery.** It also means taking action to **modernise housing construction** in line with our net zero ambitions, developing a housing sectoral plan and working with others to establish a housing innovation programme to promote new ways of designing and building homes.

<sup>8</sup> [Heat in Buildings Strategy: Achieving Net Zero Emissions in Scotland's Buildings Consultation – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/documents/2023/06/Heat_in_Buildings_Strategy_Achieving_Net_Zero_Emissions_in_Scotland's_Buildings_Consultation_-_gov.scot)

We will **support a supply chain development action plan** to build the strong local supply chains needed to decarbonise Scotland's homes and benefit our economy. We will also grow the skills needed to deliver energy efficiency measures and zero emissions heating systems.

These important foundations will support a ramping up of investment in decarbonisation at scale from 2025.

These actions will help to reduce the impact of our homes on the climate and support the delivery of affordable warmth and zero emissions homes for everyone.

### Improving the quality of all homes

Our aim is for all homes to be good quality, whether they are new build or existing, meaning everyone can expect the same high standards no matter what kind of home or tenure they live in.

We will:

- Require in law that all homes meet the same quality standards so we can expect the same no matter where we live and no one is left behind.
- Take action so that everyone who can and wants to can live independently in a home of their own which meets their needs.

### Actions to take us there

We will **introduce legislation in the next Parliament to implement a new Housing Standard** which will cover all homes new and existing, including agricultural properties, mobile homes and tied accommodation.

To support its introduction, we will develop targeted support packages for owners who need help improving their homes and introduce an enforcement framework which recognises that different types of homes in different places may need more or less time to comply with the Standard.

We will align the new Housing Standard with work to tackle emissions from our homes to make the best use of the opportunities and resources we have for improvements and minimise the disruption for householders.

We will also bring **digital connectivity** to homes, by working with social housing providers to deliver digital connections in new social homes and include digital connectivity in the scope of the consultation on the new Housing Standard to see it available in all homes, no matter what tenure.

We will introduce new building standards from 2025/26 to underpin **the new Scottish Accessible Homes Standard to future-proof new homes for lifelong accessibility**. And, alongside our work to improve the adaptations system and better integrate the work of health and social care and housing services, this will make a critical contribution to supporting people to live independently.

These actions set a strong and clear framework for the standards we will all be able to expect from our homes. Action will be needed from the public and private sectors, and from homeowners themselves, but the benefits of quality homes which are connected and support independent living are a prize for everyone.



# 01 Housing in Scotland: A Distinctive Approach

Since 1999, housing policy has been devolved to the Scottish Parliament. **This has allowed a new approach to develop in Scotland, one that recognises the central role that housing plays in determining quality of life.** We have taken a different course to other UK nations on affordable housing supply, Right to Buy, affordability, homelessness, child poverty, security of tenure and energy efficiency.

We have chosen to prioritise the delivery of affordable homes, improve tenants' experiences in the private and social rented sectors, bring in strong legal rights for those experiencing homelessness and push ahead with improving the quality of homes in the social rented sector and energy efficiency of all homes.

**Since devolution our investment has delivered record numbers of affordable homes,** helping to meet housing need throughout Scotland. Between 2007 and 2020, the supply of affordable housing per head of population in Scotland has been over a third higher than in England and three-quarters higher than in Wales.<sup>9</sup>

**We abolished the Right to Buy** to preserve social rented homes for those who most need them and to protect the high levels of investment we have made in new homes. By ending the Right to Buy, we are safeguarding approximately 15,000 homes over a ten-year period.

**We have helped to bring homeownership within the reach of more people** through long-run support for shared equity schemes. Across the Low-Cost Initiative for First Time Buyers shared equity schemes and Help to Buy (Scotland), we have helped over 35,000 households to buy a home and provided £200 million for the First Home Fund pilot to help another 8,000 households to buy their first home.

**We have broadened housing choices by increasing provision of mid-market rented housing,** though both our Affordable Housing Supply Programme and innovative funding and delivery models. Since 2007, we have supported delivery of more than 7,000 homes for mid-market rent.<sup>10</sup>

**Our internationally recognised Town Centre First approach has helped revitalise town centres,** stimulating a wide range of activity across public, private, third and community sectors.

<sup>9</sup> Sources: Scottish Government Quarterly Housing Statistics on Affordable Housing Supply; Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Live Tables on Affordable Housing (Table 1000); and Provision of Affordable Housing – Welsh Government

<sup>10</sup> Source: Scottish Government Affordable Housing Supply Programme (AHSP) administrative system

**We have placed a strong emphasis on availability and affordability of social rents** in the decisions we have taken as a Government, the impact of which is borne out in Scotland's child poverty figures. After housing costs, child poverty rates in Scotland are lower than in the UK and this is explained by the increased availability of affordable housing and lower housing costs across all tenures including social rent.<sup>11</sup>

**We have some of the most progressive homelessness legislation in the world**, and are focused first and foremost on prevention. Where homelessness does occur, we are committed to person-centred, housing-led solutions.

**We have brought greater security to private sector tenants through the introduction of a new type of tenancy ending no-fault evictions** so tenancies are open-ended and a landlord is no longer able to ask a tenant to leave simply because the fixed term has ended.

**By introducing the Scottish Social Housing Charter, we have helped tenants hold their landlord to account on the standards and outcomes they can expect**, which has driven improvements in the quality and value of services. The latest report from the Scottish Housing Regulator showed that almost 9 out of 10 social housing tenants were satisfied with the homes and services their landlords provide.<sup>12</sup>

**Big improvements have been made in the quality of social rented homes, through the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS).** This has driven modernisation and improvement of social rented stock at a scale not seen in modern times, with more tenants living in warmer, safer and drier homes and a major investment programme, worth around £4 billion, delivered by local authorities and Registered Social Landlords. Now 94% of all council and Registered Social Landlord homes meet the SHQS.<sup>13</sup>

**We introduced an energy efficiency standard for social rented homes as a core part of the SHQS and have gone on to increase this standard twice** to help remove poor energy efficiency as a driver for fuel poverty and contribute to achieving our ambitious climate change targets. In March 2020, social landlords were well on the way to achieving the first milestone for the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing, with 87% of social rented homes meeting the standard ahead of the December 2020 deadline.<sup>14</sup>

**We have made good progress on improving the energy efficiency** of Scotland's homes, with 45% now achieving Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band C or better,<sup>15</sup> and have introduced the most ambitious and comprehensive fuel poverty legislation in the UK. Our updated Fuel Poverty Strategy will be published later in 2021. Since 2013, our investment in Area Based Schemes has improved energy efficiency for over 100,000 fuel-poor households across Scotland<sup>16</sup> and over 20,000 households have been helped by our national fuel poverty scheme, Warmer Homes Scotland, since 2015, saving people on average £300 per year on their energy bills.<sup>17</sup>

11 <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/poverty-scotland-2019>

12 [National Report on the Scottish Social Housing Charter – Headline Findings – 2019-20 | Scottish Housing Regulator](#)

13 [national-report-on-the-scottish-social-housing-charter-201920-final.pdf](#)

14 [national-report-on-the-scottish-social-housing-charter-201920-final.pdf](#)

15 [Scottish House Condition Survey \(2019\)](#) – based on the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) (2012) and the Reduced Data Standard Assessment Procedure (RdSAP) v 9.93

16 [Heat in Buildings Strategy: Achieving Net Zero Emissions in Scotland's Buildings Consultation – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

17 [Heat in Buildings Strategy: Achieving Net Zero Emissions in Scotland's Buildings Consultation – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

## 02 Looking Ahead

In 2018, we published a discussion paper<sup>18</sup> and a supporting evidence paper,<sup>19</sup> setting out the context for Housing to 2040 and the challenges we face. These included **child poverty, climate change and an ageing population**.

In 2019, through further consultation and engagement, we sought people's views on a draft Vision and set of Principles and suggestions for how to make them a reality.<sup>20</sup> This set out more detail on the drivers of change that will impact the housing system over the next twenty years, including population and health (including an ageing population across the country and depopulation in some rural areas), technology, energy and climate change.<sup>21</sup>

Alongside that consultation, we supported a mobile housing exhibition across Scotland to engage with communities. The housing exhibition provided a place for conversations on Housing to 2040 and involved 350 young people from 12 communities across Scotland. Over 750 people viewed the exhibition with almost 400 participating in workshops.<sup>22</sup>

Now, in 2021, many of those challenges and drivers of change remain the same but we must also contend with the impact of the **UK's decision to leave the EU** and respond to and recover from the devastating effects of the **COVID-19 pandemic**.

**The scale of the investment needed to deliver the Housing to 2040 vision means that we need to think and do things differently** – this applies to Government, the public sector, the private sector and individual householders across Scotland. The costs involved in two key areas give an indication of the financial challenge ahead. The total cost of delivering our ambition of 100,000 affordable homes by 2032 could be in the region of £16 billion.<sup>23</sup> Meanwhile, our draft Heat and Buildings Strategy estimates that the cost of undertaking energy efficiency upgrades and installing low carbon heating systems to decarbonise our building stock could be in the region of £33 billion over the period to 2045,<sup>24</sup> and the bulk of these costs will relate to our homes.

18 [Housing-Beyond-2021-Sep.pdf](#)

19 [Housing to 2040: Evidence Paper – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

20 [Housing to 2040: a conversation – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

21 [Housing to 2040: consultation on outline policy options – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

22 [Present Voices, Future Lives Final Report](#)

23 In today's prices. The average cost of a home delivered through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme in 2019-20 was £160,000, which includes both the share financed by the Scottish Government and the share financed by other parties such as social landlords. Table 11, [Affordable-Housing-Supply Programme: out-turn report 2019-2020 – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

24 In today's prices. See p.91, [Heat in Buildings Strategy – Scottish Government – Citizen Space \(consult.gov.scot\)](#)

## Taking forward Housing to 2040

There was a great deal of consensus amongst different stakeholders who responded to our consultation. Our assessment of the major challenges facing Scotland's housing system was confirmed and the draft Vision and Principles were well supported and praised for being ambitious and comprehensive. We have made changes to the Vision and Principles based on that feedback, and stakeholders' ideas on what we should aim for and how we should seek to achieve it have been central to the development of the route map.

For example, a right to an adequate home is now central. And we have made sure that the important role our homes play in tackling the global climate emergency comes through clearly.

Our route map highlights how we want all homes to be digitally connected and have easy access to quality green space, services and public transport links – there will be no barriers to walking, wheeling or cycling and there will be easy access to learning, health services and employment opportunities.

We show how we want our homes to be part of strong local communities, where the people who live there are able to influence the decisions made about their area and can live well locally.

And no matter whether new or existing, our vision is that all homes will be warm, affordable to heat, and will reduce direct emissions from their heating to zero. New homes will be well designed and constructed and will be able to be adapted for the future. High standards of repair and maintenance will ensure older homes meet these ambitions too.

**In short, our aim is that, by 2040, everyone will have a safe, high-quality home that is affordable and meets their needs in the place they want to be.**

The Housing to 2040 Vision sets out what we are aiming for and this route map shows us how we will get there. We are beginning from a strong foundation too.

The route map is set out across four parts, aligned to the main areas of feedback we received from stakeholders during consultation.

Part 1 – More homes at the heart of great places

Part 2 – Affordability and choice

Part 3 – Affordable warmth and zero emissions homes

Part 4 – Improving the quality of all homes

A full set of the Vision and Principles for Housing to 2040 can be found published alongside this document.<sup>25</sup> The key areas in which respondents called for action and made proposals for the route map can be found in Annex A.<sup>26</sup>



<sup>25</sup> <http://www.gov.scot/ISBN/9781800047495>

<sup>26</sup> A full account of consultation feedback can be found in [consultation report](#), [Housing exhibition report](#) and [housing-2040-report-stakeholder-engagement-2018 \(6\).pdf](#)

# 03 The Route Map

## Part 1: More homes at the heart of great places

**Our aim is for everyone to have a safe, high-quality home that is affordable and meets their needs in the place they want to be.**

Delivering more homes at the heart of great places will contribute to the Housing to 2040 Vision and Principles for:

**A well-functioning housing system** – where people can find and afford a home in the place they want to live, including in rural and island communities. There are options to save for retirement beyond investing in property. This is supported by the principles of supplying high-quality homes that are affordable to live in and are part of thriving communities.

**Sustainable communities** – where people can stay in their communities, supported by a good mix of housing options. Places are well designed and connected, supporting people's wellbeing, and homes are well connected to services, facilities and transport links. This is supported by the principles that housing is provided in the right places to create and sustain thriving local communities, which guarantee that communities have a say in how housing is delivered in their areas and that prioritise community connectivity.

This part of the route map covers:

- Affordable home supply
- Attracting investment
- Building stronger and more vibrant places
- Communities at the heart
- Rural and island communities
- Taxation



## Part 1A – Affordable home supply

**We will continue to invest in the supply of affordable homes.**

Scotland has led the way in the delivery of affordable housing across the UK. This year we expect to have delivered 100,000 affordable homes since 2007 and we are committed to continuing to support the delivery of more social and affordable homes going forward.

“When I got my keys I was like a girl who had been given the world. I felt the weight and burden had lifted. Since moving, my son hasn’t had a single illness, my daughter doesn’t need any inhalers.”

**Moving to a new social rented home provided by Kingdom Housing Association has brought real health benefits for Michelle’s family.<sup>27</sup>**

Since 2016, the Affordable Housing Supply Programme has delivered over 36,000 affordable homes, over 24,000 of which were for social rent.<sup>28</sup>

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 meant that there was a necessary pause in the delivery of affordable homes at a critical time in meeting our 50,000 affordable homes target for this Parliamentary term. House building has now safely resumed; however the target will not be met by the end of March 2021. This is of course disappointing as we were on track to deliver on our commitment.

As a first step on the Housing to 2040 route map, **we will continue to work closely with partners across the housing sector to deliver the remaining homes, as quickly as it is safe to do so, to complete our 50,000 affordable homes target over 2021/22.**

Looking ahead, we want to break away from the false five-year Parliamentary cycle, provide more clarity and certainty about the future of affordable housing and give the time and space needed for those homes to be planned and delivered in the right places and to the highest possible quality.

That is why Housing to 2040 is setting a longer term ambition to build on the completion of the 50,000 affordable homes target and **deliver a further 100,000 affordable homes over the following ten years up to 2032. It is our aim that at least 70% of those homes will be for social rent**, helping to tackle child poverty and homelessness. As well as this ambition to increase the supply of affordable homes, we will continue to take action to ensure those homes help create strong and vibrant places and are high quality. Many of these homes will have zero direct emissions heating too.

**We will focus the first five years of this period (up to 2026/27) on delivering 50,000 homes and the latter five years (up to 2031/32) on delivering a further 50,000 homes.** This later phase will also see an acceleration of funding towards bringing more existing homes into the programme as well as building new, looking to make more use of off-the-shelf purchases and buy-backs.

While a longer-term ambition allows for greater foresight, it does present challenges with predicting how circumstances might change or what unforeseen events might arise. That is why we will carry out a review at the mid-point of this period to assess if plans should continue unchanged or be adapted. This will be important to support local authorities too, who are key in this process and currently plan for housing through their Local Housing Strategies on a five-yearly cycle.

<sup>27</sup> <https://kingdomhousing.app.box.com/s/b2wmva9bzj7eiamsczw6miesic14hzxy>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/housing-statistics-scotland-quarterly-update/pages/1/>

As we emerge from the COVID-19 crisis into a new phase of affordable home delivery, we will complete a review of future grant subsidy benchmark levels, maintaining a focus on rent affordability as well as efficiencies in order to maximise the delivery of more affordable homes.

We will also continue to pursue innovative approaches to delivering the non-social element of the programme, including Open Market Shared Equity or successor schemes and mid-market rent options. And we will explore the possibility of cross-subsidy models with interested councils to support the funding of more social rented housing in mixed-tenure communities.

Sustaining a strong supply of affordable homes was a key message we received from stakeholders during consultation, who agree that it is an essential part of achieving the Housing to 2040 Vision, as well as contributing to work to end homelessness and tackle child poverty. This ambitious goal for affordable housing supply will help to meet any increased demand for affordable housing driven by the effects of COVID-19 and help with economic and social recovery over the longer term.

As set out in the 2020/21 Programme for Government, we will take action to improve the **quality** of the homes delivered through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of home and the need for homes and the spaces around them to support people to live well.

“We have so much space here – there’s even room for Johny to have a trampoline in the garden, and it’s a joy to watch him play and run free across the grass.”

**Lisa reflecting on her move with her son into a new house in the village of Sauchen in rural Aberdeenshire, provided by Osprey Housing.**<sup>29</sup>

We will introduce guidance to ensure homes provide access to outdoor space and space for home working and learning and require these improved standards be met in exchange for government funding. Equality considerations will continue to shape the Affordable Housing Supply Programme as we work with local authorities to ensure the needs of diverse communities across Scotland are met, including the provision of larger homes where these are needed.

We will also work with the sector to **deliver digital connectivity in new social homes, aiming to provide ready-to-go internet connections**. Digital connectivity is an essential way to stay connected to friends and family, as well as opening out access to employment, learning and cultural activity. We will therefore drive forward work to phase in the requirement from 2021/22 that all new build social rented homes delivered through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme are digitally-enabled, including when those are off-the-shelf purchases from private developers.

<sup>29</sup> [New Osprey home gives young family a fresh start – Scottish Housing News](#)

## Part 1B – Attracting investment

**We will attract private investment to help deliver more homes and ensure those homes are energy-efficient, use zero emissions heating, are adapted to our future climate and meet the needs of people who live in them.**

Private investment has played an important role in affordable housing provision for many years, with the Affordable Housing Supply Programme based on a tried and tested model which combines government grant funding and private finance in the form of loan funding. For 2019/20, our average grant contribution for the social homes delivered by Registered Social Landlords was approximately 56% (£88,500 per home), with an average of around £69,000 raised through private funding from Registered Social Landlords' rental income.

In recent years, we have stepped up our efforts to attract private investment into housing provision by sharing risk between public and private sectors. The challenges ahead mean that we need to accelerate private investment in housing programmes and projects and in the transition to decarbonised heat, using it to complement and add value to public investment and deliver better outcomes for people and communities. Our track record in attracting investment through housing provision means we are starting from a strong position.

Creating the right conditions – commercial viability and stable, fair returns – for investment is essential and we will:

- Develop opportunities for private capital investment in housing as part of the implementation of the **Global Capital Investment Plan**. The plan clearly recognises the economic contribution of the housing sector and action to build and shape capital markets to help meet housing requirements relating to regional growth, renewal and improvement of homes.

- In line with the **Infrastructure Investment Plan** and the **Place Investment Framework**, co-ordinate social and affordable housing investment with other essential infrastructure investment to increase opportunity for private investment in place initiatives that are key to business and regional growth.
- Build a set of commercial propositions for **investment in green energy and related construction materials and products** to be considered for inclusion in Scotland's Green Investment Portfolio that is promoted globally by Scottish Development International.
- Establish a **Green Heat Finance Task Force** to explore potential new and innovative financing mechanisms to support heat decarbonisation.

The **Scottish National Investment Bank** will be a key partner in attracting private investment and exploring alternative financing models for housing. The Bank seeks to attract and catalyse private investment in businesses and projects alongside its own investment, to maximise impact and deliver on its missions on Net Zero, Place and People. The Bank is also taking a long-term view, up to 2045.

Our housing ambitions, now and over the long term, align with aspects of all three of the Bank's missions. The Bank will shortly publish its first report setting out how it will invest to deliver its missions. It is expected that there will be opportunities for investment in areas which are vital to the delivery of Housing to 2040 including:

- Affordable housing, both social housing and mid-market rent.
- "Build to Rent" in the private sector, with an emphasis on the delivery of homes at the affordable end of market rates.
- Housing infrastructure, strategic development sites and creation of new sustainable places.
- Small housing projects, by small- and medium-sized enterprise (SME) homebuilders, aligned to the Bank's missions.

- Regeneration and repurposing properties, particularly in town and city centres.
- Carbon neutral heat generation, storage and distribution and domestic energy efficiency initiatives.
- Housing supply chain energy efficiencies, modern methods of construction, decarbonisation of materials and circular economy initiatives.
- Digital infrastructure.
- Assisted living and flexible housing.

We will work closely with the housing sector to bring forward investment proposals and maximise the role the Bank can play in the delivery of the Housing to 2040 Vision.

In addition to our investment in affordable homes through our Affordable Housing Supply Programme, we have already committed to supporting the growth in Scotland of the building of homes by the private sector for long-term private renting. In recent years, we introduced a package of measures – tenancy reform, planning advice, tax relief and a government guarantee to give certainty of rental income to investors – to encourage investment in private sector “Build to Rent”. A substantial pipeline of around 9,000 Build to Rent homes in Scotland’s major cities is now progressing, with several developments moving to construction stage, contributing to place-making and regeneration of city sites. Over the next decade, **we will continue to support the building of homes for private rent, with a focus on maximising delivery of these homes at the affordable end of market rents**, working with private sector investors and partners whose business models match our ambition to improve affordability for tenants.



## Part 1C – Building stronger and more vibrant places

“Help communities to actively work to make their place a place to be proud of – green areas, play areas, help with littering, places for young people to meet and access to transport. All of the above helps to build a good community.”

Tenant group.<sup>30</sup>

**We will take action to make housing and places work together seamlessly so people can live in communities that meet their needs and support their health and wellbeing.**

Housing to 2040 puts our ambitions for place at its core, creating not only quality homes but quality places too. This applies to all communities in Scotland, recognising that all places are distinct, but also taking account of the particular challenges faced by our remote, rural and island communities as well as our town centres and urban communities.

We will help create places that people want to live, work, enjoy and settle in – places to thrive and bring up families. This means giving greater importance to what is beyond the front door of a home, be that a garden, a safe street, generous green space or a vibrant town centre. Our homes will be located in a way that strengthens local identity and brings communities together.

### Place-making

We need to make a radical shift in how we plan and design housing and places. As a first step, we are establishing the **Place Based Investment Programme in 2021, a £325 million investment over five years** contributing to our ambitions in community-led regeneration, community wealth building, town centre revitalisation and 20 minute neighbourhoods. This will also be an important source of funding to contribute to mixed-use development projects which include affordable housing.

We will also continue to deliver the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund, backed by £25 million per year over the next five years, which can be used to support mixed-use development projects, including housing, and support community-controlled housing associations to deliver community and economic facilities in housing developments.

Next, we will put more **focus on place in our housing programmes** and **ensure that our funding is planned carefully alongside other investment being made in local areas** by:

- **Developing a Place Investment Framework** to help support the delivery of more affordable homes in existing communities, town centres and **20 minute neighbourhoods**.
- Embedding the Place Principle in the terms of reference and conditions of sponsored and supporting public bodies, agencies and organisations to ensure a truly collaborative approach to delivering great places.

We will also **strengthen our planning policies** by:

- Embedding an **infrastructure first approach** to development.<sup>31</sup>
- Introducing local place plans so that communities can actively shape their neighbourhoods.
- More actively promoting the reuse of vacant and derelict land for housing.
- Reviewing permitted development rights to explore the potential for encouraging more residential development in our town centres.

A stronger focus on delivering better places in our ongoing and aligned work on housing, planning and transport will make an important contribution to the development of an Infrastructure Needs Assessment ahead of the next Infrastructure Investment Plan in 2025/26.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Provided in response to [consultation](#)

<sup>31</sup> As recommended by the Infrastructure Commission for Scotland, [Print \(infrastructurecommission.scot\)](#)

<sup>32</sup> [A National Mission With Local Impact: Infrastructure Investment Plan for Scotland 2021-22 to 2025-26 \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

We will apply concepts such as the **20 minute neighbourhoods** across our cities, towns, and rural areas so that the places where we live and work are more resilient and sustainable. In rural areas, where settlement patterns are more dispersed, the concept will help us to make sure our investment decisions deliver the maximum benefits for individuals and their communities. For instance, by building more homes to meet local needs in and around existing communities, we can strengthen the long-term viability of local facilities and services.

**20 minute neighbourhoods** are about living well locally, giving people the ability to meet most of their daily needs nearby, complemented by safe walking, wheeling and cycling and local transport options to support travel further afield.

20 minute neighbourhoods will provide easier access to essential services, reduce our reliance on out-of-town shopping, create more opportunities to enjoy the natural environment locally and reduce demand for unsustainable travel and reliance on private car use. All of this will support a better quality of life in the places we live.

To make this change:

- More new homes will be in accessible locations, reducing the need to travel.
- New planning policies will be introduced so that homes in both urban and rural areas will be planned together with community facilities and infrastructure.
- Biodiversity and blue-green infrastructure, green space and play will be embedded in the way we plan communities.
- More flexibility will be built into the design of homes so they can meet people's needs as they grow older, or accommodate changing lifestyles such as home working.
- Developers will work closely with local authorities and communities.
- The approach will be tailored, reflecting the difference between places, to ensure that living well locally can be delivered in the most relevant way within cities and more rural settings.

Our plans to put place at the heart of our housing programmes and the approach we intend to take in the National Planning Framework 4 are key levers to making 20 minute neighbourhoods a reality over the course of Housing to 2040.

Housing to 2040 will **help to deliver more town centre living** by:

- Investing in a rolling programme of **demonstrator locations**, providing expertise, resources and matched funding to help illustrate what future Town Centre Living and 20 minute neighbourhood models can look like.
- Supporting local authorities to use the **new £50 million Vacant and Derelict Land Investment Programme** to unlock brownfield land for zero emissions affordable housing and enable the purchase and reuse of vacant town centre buildings for housing.
- Updating the National Planning Framework to provide a new spatial strategy that re-imagines the future of our town and city centres.





And importantly, we will align planning and housing delivery at the local level by linking up Local Housing Strategies and Local Development Plans. This will help to deliver the right type and mix of homes in the right locations, including housing for older people, disabled people and for families within the six priority groups outlined in our Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan.<sup>35</sup>

The focus in Housing to 2040 and NPF4 on the use of brownfield sites for housing, supporting town centre living and embedding the implications for transport in spatial and land use planning will help to deliver the priorities set out in the **second National Transport Strategy**.<sup>36</sup>

Delivering affordable homes, putting homes at the heart of well-connected places, shifting our approach to planning and improving how homes support independent living will also make an important contribution to supporting **our aim for Scotland's population**.<sup>37</sup> These actions will help to make communities across Scotland attractive places to live, work, bring up families and to move to so that Scotland's population profile improves and helps support sustainable and inclusive economic growth and wellbeing.



<sup>35</sup> [Every child, every chance: tackling child poverty delivery plan 2018-2022 – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/every-child-every-chance-tackling-child-poverty-delivery-plan-2018-2022/pages/120.aspx)

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/national-transport-strategy-2/>

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/isbn/9781800045224>

## Part 1D – Communities at the heart

**We will take action so that communities can play an active role in developing their places.**

The Rural and Islands Housing Fund helps support community-led housing in rural and island communities and we will continue to offer the Fund in these areas (see Part 1E). Separately, we will explore how a similar model could be used in urban areas where there are gaps that a community anchor organisation could fill, where viable, to support delivery of community-led housing and community wealth building. We will also consider the extent to which this wider support can be used to stimulate the development of local place plans by communities for their places, as introduced by the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019.

### Community involvement

We know from our work with communities that good design really matters. We are committed to the community-led design work which Fraser Avenue demonstrates and which has been so effective in delivering high-quality homes and a strong and vibrant neighbourhood. To support other communities and designers to take this approach, we will be launching a new tool, a Design Version of the Place Standard, later in 2021.

We will also establish a **Knowledge Exchange Network** which will encourage more people to get involved in planning for housing by building local community capacity for local place planning. The Network will allow communities to share their experience and learning about community regeneration and place-making, as well as access professional expertise. We will also support the introduction of local place plans for communities to express their aspirations for the future of their places.

## Case study: Community involvement<sup>38</sup>



Fraser Avenue in Inverkeithing has shown that community involvement in the design and development of their neighbourhood – at all stages from feasibility to completion – is essential to making places great places to live and to creating a strong sense of community. It has created a model for the social aspect of regeneration, taking it beyond building housing into creating new neighbourhoods.

Careful consideration of place-making design around homes and the accessibility of local facilities, with safer street environments for pedestrians and cyclists and green space for social events and safe play, has created a newly-invigorated neighbourhood where people are proud to live, stimulated positive changes in their health, wellbeing and finances and allowed greater interactions between neighbours.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Photograph credit: Gordon Burniston

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.ads.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Fraser-Avenue-Case-Study.pdf>

## Community wealth building

### Strengthening the role of social housing providers

Social housing providers are more than social landlords and developers – they are key players in the national and local economy, with an economic impact far beyond the people they house.<sup>40</sup> Social housing providers are ideally placed not only to work with tenants and residents, but also to develop the wider local economies in which they are based and help tackle poverty in these areas by providing work and training opportunities.

- As significant **employers**, social housing providers offer employment opportunities to local communities and support to their residents.
- They undertake significant **purchasing** of goods and services, directing this spend to local SMEs, social enterprises, and cooperatives can boost local employment and retain wealth locally.
- As significant **landowners and asset owners**, social housing providers can use their landholdings to nurture good local economies built upon environmental stewardship and advancing general wellbeing.

North Ayrshire Council produced Scotland's first Community Wealth Building strategy, launched in May 2020. We supported Ayrshire to develop a regional approach to community wealth building through the Ayrshire Growth Deal and we are now working with five additional areas – Clackmannanshire, South of Scotland, Glasgow City Region, Western Isles and Tay Cities – to produce bespoke community wealth building action plans for each area.

Taking on board the learning from these action plans, **we will extend this approach so that by 2025 community wealth building is embedded in the approach and practices of social housing providers across Scotland.** There will be a big opportunity to apply this approach to energy efficiency and heat decarbonisation work across Scotland as investment ramps up from 2025 onwards.

### Housing cooperatives

Housing cooperatives play an important role in supporting access to affordable homes in communities. Our current regulatory framework supports the setting up of housing cooperatives and the Affordable Housing Supply Programme is available as a source of support for cooperatives in the same way as for Registered Social Landlords. We will explore what further support may be needed for establishing cooperatives in the rented sector, including the private rented sector, and include this in the scope of the proposed consultation as part of the Rented Sector Strategy (see Part 2C).



<sup>40</sup> <https://cles.org.uk/publications/housing-associations-as-anchor-institutions-toolkit/>

## Part 1E – Rural and island communities

“Across the islands in Argyll, including Bute and places like Mull, Tiree, Colonsay and Islay, in trying to help those islands develop a sustainable future, the one issue above all others that comes out is housing.”

**Housing Exhibition Attendee.**<sup>41</sup>

**We will take action so that rural and island communities have access to high-quality, affordable and market housing which has been planned alongside the economic and physical infrastructure and helps people to live, work and thrive – and we will help to stem rural depopulation.**

Overall quality of life and wellbeing in rural Scotland are consistently reported to be high, but rural communities are diverse, ranging from accessible rural areas around cities with relatively high average incomes, to more remote rural and island communities with amongst the lowest average incomes in Scotland, particularly for women.<sup>42</sup> Employment patterns are different too, with more people working part-time or as a self-employed person in remote rural areas compared to more urban areas.

Some rural areas face the challenges of depopulation, with young people in particular moving away either by choice or because it can be difficult to access appropriate employment, education or housing locally. Many areas also face difficulties retaining key workers where competition for homes is high.

Recent research to inform NPF4 highlighted the importance of understanding the “live-ability” of rural areas, and raised a number of common issues including access to facilities, the cost of living, an ageing population and centralisation of services.<sup>43</sup> It emphasised the fundamental role housing plays in the local economy and the sustainability of rural communities.

Housing delivery tends to be more diverse: rural Scotland has much more experience in self-build and relies on smaller builders, and developments costs are higher. Often relatively small-scale actions can bring about significant impacts, for example, a small number of additional homes can have a generational impact and help build the long-term resilience of communities.

We are committed to helping rural and island communities to thrive. We will sustain and seek opportunities to grow our population in rural areas as part of our Population Strategy<sup>44</sup> and NPF4, Scotland’s national spatial plan, is required by the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 to help grow our rural population. Housing generally and affordable housing in particular have an important part to play in this.

The **Affordable Housing Supply Programme** delivers homes in rural and island communities and offers appropriate subsidy levels to recognise the higher cost of development in these areas. Around 4,800 affordable homes have been delivered in rural and island communities in the four years to March 2020. In that time, over £59 million has been invested in the islands alone to provide affordable homes on Islay, Orkney, Shetland, the Outer Hebrides, Mull, Raasay and Barra, among others.

41 <https://www.gov.scot/isbn/9781839609602>

42 [Understanding the Scottish rural economy: research paper – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/understanding-the-scottish-rural-economy/research-paper-2020/pages/understanding-the-scottish-rural-economy-research-paper-2020.aspx)

43 Scottish Government, (2020) Rural Planning Policy to 2050: research findings. [Rural Planning Policy to 2050: research findings – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/rural-planning-policy-to-2050/research-findings/pages/rural-planning-policy-to-2050-research-findings.aspx)

44 <https://www.gov.scot/isbn/9781800045224>

The next ambitious phase of the programme will continue to provide affordable homes in rural and island communities. In addition to the mainstream programme, communities will also be supported by the **continuation of the Rural and Islands Housing Fund beyond March 2021, backed by up to £30 million** of investment. The fund aims to increase the supply of affordable housing across all tenures, and helps groups

such as community organisations, development trusts and private landowners to build new affordable housing, refurbish existing properties and bring empty properties into use including the conversion of commercial and non-domestic properties into houses. It also provides feasibility funding to help groups explore the options and range of possibilities.

## Case study: The Rural and Islands Housing Fund



North Harris Trust, the community body which manages one of the largest community-owned estates in Scotland, is committed to stopping the downward spiral of people leaving the area, services being cut and jobs disappearing. Provision of housing plays an important role in reversing this trend.

The Trust was awarded £100,000 from the Rural and Island Housing Fund to help to redevelop the former Scalpay care unit into two much needed homes for affordable rent.

The new homes were rented by two young families who wanted to stay in Scalpay but who had outgrown their current accommodation and who were considering moving away from the area and leaving local employment opportunities.

*“We were delighted to be awarded the tenancy as it will allow us to stay in Scalpay near our family and friends. The houses are great and we have settled in well.”*

*“We liked living in Scalpay and it was very good as I had secured permanent work so unless the North Harris Trust had built these homes we would have had to leave Scalpay. The house is lovely and we are very happy to be able to stay here, thank you North Harris Trust.”*

Many of the actions in the route map will bring benefits to rural and island communities as well as to urban ones. For example:

- Our plans to extend the use of **modern methods of construction** can help to overcome some of the delivery challenges in rural areas and stakeholders were enthusiastic about their potential (see Part 3C). Our work to promote and increase the use of these new technologies will specifically recognise the gains to be made for rural communities and put in place the conditions needed for those benefits to be realised.
- We recognise that many young people in rural areas aspire to self-build. Our plans to scale up opportunities for **self-provided housing** (see Part 2D) and make this a mainstream option will support this aspiration and provide an important way to help young people to stay in the rural areas they grew up in if they want to.
- We are already taking steps to regulate **short-term lets** to empower local authorities to strike a better balance between local housing need and the concerns of residents with that of the tourism industry, both of which are crucial to support thriving communities. We will also give all local authorities powers to manage the numbers of **second homes** where they see this as a problem in their area. And we will establish a new fund for local authorities to apply to in order to bring **empty homes** and potential empty homes back into residential use (see Part 2D).
- Our commitment to work with and support social housing providers to strengthen their role in community wealth building will help to develop rural economies, bringing new employment opportunities. In particular, programmes to develop local supply chains and the skills needed to support heat decarbonisation will be looking to maximise their impact in rural areas, where capacity and availability of local contractors has long been an issue (see Part 1D).

However, we know that Scotland's rural and island communities face some unique challenges in securing the right number, type and quality of homes to enable communities to thrive and grow, young people to stay, and new and existing residents to find a home to meet their needs.

We will:

- Implement **new Permitted Development Rights for the conversion of agricultural buildings to residential and commercial uses**. These will come into force on 1 April 2021 and will help support the provision of new homes in rural areas and help succession planning on farms.
- Work with Community Land Scotland and others to bring forward **more land for housing in rural areas**, and using the new NPF4 and the development planning system to do more to identify a greater choice of land for community-led and self-provided housing, affordable housing and new build homes.
- Identify how our planning policies can **help to sustain and grow crofting communities**.
- **Consider how the concept of 20 minute neighbourhoods in rural and island communities could apply**, delivering homes in existing communities with access to the services and amenities that the community needs.
- **Improve the condition and quality of existing properties**, including agricultural tenancies and tied accommodation, through the new Housing Standard (see Part 4A).
- Ensure that we take a **place-based approach and reflect a sound understanding of the aspirations of rural communities**. People living and working in rural areas are best placed to help decide how their communities can grow in a way that meets their needs and so it is essential they are involved in planning their future development.

## Part 1F – Taxation

**In the next Parliament, we will review the role of taxation in supporting our Housing to 2040 vision for both new and existing homes and our communities.**

“Taxes on land and property can serve as a powerful tool for helping Scotland develop a robust, resilient wellbeing economy.”

**Scottish Land Commission.**<sup>45</sup>

Taxation can influence people’s choices around the purchase, sale and use of housing and land. Our consultation and stakeholder engagement on Housing to 2040 has shown that many stakeholders believe that changes to taxation will be important to make the housing system fairer, more affordable, and drive up the quality of our homes.

Some of the changes needed will require action from the UK Government. For instance, as previously called for, reductions in VAT on household repairs would help incentivise the renovation of homes in Scotland, improving their quality, and helping to make Scotland’s housing more energy-efficient and responsive to the challenges of climate change and the transition to net zero.

The Scottish Government is already using the tax powers under its control to support the Vision and Principles that underpin the Housing to 2040 route map.

Scotland’s devolved Land and Buildings Transactions Tax (LBTT) aims to support the delivery of new affordable homes throughout the country, encourage the emergence of the Build to Rent sector and support homeownership.

LBTT’s Additional Dwelling Supplement (ADS) helps protect opportunities for first time buyers and home movers in Scotland, giving them a significant tax advantage compared to buy-to-let investors and those buying second homes.

We committed in the Scottish Budget 2021-22 to consult early in the next Scottish Parliament on the ADS with the aim of identifying reforms that could address concerns that stakeholders have raised about purchases by joint buyers and repayment timelines, whilst not creating further complexity or creating unintended consequences.

Local taxation is also important. The Council Tax Reduction Scheme ensures around 500,000 of the lowest earning households in Scotland are not required to meet a Council Tax liability they cannot afford, and our 2017 changes to Council Tax mean those in the most expensive properties now pay more.

Housing and land reform are closely associated. The independent Scottish Land Commission is currently conducting a review of land and property taxation, reporting later this year, and we will look at their recommendations closely.

Whilst Scotland’s tax policy is already playing an important role in delivering our ambitions, many stakeholders believe that tax could have a greater role to play, for instance, in encouraging investment in energy efficiency measures, repair and improvement of homes, making best use of our existing homes, including bringing empty homes back into use, and in encouraging sites to come forward for housing development. **In the next Parliament we will review the role of taxation in supporting our Housing to 2040 vision for both new and existing homes and our communities.**

Housing to 2040 commits the Scottish Government to developing options for reform. As part of that, we will consider how changes to existing local and devolved taxes could help deliver the Housing to 2040 Vision, within the context of our overall approach to taxation. In line with the Medium Term Financial Strategy,<sup>46</sup> and in anticipation of the forthcoming Fiscal Framework Review, we will also consider how further devolution or changes to reserved taxation could play their part.

<sup>45</sup> Scottish Land Commission (December 2020): [Land and Property Taxation in Scotland: Initial Scoping of options for reform](#)

<sup>46</sup> [Scotland’s Fiscal Outlook: The Scottish Government’s Medium-Term Financial Strategy – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

## Part 2: Affordability and choice

**Our aim is for everyone to have access to a home that is affordable and choices about where they live, no matter what tenure they live in.**

Improving affordability and choice across tenures will contribute to the Housing to 2040 Vision and Principles for:

**A well-functioning housing system** – where people can find and afford a home in the place they want to live and best use is made of homes across Scotland, helping to open up more options for people to find a home that meets their needs. Help is available for those who need it and housing costs do not prevent anyone from being able to save for their future. This is supported by the principles of supplying high-quality homes that are affordable to live in and where the whole cost of living in a home and in a place are considered as part of affordability.

**Homes that meet people's needs** – where people are empowered within the housing system and know where to get the help they need to stay in their home and to protect their housing rights. This is supported by the principles of respecting diversity and ensuring there are housing options for everyone at all income levels, including supporting people's ability to build their own homes.

**This part of the route map covers:**

- **The right to an adequate home and delivering equality**
- **Ending homelessness**
- **The rented sector**
- **The housing market and home ownership**

## Part 2A – The right to an adequate home and delivering equality

### The right to an adequate home

“For the right to an adequate home to be successfully realised, government must act so we have enough homes that are secure, warm, accessible, affordable, and not overcrowded, in places people want to live.”

**Social Renewal Advisory Board.**<sup>47</sup>

The **right to housing** is already a human right enshrined in international law and we have taken positive action in some areas. For example, Scotland already has some of the strongest rights in the world for people experiencing homelessness.

However, challenges remain in ensuring that people can realise their rights, that judicial remedies are available and that housing rights are effective in practice. Unfortunately, many people in Scotland cannot access housing in the market, while others have nowhere to live or live in places which do not meet their needs or are of an unacceptable standard. Those facing particular difficulties include disabled people, people experiencing the most acute forms of homelessness, people experiencing domestic abuse, Gypsy/Travellers and Roma, migrants, tenants without security and people facing poverty and destitution.

Stakeholders told us clearly that a right to an adequate home should be central to Housing to 2040 and **we commit to taking action to realising that right in Scotland.**

<sup>47</sup> [not-now-social-renewal-advisory-board-report \(5\).pdf](#)

There are different ways in which the right to adequate housing could be fully met. To establish the best way to make it a reality, **we will undertake a comprehensive audit of our current housing and homelessness legislation**, beginning in 2021. This will help us to identify where there are any gaps in current domestic legislation and where remedies for violations of housing rights can be strengthened. It will help us to assess how well current legislation protects marginalised groups and people with protected characteristics and help us determine the best and most effective means of making the right to an adequate home a reality.

The National Taskforce for Human Rights Leadership is working to establish a statutory framework for human rights that can bring internationally recognised human rights into domestic law and protect the human rights of every member of Scottish society. To make sure housing rights are connected with and mutually support other rights, we will take into consideration the recommendations of the Taskforce, and connect our work with theirs during the subsequent bill process. We will also ensure we take forward our work in light of the requirements to be set by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill.

### Developing a shared understanding of affordability

Stakeholders during our consultation told us that how affordability is currently understood and defined does not always deliver the best outcomes for people, meaning the right to an adequate home cannot be realised. We know that there is no one universally accepted definition of rent affordability, with differing accounts being taken of household incomes and other housing costs.

We will therefore work with stakeholders to **develop a shared understanding of affordability which is fit for the future** and takes into account the drivers of poverty and inequality, the economic challenges of the housing market, the financial sustainability of the affordable rented sector and the real costs of living in a home and a place.

### Delivering equality in the housing system

Housing to 2040 must and will underpin positive housing outcomes for everyone as a core feature of achieving a Fairer Scotland. Our aim is to advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and advance other dimensions of equality.

As we take forward our work to develop the detail of policies to support Housing to 2040, **equality and human rights considerations will continue to shape their development**. Equality impact assessments on individual policies will be carried out and we will support and be informed by the mainstreaming equality and human rights strategy, as committed to in Programme for Government 2020/21. We will also work with local authorities to ensure that understanding and acting on equality considerations is central to the development and implementation of Local Housing Strategies.

Equality has been at the heart of our thinking as we have developed the route map.

- In seeking an end to homelessness, we recognise that there are certain groups at risk of experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping and there are particular risk factors, such as socio-economic disadvantage. We will implement and embed homelessness prevention pathways for:
  - individuals released from prison sentences and remand.
  - young people leaving care.
  - young people.
  - victims of domestic abuse.
  - veterans (see Part 2A).
- Our new Rented Sector Strategy will take an equalities-led approach to addressing the current gaps in housing options for people with protected characteristics as well as vulnerable groups and those living in temporary accommodation, with a specific focus on addressing the needs of women and children, people experiencing domestic abuse, disabled people, minority ethnic groups and those with complex needs (see Part 2C).

- Our work to increase the use of offsite construction in new affordable homes, alongside new training routes, will help support a more diverse workforce than traditional construction, aiming to present a more attractive career for women, disabled people and people from ethnic minority backgrounds. And we will seek to bring Fair Work practices to our zero emissions affordable homes strategy to drive green, good and fair jobs across the labour market (see Part 3C).
- Our work to introduce a new Scottish Accessible Homes Standard will see accessibility built into new homes from the start, ensuring disabled people have an increased range of housing options and reducing the need to make costly changes to homes as people get older or when their needs change (see Part 4B).
- We will develop new support for older home owners and disabled people, helping them to overcome practical barriers to moving to homes that better meet their needs if they want to move (see Part 4B).

We have already committed to address the housing challenges faced by **minority ethnic communities** and know we must act on what we already know, as well as improve our evidence base. We will:

- Ensure that minority ethnic voices are heard in our work to develop a new Rented Sector Strategy (see Part 2C).
- Continue to support the delivery of homes that meet the needs of minority ethnic communities, including larger homes where those are needed, through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme (see Part 1A).
- Include specific consideration of the needs of this group in our review of the adaptations system (see Part 4B).

- Take forward research work with people from minority ethnic groups to understand and address the barriers they face to accessing social housing.
- Carry out a review of the evidence of minority ethnic people's representation in employment in the housing sector in 2021 and support the sector in taking forward any resulting actions.

Our joint action plan with COSLA was published in 2019 and has a commitment to more and better accommodation for **Gypsy/Travellers**.<sup>48</sup> Together, we are working with stakeholders and the Gypsy/Traveller community on issues such as investment and improving quality on sites, energy efficiency and making the planning system work better for Gypsy/Travellers.

As a result of this work, **we will make up to £20 million available over five years for more and better Gypsy/Traveller accommodation from 2021/22**. Building on the £2 million of short term funding in 2020/21, this represents a sustained investment to support local authorities to improve and widen access to Gypsy/Traveller accommodation.

To drive a significant improvement in the quality of sites going forward, we are developing a Design Guide for Gypsy/Traveller sites, in conjunction with residents and local authorities. This will set the standard for new accommodation, in keeping with the key principles such as accessibility and energy efficiency, which are important for all our homes. We will continue to work with Gypsy/Traveller communities to make sure their needs are embedded in housing and planning policy, including exploring ways to ensure that Gypsy/Traveller communities have access to support to allow them to self-provide accommodation that meets their needs.

48 [Improving the lives of Gypsy/Travellers: 2019-2021 – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/documents/2019/06/Improving-the-lives-of-Gypsy-Travellers-2019-2021.pdf)

## Part 2B – Ending homelessness

**Our vision is that everyone is able to have their right to an adequate home realised. This includes our aim that everyone has a settled home that meets their needs and homelessness is ended.** By ending homelessness, we mean that we have eradicated rough sleeping and that an effective system is in place to ensure that homelessness is only ever rare, brief and non-recurrent.

“I wake up every day with a smile on my face. I can’t quite believe I’ve managed to get such a lovely home.”

**Leaving temporary accommodation has allowed Graeme to return to a sense of normality, regain independence and focus properly on addressing his health problems.**<sup>49</sup>

Scotland already has strong rights for people who are homeless and an ambitious homelessness strategy. In response to the COVID-19 crisis and the need to protect those most at risk, we published our updated Ending Homelessness Together action plan in October 2020,<sup>50</sup> supported by our multi-year £50 million Ending Homelessness Together fund.

Our updated action plan has an increased emphasis on the prevention of homelessness, reinforces our commitment to a rapid rehousing approach and promises a closer examination of the range of inequalities faced by people experiencing homelessness. The plan will underpin efforts across the housing sector and beyond to embed change so that by 2040 we have not only delivered on our commitments to prevent and end homelessness for good, but have made this an established part of the housing system and wider public services.

We will **roll out nationally a programme to facilitate access to the private rented sector for homeless households.** We will build on the learning from the pilot project in Edinburgh concluding in 2021 to increase the housing choices available to people experiencing homelessness.

Taking proper account of lived experience and of less well-understood dimensions of homelessness is essential. The Homelessness Prevention and Strategy Group already provides important lived experience input to our work. We will also **commission research into housing insecurity and hidden homelessness** and support a Scottish Government secondment for someone with lived experience of homelessness so our policy work can be even more sensitive to the realities of homelessness.

We will **develop homelessness prevention legislation to ensure public bodies across Scotland have responsibilities for preventing homelessness.** This could mean, for example, that a patient in hospital would be asked about their housing situation and referred to the local authority for housing support if needed, before they reach crisis point. And we will **embed homelessness prevention pathways** for particular groups at risk of homelessness and rough sleeping, advancing equality of opportunity for people with protected characteristics. This includes implementing the recommendations in ‘Improving outcomes for women and children experiencing domestic abuse’.<sup>51</sup>

49 Graeme’s (not his real name) story is about his move from emergency COVID-19 accommodation to settled accommodation in the private rented sector.

50 [Ending homelessness together: updated action plan – October 2020 – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/ending-homelessness-together/updated-action-plan-2020/pages/12.aspx)

51 [Improving-Housing-Outcomes-for-Women-and-Children-Experiencing-Domestic-Abuse-Report.pdf \(womensaid.scot\)](https://www.womensaid.org.uk/resources/2019/07/improving-housing-outcomes-for-women-and-children-experiencing-domestic-abuse-report/)

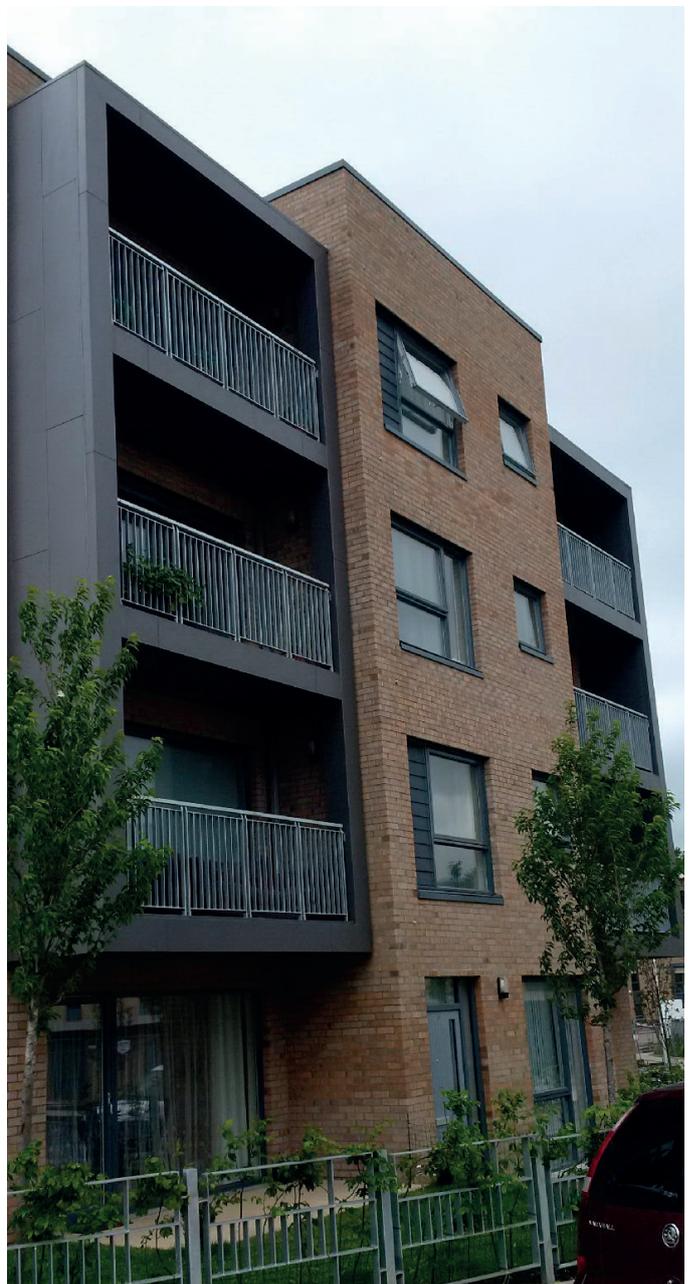
We have already committed to ensuring the **next National Performance Framework review includes explicit consideration of homelessness.**

Our aim is for Housing First to be the default option for people with multiple and complex needs. This means that people are provided with mainstream tenancies and given the wrap-around support that they need. However, although this will assist most people with complex needs, there may be people who need communal accommodation. Research, commissioned by Homeless Network Scotland, is currently investigating the need, scale and form of this kind of accommodation and will report later this year. We will then work with partners to take action to ensure people are able to access the kind of home and support they need.

Building on the Hard Edges Scotland report<sup>52</sup> and the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Scottish Government and Healthcare Improvement Scotland have launched a £890,000 project to **secure better-integrated responses from homelessness and substance use services.** The project is designed to: improve access to and engagement with health, harm reduction and rehabilitation services; reduce drug and alcohol-related deaths; and provide individuals with greater choice and control over the support they receive.

We are also **establishing a national learning network** to link representatives of Health and Social Care Partnerships and co-ordinators of rapid rehousing transition plans to better join up responses to homelessness.

The UK Government's policy on no recourse to public funds is one of the greatest barriers in our efforts to end homelessness and rough sleeping. We have committed in our updated Ending Homelessness Together action plan to explore alternative routes through which to provide support to people with no recourse to public funds. We will **continue to press the UK Government** to either remove the barriers it has put in place to supporting people with no recourse to public funds or give us the power to act.



52 [Lankelly Chase | Hard Edges Scotland full report](#)

## Part 2C – The rented sector

**We will take action so that the rented sector offers a range of high-quality homes that are affordable for those who choose to live in it.**

That means a private rented sector which offers affordable options for most people, allowing them to benefit from the flexibility the sector offers. It means a sector which is attractive to investors which, alongside increasing the choice of privately rented homes, can support jobs and create positive social and economic outcomes beyond only private gain.

It means a social rented sector that is available for those who need it and where people wait less time for a home. It is a sector where rents are good value for money and which offers high levels of service to its tenants.

The Scottish Housing Regulator supports an effective and well performing social housing sector in Scotland, safeguarding the interests of around one quarter of Scotland's households, ensuring tenants and other service users' interests are protected and ensuring lender confidence is sustained. The Regulator is a key feature of our housing system as it sets the standard, prompts improvement and underpins investment in social housing. Given the importance of effective regulation and the benefits it brings, sustaining an adequately resourced and effective regulator will play a key role in delivery of our vision for Housing to 2040.

We will continue to invest in this important part of the housing landscape, working with the Regulator to explore how they can best maximise their impact and build a more active role in improvement across the social housing sector, as well as consider how lessons learned from the social housing sector can be applied across other housing tenures.

We want the affordability, accessibility and standards of the whole rented sector to improve and align. Although the private and social

rented sectors have some fundamentally different characteristics and are structured very differently, both form an important part of local housing markets and we need to make sure that they operate well together in specific places and communities.

To do that, we will work with stakeholders to develop a **new Rented Sector Strategy in 2021**, with a view to consulting on its contents in 2022. The strategy will cover all types of rented home, including agricultural tenancies and will take an equalities-led approach to addressing gaps in housing options for people with protected characteristics. We will ensure the voices of people with protected characteristics are heard in our work to develop the strategy. Some of the outcomes we propose to achieve in the Rented Sector Strategy will require changes to legislation. To do that, we will bring a **new Housing Bill early in the next Parliament**.

We cannot continue with the situation where even those with median incomes cannot afford homes in some parts of the rented sector or face very limited choices of homes they can afford. The Rented Sector Strategy and new Housing Bill will give us and our partners the tools we need to deal with unreasonable rent increases and give people genuinely affordable choices.

We will reform Rent Pressure Zones to allow us to take localised approaches in areas experiencing the impacts of high rents, based on evidence and lived experience, and make sure that we do not unintentionally drive rents up or impact on investment in parts of the country that are not experiencing such pressures. To support this work, we will put in place robust data collection approaches to ensure we can gather information to the necessary standards required for statistical purposes – helping to identify issues and problem areas and ensuring evidence-based policy making. We will also look across the whole rented sector, at how the social and private sectors interact and how they can better work together to widen affordable housing choices for people who rent.

To provide tenants with greater protections from **unreasonable rent increases**, in the private rented sector, the strategy will set out how we will:

- Reform existing Rent Pressure Zone legislation to create a valuable and flexible tool to ensure local authorities combat unreasonably high rents in localised areas.
- Put in place mechanisms to collect robust data on the Scottish private rented sector, helping us to identify areas suffering from unreasonable rents. By the end of 2021, we will have undertaken an analysis of what is required and will set out our intentions.
- Encourage and increase the use by tenants of the Private Residential Tenancies rent adjudication process and consider options for preventing such adjudications being able to recommend increases in rent.

To increase **access to rented housing**, the strategy will set out how we will:

- Improve the data we gather to understand housing need in the social rented sector (beyond waiting lists), particularly in relation to equality groups.
- Better understand and address the barriers people from ethnic minorities face accessing social housing.
- Work with social landlords and tenants to review the approach to identifying housing need and to determining housing allocations in the social rented sector. This will involve addressing any gaps in available housing options for vulnerable groups and those living in temporary accommodation, with a specific focus on addressing the needs of women and children, people experiencing domestic abuse, disabled people, minority ethnic groups and those with complex needs.

- Work with local authorities to centrally map all empty properties to identify barriers and solutions to enable these homes to be brought back into effective use. We will also provide tools and powers for local authorities to make best use of existing housing stock, including long and short-term empty homes and voids, second homes, short-term lets and student accommodation.
- Ensure support is provided to access online services so everyone can benefit from available financial and housing support.

To strengthen the **rights of tenants and give greater protection from unfair evictions**, the strategy will set out how we will:

- Introduce pre-action protocols on a permanent basis in the private rented sector, making duties on landlords to work with tenants prior to evictions in the private sector a legal requirement, more in line with the social rented sector. We will also update pre-action requirements in the social rented sector to reflect the impact of domestic abuse on rent arrears.
- Ensure that joint tenants experiencing domestic abuse can end a joint tenancy in the private rented sector and, where appropriate, can remain in the family home as a sole tenant and consider what additional protections could be granted to people experiencing domestic abuse.
- Review and consider potential reforms to the current grounds for repossession under the Private Residential Tenancy, assessing what is the correct balance between maintaining tenancies wherever possible and landlords' rights.
- Improve the protections of those in less traditional forms of accommodation, such as residential mobile homes.

To address **standards**, the strategy will set out how we will:

- Progress towards tenure-neutral standards and support our work to develop a new Housing Standard for all tenures (see Part 4A) and decarbonise heat (see Part 3).
- Review the existing registration and regulation regimes within the private rented sector and consult on any proposals to strengthen them where needed.
- Support social and private sector landlords to improve fabric quality and state of repair and maintenance in existing social and private rented homes. This will also mean considering solutions to poorly constructed and badly designed housing, including demolition and new build.
- Modernise and develop the core services in social housing to deliver cross-sector support for aspects such as welfare advice, tenancy sustainment, wellbeing and care and support.
- Balance the need to invest in social housing stock quality and the financial sustainability of the sector, alongside keeping rents affordable and ensuring value for money.
- Balance the need for private investment in the private rented sector with ensuring it can also provide affordable local choices.

As we work with stakeholders to develop this cross-sector strategy, we will ensure it stays aligned to local housing planning.

We will put **tenant participation** at the heart of developing the Rented Sector Strategy. For the social rented sector, we will establish a national network of social rented tenants which will represent the diversity within the social rented sector by including people with protected characteristics, families with children and younger people, as well as people with a wide range of backgrounds, such as those who have experienced homelessness.

For the private rented sector, we will establish a Tenant Participation Panel and consider and consult on what additional tools and materials are needed to support both tenants and landlords more effectively, including an improved understanding of rights and responsibilities across the sector. Both of these groups will inform development and delivery of the Rented Sector Strategy.

As set out in the 2020/21 Programme for Government, we are undertaking a review of purpose-built student accommodation. This will help inform changes in the sector alongside the wider Rented Sector Strategy. In addition, the new Housing Bill will provide an opportunity to address any legislative gaps that may be identified as part of the review.

Should some landlords with poor quality property choose to sell as a result of these changes, we will take the opportunity to support social housing providers to buy suitable properties, making sure that driving out low quality housing does not leave some people with no housing options at all. Part of this will be delivered by the Affordable Housing Supply Programme, which already supports these types of purchases and will continue to do so in the future.

We will also work with banks and other stakeholders to develop innovative financial products to help renting to become an affordable and viable long term option for those who want it, helping to bring longer term financial security to renters who want to benefit from the flexibility and choice this housing option offers. This could include exploring the potential for combining a mortgage-rent payment during work years, with a rent-free occupancy and pension during retirement.

## Part 2D – The housing market and home ownership

**The Housing to 2040 Vision and Principles describe prioritising homes for living in, not for accumulating wealth, and we will take action so that the housing market operates fairly across Scotland, providing housing options that are affordable and choices in all communities.**

### Short-term lets and second homes

We estimate there may be around 30,000 properties involved in the short-term letting market and, according to 2019 council tax figures, there were approximately 24,000 second homes in Scotland.

Second homes and short-term lets bring benefits to those who own them and the tourism businesses they support. But we know that, in some communities, these kinds of ownership patterns impact on the availability of homes to meet local needs and on community sustainability. Short-term lets can also cause noise and nuisance concerns for local residents, and for the safety of guests and neighbours.

Short-term lets can offer people a flexible and cheaper accommodation option, and have contributed positively to Scotland's tourism industry and local economies across the country. However, we know that in certain areas, particularly tourist hot spots, high numbers of lets can cause problems for neighbours and make it harder for people to find homes to live in. We are working with stakeholders to **develop guidance and finalise legislation for a short-term lets licensing scheme**. The principal component of our licensing scheme is a set of mandatory standards which will help to protect the safety of guests and neighbours in short-term lets across Scotland – and we are committed to delivering this protection. This Government intends to **lay legislation to establish a new licensing scheme in June 2021**, with local authorities required to establish licensing schemes in their areas by 1 April 2022 and existing hosts and operators required to

apply by 1 April 2023. Local authorities will also be able to designate control areas, under legislation passed in February 2021. Control areas will help local authorities manage high concentrations of secondary letting, where it affects the availability of residential housing or the character of a neighbourhood, for example. These measures will help all local authorities in Scotland to strike a better balance between local housing need and the concerns of residents with that of wider economic and tourism interests.

To protect opportunities for first time buyers and home movers in Scotland, and to help them compete with buy-to-let investors or those buying second homes, the Land and Buildings Transaction Tax Additional Dwelling Supplement is payable at a rate of 4% on the total purchase price of an additional dwelling of £40,000 or more. The Council Tax (Variation for Unoccupied Dwellings) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 also gives each local authority discretionary powers to vary the council tax discount applied to second and unoccupied homes in their area.

To help to improve communities' say on the way homes are used in their areas and to make it easier for local people to stay in their area, we will **give local authorities the powers to manage the numbers of second homes** where these are a problem. We will **continue work with local authorities and stakeholders on the legislation, guidance and implementation for the short-term lets licensing scheme**, ensuring it is as efficient and effective as possible.

### Empty homes

In 2019, there were approximately 40,000 empty homes in Scotland. We have brought back around 6,000 empty homes into use since 2010 through our support for the Empty Homes Partnership and other initiatives. Empty homes are a wasted resource and the Housing to 2040 Vision requires us to go further than we have before.

As a first step, we will work with local authorities to **audit empty homes** and determine those that should be brought back into use and support the work of the Empty Homes Partnership and continue to roll out the approach across Scotland.

We will **give councils the powers they need** to regulate and charge owners appropriately for homes lying empty and ensure they have the mechanisms to bring them back into productive use. We will **create a support package for homeowners in trouble to help them stay in their home** if that is right for them and to prevent homes falling into disrepair or becoming empty in the first place.

We will also **establish a new fund for local authorities to apply to in order to bring empty homes and potential empty homes back into residential use and convert suitable empty commercial properties in town centres**. This fund will be flexible and adaptable allowing local authorities to purchase the homes themselves for use as affordable housing or provide grants to private owners to renovate the home on condition that the home is rented out at an affordable rent for a set period of time. We will be open to innovative suggestions from local authorities and others in the development of the fund so that it can meet local needs effectively.

### Home ownership

Many people aspire to own their own home. However, at the heart of Housing to 2040 is a drive to improve the affordability, standard and security of all types of home. That means that home ownership in the future will not be the only way to achieve security and unlock the ability to save for the future. This brings us more in line with some of our European neighbours, for instance Germany, Austria and Switzerland,<sup>53</sup> where home ownership has not been the default tenure of choice, and where private renting in particular is a long-term, stable and secure housing option.

We have provided funding for the Open Market Shared Equity Scheme, the Help to Buy Smaller Developers Scheme and the First Home Fund in 2021/22, recognising the important role shared equity plays in supporting the market as we recover from the effects of the pandemic through stimulating new housing development and supporting SMEs. Shared equity helps some people who would not otherwise be able to access home ownership at all and helps others to buy the home they want.

As part of Housing to 2040, we must make better use of the homes we already have and support owners and landlords to improve their properties. Recognising that this is a significant challenge but one we must face up to, we will **phase out the Help to Buy scheme completely and shift the focus of our support to helping people to renovate, adapt or improve the energy efficiency of their homes** (see Part 4A for more information).

We will continue to provide some support for first time buyers, young people and older people looking to downsize. However, we will **shift the focus to those who are either purchasing high-standard new build homes or purchasing an existing home with the intention to renovate or adapt it or improve its energy efficiency**. This support will help people own a home that is right for them and help to improve the quality of our housing stock.

The house building sector also has a role to play in supporting people into affordable home ownership. We will **work with the development and construction industries to explore ways in which future sales volumes can be less volatile and the risks associated with housing development reduced so that prices become more affordable to those on moderate incomes**.

<sup>53</sup> <http://www.oecd.org/housing/data/affordable-housing-database/housing-market.htm>

## Self-provided housing

Self-provided housing is an important element of future housing supply – one we have been told through the Housing Exhibition is particularly desired by young people. It can include self-build (where a person builds their own house or appoints their own builder), custom-build (where a person tasks a house builder to tailor a home to their preferences before it is built) and collective build (where a group of people design and build several homes together).

“It [self-build] would give me freedom and happiness and I could make it eco-friendly and sustainable.”

**Housing Exhibition attendee.**<sup>54</sup>

Self-provided housing produces homes tailored to people’s long-term needs, helping to create and deliver homes which offer people greater choice, flexibility and quality in terms of both their home and its location, with affordability and energy efficiency embedded. Self-provided homes also support diversity and innovation in the SME sector.

## Case study: Glasgow City Council self-build<sup>55</sup>



Glasgow City Council was the first council in Scotland to set up a Self-Build Register, run a unique council-enabled self-build pilot, and from that create a self-build programme.

Due to the success of the pilot project and the clear demand for affordable, serviced plots, the council created a programme of self-build, with a rolling release of plots (four council-owned sites over the next year).

The planning approach adopted by the council has encouraged affordable, high-quality, sustainable, innovative and highly individual house designs. The Design Code and Plot Passports produced for the pilot site are easily replicated for other sites and Glasgow City Council is keen to share its learning.

<sup>54</sup> [Housing Exhibition report](#)

<sup>55</sup> Image copyright: Ann Nisbet Studios

We want to see more opportunities for self-provided housing, with increased capacity amongst households and industry to deliver these kinds of homes so that it becomes a mainstream option for increasing housing choice, affordability and supply. **We want to see numbers of self-provided homes increasing year-on-year.**

To make sure we build on good practice as we scale up opportunities for self-provided housing, we will learn from the outputs of the Self and Custom Build Challenge Fund pilots across Scotland, which are largely complete,

and from the University of Edinburgh research into the pilots and loan fund. We will extend the Self Build Loan Fund for an additional year to September 2022, develop a national advice service and encourage local authorities and public land owners to provide land suitable for these homes and, where possible, infrastructure-ready plots in both rural and urban areas. To provide an appropriate evidence base, we will progress with establishing Lists of Persons with an Interest in Self-Build, set out in the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, and publish guidance to help local authorities to develop lists of potential self-builders in their area.



## Part 3: Affordable warmth and zero emissions homes

**Our aim is for housing to contribute to tackling climate change by 2045 by delivering homes that are warm and affordable to heat and reducing the emissions caused by housing and housing construction.**

Delivering affordable warmth and zero emissions homes which enhance biodiversity will contribute to the Housing to 2040 Vision and Principles for:

**High-quality and sustainable homes** – where new homes are designed to be energy-efficient and use zero emissions heating systems and where existing homes are retrofitted to improve their energy efficiency and decarbonise their heating systems, whilst making fuel poverty a thing of the past. This is supported by the principles of enhancing biodiversity, promoting energy security and contributing to our statutory targets for climate change.

**This part of the route map covers:**

- **Zero emissions new homes**
- **Zero emissions existing homes**
- **Housing’s contribution to the green recovery**

### The journey to zero emissions homes

**We are absolutely committed to ending Scotland’s contribution to climate change by 2045 in a just and fair way.** We are just as committed to achieving our statutory fuel poverty targets.

These ambitions mean that the scale and pace of the changes to how we heat our homes need to be transformational. By 2035, we want all of Scotland’s homes to be as energy-efficient as possible. And by 2045, emissions from heating all buildings need to reach zero.

The type of heating used in over 2 million homes and 100,000 non-domestic buildings must be changed by 2045 and we estimate that around 50% of homes, or over 1 million households, will need to convert to a low or zero emissions heating system by 2030. This will require very significant investment which cannot be delivered by government alone – investment from home owners, private and social landlords and others will all be critical.

While we do this, we will also work towards our statutory fuel poverty targets, delivering changes in a way that ensures a fair and just transition. As we further develop the actions set out in the draft **Heat in Buildings Strategy**,<sup>56</sup> we will only take forward actions where they are found to have no detrimental impact on fuel poverty, unless additional mitigating measures can also be put in place. We believe that emissions from our homes cannot be reduced to zero in a fair and just way without UK Government action and investment. We will continue to urge the UK Government to make the necessary changes to energy markets and put in place safeguards to protect consumers so that everyone can get a fair deal for low and zero emissions heat, particularly those least able to pay.

The changes we will make will affect people right across Scotland – tenants, landlords and homeowners alike. But the opportunities, too, are significant. And, in the year when Scottish Government is working with domestic and international partners to deliver COP26, we have an opportunity to show to the world how we will deliver zero emissions homes in Scotland.

**Housing to 2040 sits alongside the draft Heat in Buildings Strategy, with both working together to deliver our statutory targets for climate change and fuel poverty, and the milestones in between, in a fair and just way.**

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/heat-buildings-strategy-achieving-net-zero-emissions-scotlands-buildings-consultation/>

## Part 3A – Zero emissions new homes

**Our aim is to ensure that new homes are fit for the future and do not need to be retrofitted later to achieve zero emissions.**

We are developing **regulations which will require new buildings consented from 2024 to use zero direct emissions heating.**

Alongside this, in 2021 and 2024 we will **review energy standards** set through building regulations to deliver further improvements in the energy efficiency and emissions reductions in new homes. This will contribute to removing poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty and make homes more affordable to heat.

To lead by example, we will **aim for all new homes delivered by Registered Social Landlords and local authorities to be zero emissions homes by 2026.** This will mean accelerating the introduction of zero emissions heating systems ahead of the 2024 regulations coming into force and making greater use of offsite construction in the social rented sector to deliver high-quality and energy-efficient homes.

This will be supported by a new **zero emissions new build affordable homes strategy to be developed in 2021 which will focus on greater use of offsite construction and the introduction of a new business model for the delivery of affordable homes based on collaborative procurement.** Please see part 3C of this route map for further information.

The new strategy will also include how we will develop and promote nature-based investments in affordable housing delivery. This will involve greater use of natural products and solutions delivered and funded ethically, such as green infrastructure, forestry and agricultural solutions using Scottish raw materials. Action will be taken to enhance the resilience of supply chains and contribute to nature recovery and the circular economy.

Research<sup>57</sup> is underway to identify opportunities to make greater use of **Scottish timber** in construction. If successful, this could reduce imports and risks around future supply and prices.

If demand for Scottish timber increases, it can bring opportunities for Scottish manufacturing businesses and support jobs, as well as give us the chance to increase forested land and develop alternative uses for unproductive agricultural land. Our aim is to identify these opportunities early so that full preparations to take advantage of them can be made.

Taking these bold steps to reduce emissions from affordable homes will not only make a positive and early contribution to the emissions reductions we need to see across the housing system, but it will demonstrate what is possible to the wider market.

The Edinburgh Home Demonstrator project is an industry, academic and public sector partnership developing around 1,000 affordable homes to net zero standards across the City Region using offsite construction. As well as innovating around zero direct emissions heating, the work draws on the idea of “Community Carbon”<sup>58</sup> which allows local people to run and participate in local projects which offset the carbon impact of their homes, contributing to place-making as well as emissions reductions. These approaches will be tested through the Edinburgh project and, if successful, supported in other projects across Scotland.

<sup>57</sup> Research has been commissioned by Scottish Forestry and is being undertaken by Edinburgh Napier University.

<sup>58</sup> “Community Carbon” as an idea is attributed to the design practice Anderson, Bell & Christie.

## Part 3B – Zero emissions existing homes

**Our aim is that existing homes are adapted and retrofitted to improve their energy efficiency and decarbonise their heating, ending their contribution to climate change.**

We face a significant challenge to reduce the emissions created by the homes we already have in Scotland. Alongside widespread use of fossil fuel heating systems, many homes have poor energy efficiency and are expensive to heat.

As set out in the analysis of the Just Transition Commission’s call for evidence,<sup>59</sup> we have the potential in our transition to net zero to make significant improvements in the quality of homes, including improving heating and insulation of existing homes and in so doing alleviating fuel poverty. As we move to zero emissions heating in existing homes, we must take the opportunity to ensure that works to the fabric of the building and new zero emissions heating systems also serve to increase comfort and affordability for fuel poor households.

There is some uncertainty in the long-term pathway to reducing emissions from existing homes, particularly to ensure that there is no detrimental impact on rates of fuel poverty. We need to work collaboratively to establish the right mix of solutions for different types of homes in different areas to ensure heat remains affordable. We also need to work through how best to regulate to incentivise change; how new infrastructure and in-home technologies can be financed; and how to ensure national infrastructure supports future change.

The draft Heat in Buildings Strategy sets out the preparatory work needed so we can proceed on the right pathways with confidence. The challenges lie in financing this investment whilst also addressing fuel poverty, in leveraging significant private investment and in the fact that we must look to the UK Government to make the reforms to the energy market to help deliver a just and fair net zero transition for homes.

Once this essential preparatory work is underway and there is a clearer basis on which to make sound investments at pace and scale, we and partners across the public and private spheres will **ramp up investment on decarbonised heat from 2025 onwards.**

### Early action

We are taking action in the coming years to lock in some early gains and prepare the housing sector for the work to be done over the coming decades.

The draft Heat and Buildings Strategy sets out in detail the actions we are taking and a summary is given here under three headings:

- Kick-starting investment in the transition.
- A regulatory framework.
- Engagement.

### Kick-starting investment in the transition

“You get up and it’s warm even if the heating’s not on. It’s never cold. It gives you peace of mind.”

**Mr and Mrs A talking about the impact of having external wall insulation fitted as part of the Energy Efficiency Programme for Scotland: Area Based Schemes for South Ayrshire Council.**<sup>60</sup>

The draft Heat in Buildings Strategy sets out how we will kick-start the transformation of Scotland’s homes and buildings with almost £1.6 billion of capital funding over the next five years.

We will continue delivery of energy efficiency investment to support fuel poor households in order to make homes warmer and easier to heat and to reduce the impact of any increased running costs from zero emissions systems. This will take into account the distinct challenges faced by island, rural and remote communities, with extended financial support for off-grid communities.

<sup>59</sup> [Just Transition Commission: Call for Evidence Analysis Report \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/publications/2023/01/just-transition-commission-call-for-evidence-analysis-report/)

<sup>60</sup> [Home Energy Efficiency Programmes for Scotland: case studies – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/publications/2023/01/home-energy-efficiency-programmes-for-scotland-case-studies/)

Over the next five years, Area Based Schemes will increase their reach to support higher numbers of households in or at risk of fuel poverty. This includes delivering an increased number of “whole house” retrofits to fuel poor households and adoption of a “zero emissions first” approach in improving heating systems.

We will continue to support people through interest-free loans for heat and energy efficiency technologies via Home Energy Scotland, and will run our current cashback scheme until at least 2023 to help households overcome the upfront cost of taking early action.

We will evaluate the area-based equity loans pilot and consider any future equity scheme in light this evaluation and extend the Social Housing Net Zero Heat Fund until 2026 to further accelerate the decarbonisation of our social housing stock.

We will establish a Green Heat Finance Taskforce in 2021 to explore potential new and innovative financing mechanisms to support heat decarbonisation.

### A regulatory framework

To underpin investment and give long term certainty to the sector and home owners, the draft Heat in Buildings Strategy sets out proposals for **new regulation to set standards for zero emissions heating and energy efficiency between 2023 and 2025.**

Regulation will be introduced in a way that is proportionate and which considers the health and wellbeing of Scotland’s people, ensuring our actions have no detrimental impact on fuel poverty, unless additional mitigating measures can also be put in place. People and the market will be given sufficient time to adjust and prepare for new standards coming into force and there will be clear sources of support and advice.

## Case study: retrofit<sup>61</sup>



Woodside flats in Glasgow, three 18-storey tower blocks originally built in the 1960s, were refurbished in 2019 by Queens Cross Housing Association.

A pioneering retrofit strategy has brought the homes to the forefront of energy performance, resulting in a 70% reduction in carbon emissions, and helped to mitigate fuel poverty for 314 households. Open balconies were transformed into winter gardens, whilst improved access and community spaces replaced redundant stores on ground floors. By retrofitting, the associated whole life carbon of these homes are closer to net zero than most new builds. The project is recognised as “a powerful and instructive model for retrofitting” by Architects Journal in the AJ Retrofit Awards 2021.

On top of the £13.3 million refurbishment of the buildings, the project will deliver £4 million of neighbourhood environmental improvements to deliver green infrastructure, biodiverse habitats, walking/cycle routes and play spaces.

These improvements to the energy performance of homes and to the quality of the spaces around them will improve people’s quality of life and living conditions, as well as establish a sustainable future for the neighbourhood.

61 Photo credit: Andrew Lee

We will:

- Consult on a reformed Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) assessment process by summer 2021.
- Bring forward proposals for regulating, to the extent that devolved powers allow, to require the installation of zero or very near zero emissions heat in existing buildings from 2025, with a backstop of 2045.
- Bringing forward regulations requiring private rented sector properties to achieve an equivalent to EPC C by 2028.
- Consult on proposals for regulations from 2023-25 to require owner-occupied private homes to meet a minimum level of energy efficiency (equivalent to EPC C) by 2035.
- Seek the agreement of the social housing sector to bring forward the review of the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing 2 to 2023 with a view to strengthening and realigning the standard with net zero requirements so that social housing leads the transition to zero emissions buildings.
- Consult on introducing regulation to require mixed-tenure and mixed-use buildings such as tenements to reach a good level of energy efficiency (equivalent to EPC C where technically feasible and cost effective), and to install a zero emissions heating supply by 2040-45, including provisions on ensuring cooperation between building owners to carry out works and recover costs.
- Work with Historic Environment Scotland to consider what specific regulatory provisions or exemptions may be needed within regulations for buildings designated as listed or in conservation areas.

## Engagement

Much of the work set out in the draft Heat in Buildings Strategy will need the detailed input of the housing sector to design, develop and deliver. The consultation period runs until 30 April 2021 and we are seeking input from as many parts of the housing sector as possible.

To make sure the housing sector is a key part of this work, we will **establish a Zero Emissions Social Housing Task Force**. It will be convened in 2021 and will, acting independently of government, advise on requirements in social housing to meet net zero targets and, longer-term, inform what is required in the private rented and owner occupier sectors.

We will also assess the feasibility of council-led task forces to undertake retrofit and other green recovery construction projects (alongside local SMEs) through local re-training and apprenticeship programmes with the support of local further education institutions.

It is essential that Scotland's people have an opportunity to shape the heat transition. In 2021, a **bespoke public engagement strategy for heat in buildings** will be implemented, with a focus on:

- Raising the profile of energy efficiency and zero emissions heating options so that people are aware of the benefits and begin to see them as a positive choice.
- Enabling people to actively participate in shaping the development of Scottish Government policy and incentives as well as local level heat and energy efficiency planning.
- Promoting the support that is on offer from both the Scottish and UK governments to maximise take up.

By the end of 2023, there will be a new requirement for a Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) to be in place in all local authority areas. LHEES Delivery Plans will provide a strong basis for action for local communities, government, investors, developers and wider stakeholders, pinpointing areas for targeted intervention and early measures.

There will be a consultation on the draft LHEES methodology with a view to introducing legislation to establish LHEES on a statutory basis so that they are in place for all local authority areas by the end of 2023.

## Part 3C – Housing’s contribution to the green economy

**It is our aim to maximise housing’s contribution to Scotland’s green recovery.**

We estimate that the total investment in buildings that will be required to align with our net zero targets will be in the region of £33 billion.<sup>62</sup>

The scale of this investment presents a very significant opportunity to boost local economies and create good, green jobs and will involve a significant ramp-up of the capability and capacity of supply chains in Scotland. The scale of transformation means there will be opportunities for companies already involved in the energy efficiency, heating and modernised construction sectors, as well as new entrants to these markets. To maximise community wealth building, we need to secure and expand these supply chains, rather than import goods and services from elsewhere.

### Modernising construction

Modernising construction, particularly through offsite construction, is one of the most important tools we have to achieve the quality of home build and the exacting energy efficiency standards needed to meet our net zero targets.

Modernising the house building industry will not only support net zero but also bring the benefits of a more diverse workforce, more digitisation, speedier development, greater benefits for communities and improved health and safety.

“The coming decade will be one of the most innovative and transformative periods for the housebuilding sector as new technologies and approaches enter the market. For young people considering a career in engineering, construction and housebuilding there are a range of new opportunities, roles and key skills the sector will require. There is now a unique opportunity for school career advisors, industry and the public sector to enable the pathways into these future careers and support greater diversity and inclusion.”

**Professor Sean Smith, Chair of the Housing and Construction Skills Short Life Working Group.**<sup>63</sup>

We will develop a **zero emissions new build affordable homes strategy in 2021 based on greater use of offsite construction and zero emissions heating**. The strategy will tackle important strategic questions such as whether to use home-grown or imported systems, the advantages and disadvantages of panelised and modular systems, how to exploit opportunities for economic growth and increase supply chain resilience and develop understanding of technological and investment requirements.

To support the sector to embed this new approach and improve efficiency, we will work with partners through the Edinburgh Home Demonstrator Project to develop **a new business model for the design and construction of affordable homes based on collaborative procurement**. Under this model, Registered Social Landlords and local authorities, designers, regulators and builders will work closely together from day one, helping to avoid false starts and unnecessary work and delays. Improvements will be made to how goods and services are bought, greater use will be made of standard components (without compromising design quality) and the cost of a project will be assessed over its whole lifetime.

<sup>62</sup> [Heat in Buildings Strategy: Achieving Net Zero Emissions in Scotland’s Buildings Consultation – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/documents/2021/04/Heat_in_Buildings_Strategy_Achieving_Net_Zero_Emissions_in_Scotland's_Buildings_Consultation.pdf)

<sup>63</sup> [Developing the construction workforce – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/documents/2021/04/Developing_the_construction_workforce.pdf)

This work will help us, working with councils and housing associations, to **develop a more visible pipeline of future offsite development** so that industry has increased confidence to invest in more advanced and productive plant and systems and associated skills.

We will **develop a housing sectoral plan** by 2022 to prioritise the delivery of green housing investments such as energy efficiency and zero emissions heating across sectors and set out how those can be procured effectively. This will help to strengthen the local labour and materials dimensions of existing supply chains and support the development of new ones.

We will work with the Construction Scotland Innovation Centre, Scottish Futures Trust and others to **establish a housing innovation programme** to reshape demand towards design for manufacture and assembly and to raise public awareness of the environmental, social and economic reasons for this change.

### Green supply chains

We will also take action to build the strong supply chains needed to contribute to Scotland's green recovery.

Early in 2021, we will initiate **a new supply chain action plan specifically focused on the development of energy efficiency and zero emissions heat in buildings supply chains in Scotland.**

And, through our existing Sustainable Energy Supply Chain programme and our economic development agencies – Highlands and Islands Enterprise, South of Scotland Enterprise, Scottish Enterprise and Scottish Development International – we will continue to raise awareness amongst the supply chain, and continue to provide valuable tailored business support that will attract new entrants and inward investment.

### Skills, jobs and a Fair Work Nation

Our vision is for Scotland to be a leading Fair Work nation by 2025. Offsite construction has the potential to attract a more diverse workforce than traditional construction and spread jobs more equally across Scotland. As decarbonisation work and offsite construction techniques pick up pace over the next decade, the demand for skills to deliver these transformations will increase. Professor Sean Smith, in his report *New Housing & Future Construction Skills: Adapting and Modernising for Growth* recommends that we support the demand of offsite skills by creating pipelines of offsite projects and grow the supply of those skills through bespoke training routes.<sup>64</sup>

Through the new zero emissions new build affordable homes strategy, we will work with partners to identify the scale and nature of job opportunities in offsite construction and associated training and skills needs.

In 2021, Skills Development Scotland will carry out work to build a better understanding and evidence base of the future skills needed to help the construction industry move to zero emissions.<sup>65</sup>

64 <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/independent-report/2019/05/new-housing-future-construction-skills-adapting-modernising-growth/documents/new-housing-future-construction-skills/new-housing-future-construction-skills/govscot%3Adocument/new-housing-future-construction-skills.pdf?forceDownload=true>

65 [climate-emergency-skills-action-plan-2020-2025.pdf \(skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk\)](https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/climate-emergency-skills-action-plan-2020-2025/pdf/skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk)

As those skills requirements become clearer, we will work with Skills Development Scotland and others to develop **flexible learning offers to ensure that the new skills needed to support the move to offsite construction are available through a variety of routes**, such as modern and graduate apprenticeships, as well as other pathways. One of these routes will be, from 2022, the **creation of an offsite construction training route** as part of the online National Construction Skills Academy being established to provide training linked to low carbon and digital skills and high-quality management training. We will also work with enterprise agencies and the Construction Scotland Innovation Centre to promote house building and wider construction as an **attractive and ethical career prospect** in schools and through wider marketing.

We will **apply Fair Work First** to our zero emissions new build affordable homes strategy and apply these criteria to grants, other funding and contracts awarded by and across the affordable housing sector. This will help to tackle the gender pay gap and the disability pay gap, contributing to our efforts to eradicate child poverty by supporting families with children to gain more income through employment.

Developing the skills needed for energy efficiency and low and zero emissions heating systems is important to ensure we can retrofit existing homes and build future-proofed new homes. And, the development of new skills requirements will help both professionalise services in the sector and provide career pathways, particularly for young people.

We are **consulting on proposals for Scottish skills requirements for energy efficiency, low and zero emissions heating systems, microgeneration and heat networks in 2021.**<sup>66</sup> Once confirmed, these requirements will create best practice standards for the sector and will be a minimum requirement for Scottish Government supported programmes.



<sup>66</sup> [Consultation on Scottish skills requirements for energy efficiency, zero emissions and low carbon heating systems, microgeneration and heat networks for homes. – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/consultations/energy/2021/01/consultation-on-scottish-skills-requirements-for-energy-efficiency-zero-emissions-and-low-carbon-heating-systems-microgeneration-and-heat-networks-for-homes)

## Part 4: Improving the quality of all homes

**Our aim is for all homes to be good quality, whether they be new build or existing, meaning everyone can expect the same high standards no matter what kind of home or tenure they live in.**

Stakeholders told us that the state of repair of our existing homes is a major challenge and one to which we should be giving increasing attention. They also told us that new homes should be future-proofed for accessibility, avoiding costly adaptations in the future when people's needs change.

Improving the quality of all homes will contribute to the Housing to 2040 Vision and Principles for:

**High-quality and sustainable homes** – where all homes are well-designed and of a high standard, allowing people to live well no matter what kind of home or tenure they live in. New build homes will be built to high standards from the outset and existing homes are able to be adapted and improved, with support for home owners and householders to maintain, improve and repair their homes. This is supported by the principles of tenure-neutral standards and requiring housing developers and homeowners to ensure their properties are built and maintained to a high standard.

**Homes that meet people's needs** – where homes support people's wellbeing by being easily adaptable and with enough space to live well and there are a range of housing options available to meet different needs. This is supported by the principle that homes and the housing market are flexible to allow people to find, create or move to a home that meets their needs throughout their life.

**This part of the route map covers:**

- **A new Housing Standard**
- **Independent living**



## Part 4A – A new Housing Standard

“The housing system needs to be tenure blind – all houses should be seen as homes.”

Tenant group.<sup>67</sup>

**We will take action so that all homes, no matter their tenure, are required to meet the same standards.**

Respondents to our consultation felt strongly that a single set of quality standards across all tenures was central to achieving the Housing to 2040 Vision.

At the moment, the Tolerable Standard, introduced in 1969 and added to periodically since then, sets out minimum requirements for habitation and applies to all homes. However, depending on the tenure of a home, owners and landlords will be working towards different additional quality requirements with separate mechanisms for enforcement.

Current housing standards allow for exceptions in some local circumstances, such as homes in rural areas, agricultural properties or hard to treat buildings. This results in the unacceptable position where those with the fewest options and the least recourse are more likely to have to live in sub-standard housing.

Overall, this means we cannot guarantee that everyone has a good quality of home, regardless of whether they own it or rent it from a private or social landlord – and some homes are left behind entirely.

As an important first step towards tenure-neutral housing standards, we will develop a **new Housing Standard, set in law**. Our aim is that this will cover all homes new or existing, including agricultural properties, mobile homes and tied accommodation. We aim to ensure that there will be **no margins of tolerance, no exemptions and no “acceptable levels” of sub-standard homes** in urban, rural or island communities, deprived communities or in tenements. This will mean our existing homes will keep pace with new homes, with no one left behind.

We will work with local authorities, registered social landlords, private landlords and communities to drive improvements to the quality of all homes, balanced with the rights of building owners and householders.

The Standard will be aligned to the proposed regulatory standards for energy efficiency and heating, giving us the opportunity to address both goals, maximising the impact of investment and minimising disruption to households.

A new tenure-neutral Housing Standard will ensure a clear minimum standard setting out what people are entitled to expect, and what they are expected to do, so that everybody living in Scotland can have a warm, comfortable and safe place to live. With this, we will move beyond traditional models of fitness for human habitation to a new model that meets expectations for housing as a human right and delivers homes that underpin health and wellbeing.

This represents **a shift towards greater partnership between Government and home owners**, still rooted in the responsibilities home owners have for the repair and maintenance of their properties. Careful consultation and time is needed to set the right standard, determine the right pace and bring people with us.

<sup>67</sup> Provided in response to [consultation report](#)

In 2021, we will **consult** on a new Housing Standard and how it can:

- Cover all tenures and apply the same quality requirements, aiming for no exemptions.
- Go beyond a minimum standard to include aspects such as being free from serious disrepair, minimum space standards, systematic future-proofing of homes for our future population and additional safety standards.
- Balance quality improvement with affordability for households and the rights of property owners.
- Create mechanisms to provide assistance to address substandard housing.

Following consultation, we aim to **publish a draft Standard in 2023 and progress legislation in 2024/25, for phased introduction from 2025 to 2030.**

Home repairs and maintenance are a homeowner's responsibility and we will take action to support **proactive approaches to repair and maintenance**, which should help owners to avoid high-cost interventions later. In the next Parliament, we will commission research on the costs of maintenance and current incentives and disincentives to investing in maintenance. This will help owners to understand the costs associated with keeping homes in good condition and the long-term benefits such investment brings. And it will help us to identify ways to support owners to ensure their property is in a good state of repair and well maintained. Recognising the particular challenges faced by those in tenement properties, we will act on the recommendations of the Parliamentary Working Group on Tenement Maintenance, and we will investigate ways to encourage behaviour change which is most cost-effective for owners in the longer term.

Where owners need support to improve their homes, we will take forward work to develop targeted support packages, aligning this closely with support developed to deliver heat decarbonisation. There are benefits to be gained by bringing these together where possible, in packages which address the specific challenges of different building types and geographies. We recognise that to minimise disruption, the future proofing of homes for our ageing population should be completed alongside other improvements where this is feasible too.

To do this, we will **develop a new 'Help to Improve' policy approach**. We will work with stakeholders to design new support for repairs and improvements which work alongside existing and planned support for energy efficiency and zero emissions heating systems delivered under the draft Heat in Buildings Strategy, allowing us to take a whole-house approach where possible.

We anticipate that this holistic Help to Improve approach will result in support being available across all areas of Scotland for homeowners and landlords to help pay for improvement work and **support will begin to be in place by the time the Standard is introduced from 2025.**

As a first step in the design of this approach, we will review the current support available for condition repair, including our experience of loan and equity funding. We will draw on the work of the Green Heat Finance Taskforce, who will consider the financial and economic benefits of any new financing mechanisms for owner occupiers, renters and landlords, and mitigation of any unintended consequences, particularly on those least able to pay.

Alongside the new Standard, we will review **enforcement provisions**. This will help to align the objectives of the Standard to plans for regulating heat in buildings and make sure we are not left with an “acceptable” level of substandard housing in rural and island communities, deprived areas or in tenements. We intend to introduce an enforcement framework from 2025, which **could come into force in phases between 2025 and 2030**, recognising that different types of homes in different places may need more or less time to achieve compliance.

As well as the new Housing Standard, we are also working with the UK Government to deliver a New Homes Ombudsman scheme which extends to Scotland but respects devolution and works for Scotland. The intention of the New Homes Ombudsman scheme is to raise the standards of conduct of developers and the quality of new build homes.

**Digital connectivity** is an important driver of economic and social benefits. It can allow people to work effectively from home, support children in their learning, help people to stay connected to friends and family and allow people to participate in a wide range of cultural activities. It is also an important enabler for technology-enabled care, a key dimension of supporting independent living.

In recognition of this, we have committed £600 million to the Reaching 100% broadband programme. This programme will ensure that every home and business across Scotland will be able to access superfast broadband by the end of 2021. We are also investing to improve mobile coverage by funding new masts in selected rural “notspots” via the £25 Million Scottish 4G Infill Programme.

However, we know that older adults, those with lower household incomes, adults living in the most deprived areas, disabled people and those living in social rented housing are all less likely to use the internet in Scotland.<sup>68</sup>

COVID-19 has thrown into sharp relief the importance of digital connectivity in a home environment. We have been able to tackle digital exclusion of up to 55,000 people on low incomes through our Connecting Scotland programme. We have committed over £45 million to the programme, providing devices, internet connection and data, and training to ensure that people have the best opportunity to become confident digital citizens and to experience the benefits of digital. However, consideration needs to be given to longer term approaches which continue to keep these 55,000 people online and provide solutions for those not yet supported.

As part of Housing to 2040, we are taking early action to bring digital connectivity to new social housing, driving forward work to phase in the requirement from 2021/22 **that all new build social rented homes delivered through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme are digitally-enabled**.

We also need to look beyond new build social housing. As part of the new Rented Sector Strategy, we will **work with social housing providers to deliver internet services to all tenants and include consultation on digital connectivity in the review of the Social Housing Charter in 2021**. We will also **consider digital connectivity within our consultation on the new Housing Standard** to see how it can be made available in all homes, no matter what tenure.

<sup>68</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-people-annual-report-results-2018-scottish-household-survey/>

## Part 4B – Independent living

**We will take action so that our homes support those with long-term conditions and disabilities and everyone who can and wants to be enabled to live independently in a home of their own.**

Stakeholders told us that this means homes should be good quality and accessible by design or able to be easily adapted to allow people to live independently and with no barriers to participation in daily life, work and their community.

“I enjoyed living in the high-rise but it was difficult getting up and down from the ninth floor. Here, it’s much easier. The doors are wide enough for my scooter and there’s a lift. I get out and about much more and I feel a lot better in myself. I feel human again. I love it here. I thank my lucky stars every day.”

**Geraldine, 57, talking about her move into an accessible home with a communal lift and fully level access, provided by Loretto Housing in Pollokshaws.**<sup>69</sup>

Most older people and disabled people live in mainstream homes and want to continue to do so, but these properties may or may not meet their needs. There is a small amount of specialist supported housing, such as extra care housing or sheltered housing. This is around 1% of total housing stock and the vast majority of it is in the social rented sector which limits choice. Some disabled people live in care homes or other settings because there is a lack of suitable housing to allow them to live independently within their community.

There is a considerable number of people whose needs are not being met and who are not able to choose a home or way of living that meets their needs. A 2018 report on housing issues affecting disabled people by the Equality and Human Rights Commission<sup>70</sup> set out a summary of the position in Scotland. The report highlighted that:

- 61,000 people need adaptations to their home.
- Approximately 1% of housing is fully accessible for wheelchair users.
- 10,000 disabled Scots are on housing waiting lists.

In addition to this sobering picture, projections for the future suggest the challenge will only increase without action. By 2040, it is projected that there will be over 730,000 people in Scotland aged 75 or over.<sup>71</sup> This will put much greater demand on housing and health and social care services to help people to live independently at home and our response must match the scale of the challenge.

The number of disabled people is expected to rise too. Research by Horizon Housing in 2018<sup>72</sup> projected an 80% increase in the population of wheelchair users by 2024.

People with learning disabilities and autistic people tell us that they want to be treated with dignity and respect by services, including housing, that are able to identify and be responsive to their needs.<sup>73</sup> They say that good-quality and timely housing advice and support services are as important as accessibility in supporting them to live independently in a home of their choice within their community.

69 [New Loretto home helps tenant ‘feel human’ again – Scottish Housing News](#)

70 <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/housing-and-disabled-people-scotlands-hidden-crisis>

71 <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/population/population-projections/population-projections-scotland/2018-based>

72 [Still minding the step? \(horizonhousing.org\)](#)

73 [Keys-To-Life-Implementation-Framework.pdf](#) and [Scottish Strategy for Autism: outcomes and priorities 2018-2021 – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

Local authorities are already required to undertake an assessment of housing requirements and to consider how to support people to live independently as part of their Local Housing Strategies. We will also work with them and housing providers to implement the guidance for setting all tenure local targets for wheelchair accessible homes and requiring annual reporting on progress.

There are a number of actions set out in Housing to 2040 that will give us further levers to improve the accessibility of homes and their ability to meet people's needs.

- **The Affordable Housing Supply Programme** (see Part 1A) – we have already committed to **reviewing Housing for Varying Needs**, the design guide used for new build properties in the programme which covers how to meet the needs of older people, disabled people, wheelchair users and people with other specific needs. We will work with the sector to carry out this review within the next two years, considering the Scottish Federation of Housing Association's concept of an "inclusive living and design" approach, which would see all homes in the social housing sector designed for all ages and abilities.
- We will introduce a new focus on **increasing the supply of accessible and adapted homes and improving choice**, particularly for younger disabled people who we know face a significant lack of options.
- **National Planning Framework 4** – the new approach to planning set out in the NPF4 Position Statement<sup>74</sup> will support the development of quality homes by private developers that meet people's needs. The planning system will help to make more accessible homes available by helping to deliver all-tenure wheelchair housing targets, supporting sites for self-provided homes and homes in accessible locations reducing the need to travel, as well as promoting the development of homes that can adapt as people's needs change. The drive to ensure homes are planned together with community facilities and infrastructure

means that the planning system will help to improve the choice and availability of accessible homes, as well as make the spaces around homes more accessible too – something stakeholders called for during our consultation.

## Case study: Future-proofing new homes

Canada's "Accessibility Resource Centre" is a national resource centre for accessible housing. Across Canada, builders and designers are turning their attention to a new housing design – FlexHousing™. FlexHousing™ embeds, at the design and construction stage, the option to make future changes to a home easily and with minimal expense to meet the evolving needs of those who live there and allow people to stay in the home for longer. Its features include level access, wheelchair access, non-slip surfaces, unobstructed circulation, wide stairways and adaptable interior space.

To make sure that we build in accessibility and adaptability to new homes and future proof them, we will **introduce new building standards to underpin a Scottish Accessible Homes Standard which all new homes must achieve**. This will mainstream a high standard of accessibility, delivering a step change in the availability of housing options for disabled people and enable the delivery of new homes in all sectors which can be readily adapted to meet varying needs.

We will carry out research and engagement with stakeholders to confirm the shortfalls of the current framework. Then, as we consult on the new Housing Standard in 2021 (see Part 4A), we will also explore views on the new Scottish Accessible Homes Standard. We will build on the review of the Housing for Varying Needs Design Guide and the implementation of all-tenure wheelchair accessible housing targets, intending to introduce these new requirements

<sup>74</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-fourth-national-planning-framework-position-statement/>

into building standards from 2025/26 alongside the new Housing Standard.

As well as taking action to future-proof new homes, we need to take action to increase the accessibility of existing homes. We will:

- **Establish an inclusive programme of retrofitting social homes.** This will ensure all planned refurbishment addresses accessibility requirements and that digital connectivity is in place to support technology-enabled care and telehealth. We will align this work with the development of schemes to support repair and retrofit (as set out in Part 4A), looking to build in efficiencies to improvement work and minimise disruption for householders.
- **Streamline and accelerate the adoptions system.** We must take action to reduce the time it takes to apply for and receive support and maximise the available resources. This work will begin with a fundamental review of the system in 2021/22, taking into account the needs of ethnic minority communities and other groups with protected characteristics. It will develop recommendations on how best to improve the system so that it will be fit and capable of dealing with the increased demand that an ageing population will drive.
- **Provide help to older and disabled home owners who want to move to a home that better meets their needs.** We will work with all those involved in making a house move happen, from the solicitors to removal companies, to develop a scheme that helps with every step of the process. We will also consider with banks the potential for cost-effective bridging loan schemes to help people to move over several days and take the pressure off a single-day move.

How we work to deliver greater availability and choice of housing and the support needed to live independently matters too. Housing and health and social care services all strive to ensure people are able to live in a home that meets their needs and allows them to access appropriate support. To respond to the

recommendations of the Independent Review of Adult Social Care<sup>75</sup> and deliver the Housing to 2040 Vision, we will work at national and local level with health and social care and housing services, service commissioners, delivery organisations and older and disabled people to **embed a person-centred approach**, that aligns housing support with social care services, so people have choices and flexibility to live independently.

To do that, we will:

- Ensure that strategic planning is joined up locally across housing and health and social care services.
- Develop and implement a **joint accountability and outcomes framework** to design and deliver person-centred and integrated services, planning ahead to meet people's future needs.
- Establish mechanisms for shared resources across health and social care in a phased way to ensure best use of health, social care and housing funding and deliver integrated services on the ground.
- Ensure greater connectivity between mental health and addictions service design and local housing support, by continuing to scale up Housing First, which gets people into settled homes first and then provides flexible support with any other needs, such as substance use and physical and mental health problems.
- Act jointly to transform the way health and housing services are delivered to those experiencing addiction and homelessness and to those with severe and multiple disadvantage. Our two-year Reducing Harm, Improving Care programme, due to report in April 2022, will deliver better-integrated models of care for people experiencing homelessness and using drugs, drawing on lived experience.

<sup>75</sup> [Adult social care: independent review – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

## Housing to 2040 actions and supporting policies

### More homes in great places

#### Action 1: Continue to invest in the supply of affordable homes.

- Complete our 50,000 affordable homes target over 2021/22.
- Look longer term and set an ambition to deliver an additional 100,000 affordable homes by 2032, with at least 70% of these to be for social rent.
- Deliver 50,000 affordable homes by 2027, with a further 50,000 by 2032 including accelerating funding towards bringing existing homes into the programme, as well as building new.
- Continue to take action to ensure those homes help create strong and vibrant places and are high quality and zero emission.
- Review future grant subsidy benchmark levels, maintaining a focus on rent affordability.
- Improve the quality of homes delivered through the programme, with provision for outdoor space and space for home work and learning.
- Deliver digital connectivity in new social homes.

#### Action 2: Develop approaches and test new models to attract and accelerate private investment in housing programmes and projects and in the transition to decarbonised heat.

- Develop opportunities for private capital investment in housing as part of the implementation of the Global Capital Investment Plan.
- Build a set of commercial propositions for investment in green energy and related construction materials and products to be considered for inclusion in the Green Investment Portfolio.
- Establish a Green Heat Finance Task Force to explore potential new and innovative financing mechanisms to support heat decarbonisation.

- Work with the Scottish National Investment Bank and the housing sector to build a pipeline of investable propositions in housing and place-making including affordable housing, housing infrastructure, investment in town centres and modernising construction.
- Continue to support the building of homes for private rent, with a focus on maximising delivery of these homes at the affordable end of market rents.

#### Action 3: Support the delivery of homes in town centres and at the heart of communities by developing vacant and derelict land, repurposing existing properties and locating homes closer to services and facilities within 20 minute neighbourhoods.

- Invest £325 million over five years in community-led regeneration, community wealth building and town centre revitalisation.
- Put more focus on place in our housing programmes, using the Place Principle and a Place Investment Framework.
- Deliver a rolling programme of demonstrator locations to help illustrate what future Town Centre Living and 20 minute neighbourhoods can look like.
- Provide support for local authorities to use the new £50 million Vacant and Derelict Land Investment Programme.

#### Action 4: Support more community involvement in place-making.

- Explore how we can support more community-led housing in urban areas.
- Launch a new tool, a Design Version of the Place Standard, to help communities get involved in designing their places.
- Embed community wealth building in the approach and practices of social housing providers across Scotland by 2025.
- Continue to support housing cooperatives.
- Establish a Knowledge Exchange Network to support more people to get involved in planning and design for housing by providing a platform for communities to share their experiences and access professional expertise.

- Support the introduction of local place plans for communities to express their aspirations for the future of their places.

**Action 5: Shift the planning system to be more directive about the quality of places, including where new development should happen and how those developments can deliver more for new and existing communities, including for 20 minute neighbourhoods.**

- Implement new planning policies to discourage development in unsustainable locations and actively encourage new homes where they are close to local services, supported by sustainable transport connections, and designed with green infrastructure, health and wellbeing in mind.
- Discourage greenfield development and instead promote reuse of vacant and derelict land.
- Adopt an infrastructure-first approach to neighbourhood planning to improve access to services and reduce overall car mileage.
- Support the development of quality homes that meet people's needs.
- Tackle the question of housing land requirements up front, so that planning can focus more on quality and delivery.
- Roll out masterplan consent areas to identify places where quality homes can be built without the need for planning permission, provided they meet low carbon design and place making requirements.

**Action 6: Support housing development in rural and island communities, helping to stem rural depopulation and supporting communities to thrive.**

- Continue to deliver affordable homes in rural and island communities through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme and the continuation of the Rural and Islands Housing Fund beyond March 2021, backed by up to £30 million of investment.
- Complete work to regulate short-term lets so that local authorities can balance the needs of local residents and communities with wider tourism and economic interests.

- Give local authorities the powers to manage the numbers of second homes where these are a problem.
- Extend the use of modern methods of construction to overcome some of the delivery challenges in rural areas.
- Increase opportunities for self-provided housing.
- Implement new Permitted Development Rights for the conversion of agricultural buildings to residential and commercial uses.
- Work with Community Land Scotland and others to bring forward more land for housing in rural areas.
- Identify how our planning policies can help to sustain and grow crofting communities.
- Consider how the concept of 20 minute neighbourhoods in rural and island communities could apply in ways that make sense for these areas.
- Improve the condition and quality of existing properties, including agricultural tenancies and tied accommodation, through a new Housing Standard.
- Ensure that our approach is founded on a place-based approach and reflects a sound understanding of the aspirations of rural communities.

**Action 7: In the next Parliament, we will review the role of taxation in supporting our Housing to 2040 Vision for both new and existing homes and our communities.**

**Affordability and choice**

**Action 8: Realise the right to an adequate home in Scotland and deliver equality in the housing system.**

- Beginning in 2021, undertake a comprehensive audit of our current housing and homelessness legislation to understand how best to realise the right to an adequate home.
- Develop a shared understanding of affordability which is fit for the future.
- Ensure that equality and human rights are embedded in the further development of all policies to deliver Housing to 2040 now and in the future.

- Take action to address the housing challenges faced by minority ethnic communities.
- Make up to £20 million available over five years for more and better Gypsy/Traveller accommodation.

### **Action 9: Prevent and end homelessness and eradicate rough sleeping.**

- Continue to implement the Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan and develop our work further up to 2040.
- Roll out nationally a programme to facilitate access to the private rented sector for homeless households.
- Commission research into housing insecurity and hidden homelessness.
- Implement the recommendations in ‘Improving housing outcomes for women and children experiencing domestic abuse’.<sup>76</sup>
- Develop homelessness prevention legislation to ensure public bodies across Scotland have responsibilities for preventing homelessness.
- Ensure the next National Performance Framework review includes explicit consideration of homelessness.
- Secure better integrated responses from homelessness and substance use services.
- Establish a national learning network to ensure a more joined up approach to homelessness.
- Continue to press the UK Government to remove the barriers it has put in place to supporting people with no recourse to public funds or give us the power to act.

### **Action 10: Improve accessibility, affordability and standards across the rented sector.**

- Publish a new Rented Sector Strategy for consultation in 2022, setting out proposals to address availability, affordability and standards in the private and social rented sectors.
- Put tenant participation at the heart of the Strategy’s development, creating a National Network of social rented tenants and a Tenant Participation Panel for the private rented sector.

- Bring forward a new Housing Bill early in the next Parliament to take forward aspects of the new Rented Sector Strategy and strengthen the rights of tenants with greater protections from unreasonable rent increases and unfair evictions and improve the rights of people experiencing domestic abuse.
  - Reform existing Rent Pressure Zone legislation to create a valuable and flexible tool to ensure local authorities combat unreasonably high rents in localised areas.
  - Put in place mechanisms to collect robust data on the Scottish private rented sector, helping us to identify areas suffering from unreasonable rents. By the end of this year, we will have undertaken an analysis of what is required and will set out our intentions.
  - Work with banks and other stakeholders to develop innovative financial products to help renting to become an affordable and viable long term option for those who want it.
- **Action 11: Take action to ensure the housing market operates more fairly across Scotland, providing affordable housing options and choices in all communities.**
- Complete work on the regulation of short-term lets, with legislation on the licensing scheme laid in June 2021, accompanied by draft guidance.
  - Give local authorities the powers to manage the numbers of second homes where these are a problem.
  - Work with local authorities to audit empty homes and determine those that should be brought back into use.
  - Give councils the powers they need to regulate and charge owners appropriately for homes lying empty and ensure they have the mechanisms to bring them back into productive use.
  - Create a support package for homeowners in trouble to help them stay in their home if that is right for them and to prevent homes falling into disrepair or becoming empty in the first place.

<sup>76</sup> [Improving-Housing-Outcomes-for-Women-and-Children-Experiencing-Domestic-Abuse-Report.pdf \(womensaid.scot\)](https://www.womensaid.scot/improving-housing-outcomes-for-women-and-children-experiencing-domestic-abuse-report.pdf)

- Establish a new fund for local authorities to apply to in order to bring empty homes and potential empty homes back into residential use and convert suitable empty commercial properties in town centres.
- Phase out the Help to Buy scheme and shift our focus to helping people to renovate, adapt or improve the energy efficiency of their homes.
- Shift the focus of support for home ownership to those who are either purchasing high-standard new build homes or purchasing an existing home with the intention to renovate or adapt it or improve its energy efficiency.
- Work with the development and construction industries to explore ways in which future sales volumes can be less volatile and the risks associated with housing development reduced so that prices become more affordable to those on moderate incomes.
- Scale up opportunities for self-provided homes.

## Affordable warmth and zero emissions homes

**Action 12: Align the work set out in Housing to 2040 with the draft Heat in Buildings Strategy so both work together to deliver our statutory targets for climate change and fuel poverty, and the milestones in between, in a fair and just way.**

**Action 13: Aim for all new homes delivered by Registered Social Landlords and local authorities to be zero emissions by 2026.**

- Fit zero emissions heating systems in all new build social homes ahead of the 2024 regulations coming into force.
- Make greater use of offsite construction in the social rented sector.
- Test approaches to offsite construction and Community Carbon initiatives through the Edinburgh Home Demonstrator Project.

## Action 14: Adapt and retrofit existing homes to improve their energy efficiency and decarbonise their heating systems.

- Invest in energy efficiency and heat decarbonisation of buildings, with almost £1.6 billion investment committed over the next five years.
- Regulate to set minimum energy efficiency standards between 2023 and 2025.
- Establish a Zero Emissions Social Housing Task Force to advise on requirements in social housing to meet zero emissions for existing homes and inform, longer-term, what is required for existing homes in the private rented sector and owner-occupied sectors.
- Assess the feasibility of council-led taskforces to undertake retrofit and other green construction projects.
- Implement a public engagement strategy for heat in buildings.
- Support a ramping up of investment in heat decarbonisation from 2025 onwards.

## Action 15: Modernise housing construction, particularly through offsite construction.

- Publish a new strategy for zero emissions new build affordable homes, based on offsite construction, and take into account new techniques and technologies, supply chain resilience and associated training and skills needs.
- Introduce a new business model for the delivery of affordable homes where Registered Social Landlords and councils, designers, regulators and builders work closely together from day one, there is greater standardisation of components (without compromising on design quality) and costs are assessed across the whole lifetime of the project.
- Work with councils and housing associations to develop a more visible pipeline of future offsite development.
- Develop a housing sectoral plan by 2022 to prioritise the delivery of green housing investments.

- Work with the Construction Scotland Innovation Centre, Scottish Futures Trust and others to establish a housing innovation programme to reshape demand towards design for manufacture and assembly.

**Action 16: Build the strong local supply chains needed to decarbonise Scotland's homes and contribute to green recovery.**

- Start a supply chain development action plan in 2021, specifically focused on the development of energy efficiency and zero emissions heat in building supply chains.

**Action 17: Grow the skills needed to deliver energy efficiency and zero emissions heating systems and support an increase in the use of offsite construction.**

- Work with Skills Development Scotland and others to develop flexible learning offers to support new skills for offsite construction.
- Create an offsite construction training route as part of the online National Construction Skills Academy.
- Work with enterprise agencies and the Construction Scotland Innovation Centre to promote house building and wider construction as an attractive and ethical career prospect in schools and through wider marketing.
- Take forward our work on Scottish skill requirements for energy efficiency, low and zero emissions systems, microgeneration and heat networks following consultation and incorporate into retrofit industry standards.
- Integrate Fair Work First into our zero emissions new build affordable homes strategy to drive green, good and fair jobs across the housing labour market and apply these criteria to grants, other funding and contracts awarded by and across the affordable housing sector.

**Improving the quality of all homes**

**Action 18: Set tenure-neutral standards so that everyone can live with dignity and in comfort, no matter what tenure they live in.**

- Introduce legislation for a new Housing Standard in 2024/25, for phased introduction from 2025 to 2030, aiming to cover all homes new and existing, with no margins of tolerance, no exemptions and no “acceptable levels” of sub-standard homes.
- Take action to support proactive approaches to repair and maintenance to help owners avoid high-cost interventions later.
- Develop a new Help to Improve approach to support homeowners and landlords pay for improvement work. This will operate alongside existing and planned support for energy efficiency and zero emissions heating systems, allowing us to take a whole-house approach where possible.
- Introduce an enforcement framework to support the new Standard, which could come into force in phases between 2025 and 2030, recognising that different types of homes in different places may need more or less time to achieve compliance.
- Work with UK Government to deliver a New Homes Ombudsman which extends to Scotland but respects devolution.

**Action 19: Bring digital connectivity to homes, tackling the digital divide.**

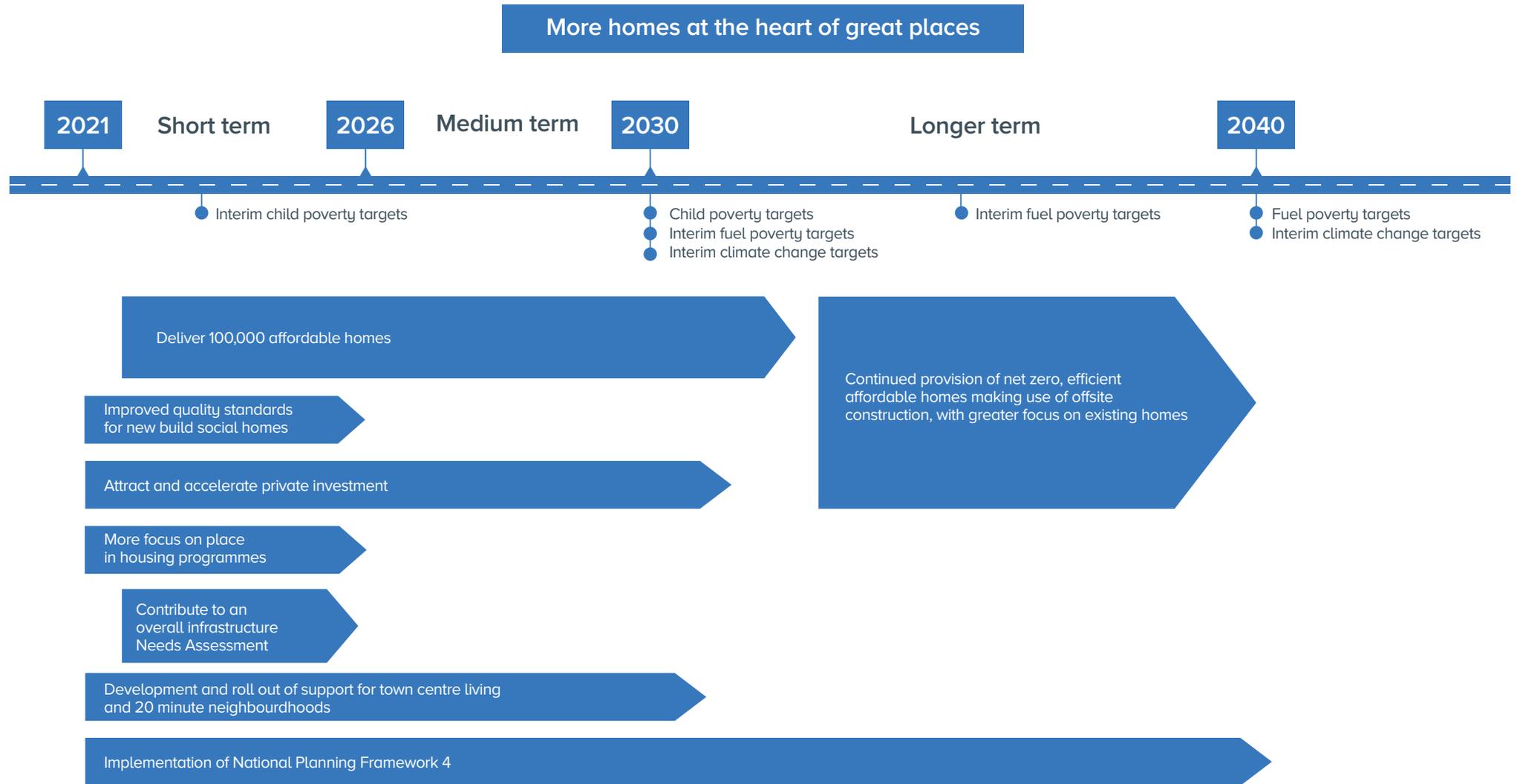
- Phase in the requirement from 2021/22 that all new build social rented homes delivered through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme are digitally-enabled.
- Work with social housing providers through the new Rented Sector Strategy and consider digital connectivity in the review of the Social Rented Housing Charter in 2021.
- Include digital connectivity in the scope of our consultation on the new Housing Standard to see how it can be made available in all homes, no matter what tenure.

**Action 20: Ensure that everyone who wants to is enabled to live independently in a home of their own.**

- Review Housing for Varying Needs.
- Introduce a new focus on increasing the supply of accessible and adapted homes and improving choice, particularly for younger disabled people.
- Use NPF4 to help make more accessible homes available by helping to deliver tenure-neutral wheelchair housing targets, supporting sites for self-provided housing and delivering homes in accessible locations.
- Introduce new building standards from 2025/26 to underpin a Scottish Accessible Homes Standard which all new homes must achieve.
- Establish an inclusive programme of retrofitting social homes.
- Streamline and accelerate the adaptations system.
- Address the practical barriers faced by older and disabled home movers who wish to move to a home that better meets their needs.
- Take action to better integrate the work of housing and health and social care services and deliver a person-centred approach, including the implementation of a joint accountability and outcomes framework.
- Improve the ways that housing and health services support people experiencing addiction, helping them to find settled homes and access flexible support for their other needs.



Timeline of key actions



### Affordability and choice



Affordable warmth and zero emission homes



Key milestones

**From 2024**

New buildings consented must use zero direct emissions heating.

**By 2030**

Heating systems in the majority of domestic and non-domestic properties off the mains gas grid will be zero emissions.

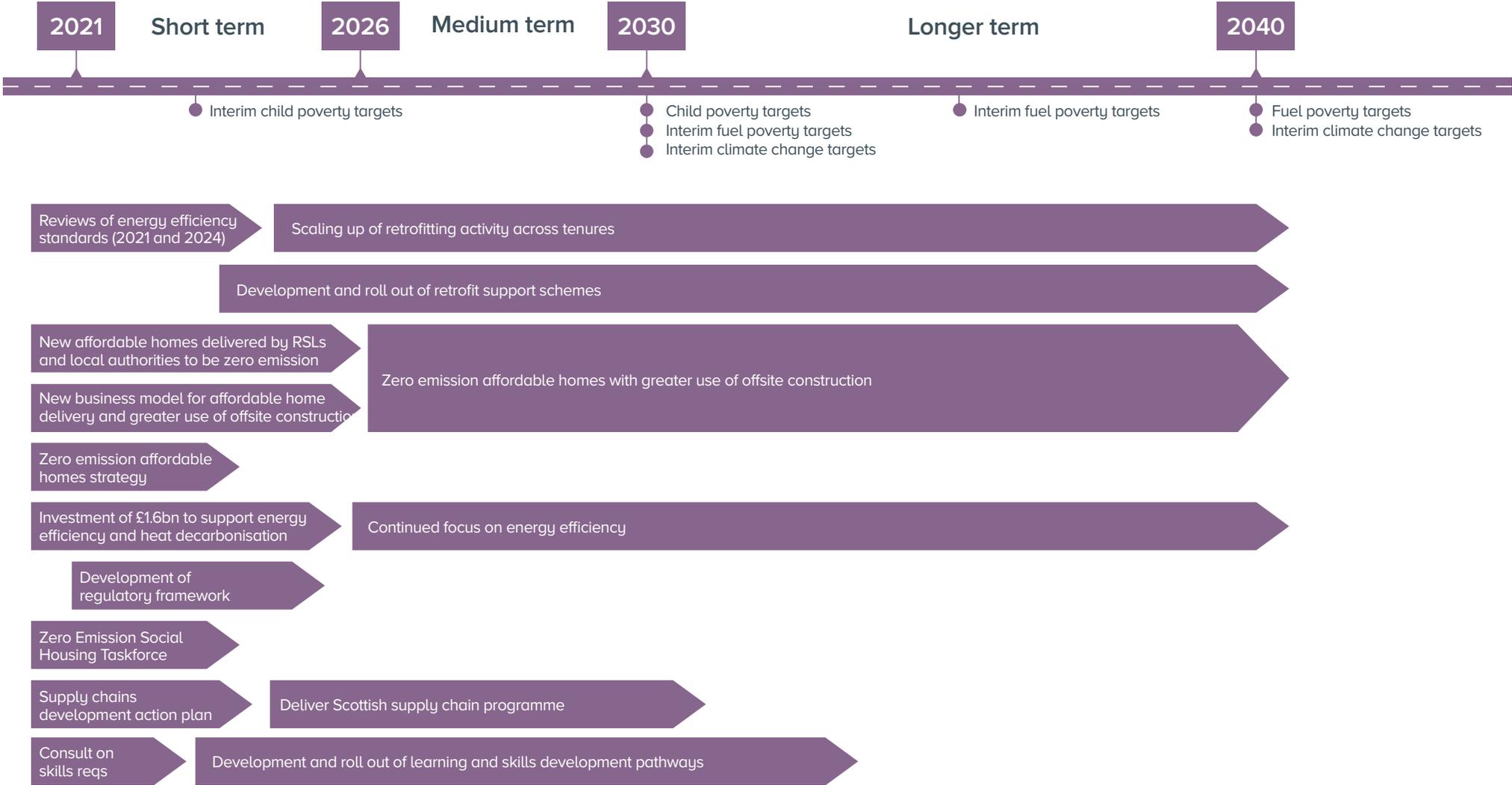
**By 2035**

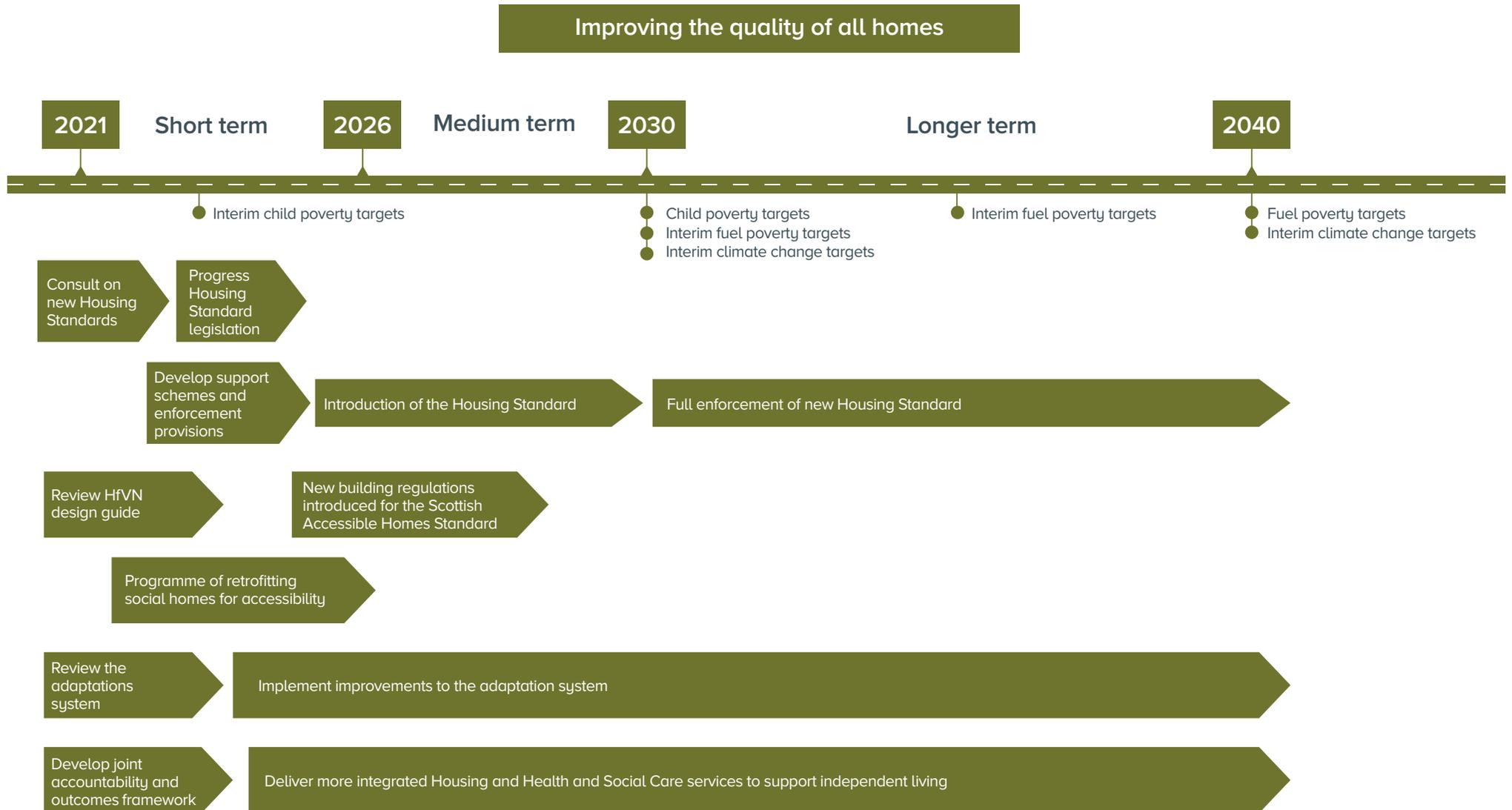
All homes will meet a minimum standard of energy efficiency, equivalent to an EPC C where technically feasible and cost-effective, and poor energy efficiency has been removed as a driver of fuel poverty.

**By 2040**

Nearly all heating systems in Scotland's homes are net zero emissions systems, with direct emissions virtually eliminated by 2045. Multi-tenure or mixed-use buildings will be given until 2040-2045 to improve their energy efficiency and install a zero emissions heat supply.

Affordable warmth and zero emission homes





# 04 Housing To 2040's Contribution To The National Performance Framework

The ambitions and actions we have set out in the Housing to 2040 Route Map will make an important contribution not only to achieving the Housing to 2040 Vision but will also bring benefits across the National Performance Framework.

## Affordable housing helps to tackle poverty and inequality

### National Outcome: Poverty



- Levels of relative child poverty in Scotland, after housing costs, were six percentage points lower than the UK as a whole in 2016-19.<sup>77</sup>
- This difference, which developed following the devolution of housing to the Scottish Parliament, has been attributed to a larger proportion of people on low incomes living in the social rented sector and rents being comparably lower across sectors in Scotland.<sup>78</sup>
- An estimated 3,100 households with children in Scotland have been helped into affordable housing in the year to March 2020 and keeping social rents lower than market rents benefits approximately 110,000 children living in poverty each year.<sup>79</sup>
- Action to increase the supply of affordable and social rented homes and tackle unreasonably high rents in the private rented sector will continue to make an impact on child poverty levels.

## How we live in, heat and build our homes impacts on the environment

### National Outcome: Economy



### National Outcome: Environment



15% of Scotland's emissions are attributable to the residential sector, primarily from space and water heating.<sup>80</sup>

- We are clear that the tension between tackling emissions and ending fuel poverty must be overcome and remain steadfast in our commitment to supporting those least able to pay in the net zero transition, and in protecting those who are most vulnerable to any increase in costs.
- Decarbonising how we heat our homes through new regulations, changing how we build them with new techniques and approaches and taking action to make them resilient will make a major contribution to meeting Scotland's statutory climate change targets and help to reduce our exposure to the impacts of climate change.



77 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/tackling-child-poverty-delivery-plan-second-year-progress-report-2019-20-annex-b-child-poverty-drivers-scotland-uk/>

78 <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/poverty-scotland-2019>

79 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/tackling-child-poverty-delivery-plan-second-year-progress-report-2019-20/pages/0/>

80 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-greenhouse-gas-emissions-2018/>

## Safe and warm homes and good neighbourhoods improve physical and mental health and wellbeing and build strong communities

### National Outcome: Human Rights



### National Outcome: Communities



### National Outcome: Health



- The quality of a home and how affordable it is are both important in creating a sense of home<sup>81</sup> and having a safe and warm place to live has clear health benefits for everyone, and particularly for young children, elderly people and people with physical and mental health conditions.<sup>82</sup>
- The introduction of the National Planning Framework 4, the new Housing Standard and the new Scottish Accessible Homes Standard will improve the spaces within and around our homes and support people's wellbeing, no matter where they live.
- Putting a focus on place at the heart of our work and making sure homes add to and create great places will help to improve social cohesion, enable and contribute to community wealth building and unlock social capital across Scotland.

## High-quality homes and neighbourhoods improve children's wellbeing and development

### National Outcome: Children



### National Outcome: Education



Warm, healthy, safe and non-overcrowded homes in positive neighbourhoods can contribute to children's wellbeing and happiness, providing a healthy start and contributing to their social and physical development. Good homes with room for children to play, learn and study can contribute to educational attainment<sup>83</sup> and are part of our work to make Scotland the best place in the world to grow up.

- Improving the quality of new build social homes and addressing all-tenure standards through the new Housing Standard will make an important contribution to ensuring people can live well in their homes and children have the space indoors and outdoors that they need to thrive.
- The Promise<sup>84</sup> is clear that there is a real need to provide secure and stable housing for families as part of a package of holistic family support. Ensuring families have a safe living environment gives them the opportunity to better manage the challenges they face and enables them to better engage with supportive services.

81 [https://www.gcph.co.uk/publications/882\\_housing\\_through\\_social\\_enterprise\\_final\\_report](https://www.gcph.co.uk/publications/882_housing_through_social_enterprise_final_report)

82 e.g. see <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/research-and-analysis/2017/01/evidence-review-potential-wider-impacts-climate-change-mitigation-options-built/documents/00513151-pdf/00513151-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/00513151.pdf>; and <http://shura.shu.ac.uk/7923/>

83 Communities Analysis Division (CAD) 2010 'A Thematic Review of Literature on the Relationship Between Housing, Neighbourhoods and Schools' accessed via link below <https://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/archive/3000/https://www.gov.scot/resource/doc/1125/0104564.doc>

84 [Home – The Promise](#)

## Housing creates and supports jobs and drives inclusive economic growth and social benefits

### National Outcome: Economy



### National Outcome: Fair Work & Business



### National Outcome: Education



Housing makes a crucial contribution across all four pillars (economic, human, social and natural) which underpin our vision of an economy that delivers sustainable and inclusive growth for the people of Scotland.

- Our ambition to deliver 100,000 affordable homes up to 2032 will support a total investment package of around £16 billion in Scotland's economy and 12,000 to 14,000 jobs each year.<sup>85</sup>
- Total investment from public and private sources to decarbonise Scotland's domestic and non-domestic buildings is estimated to be in the region of £33 billion over the period to 2045, and is likely to support around 24,000 jobs each year as investment reaches its peak in the late 2020s.<sup>86</sup>
- Scottish house prices are generally more affordable than UK house prices,<sup>87</sup> and this helps remove an important barrier to labour mobility by making it easier for workers to move to areas offering the type of work that best matches their skills, boosting economic productivity.
- Having enough space at home to work effectively is important for economic resilience since it allows people to continue to work when it is not safe to travel to or be in their workplace. It can also boost wellbeing by giving people more flexibility to balance their work/life commitments and work from a broader range of locations, increasing productivity by cutting the costs required to support work (such as the time and cost of commuting), reducing emissions associated with transport, and allowing those who would like to work but need to be based at home, for reasons such as caring responsibilities, to enter the workforce.
- Home ownership can support entrepreneurship because it provides an asset to borrow against.<sup>88</sup>
- Housing's unique place at the heart of thriving communities means that investment in housing, and all the indirect effects that flow from that, can contribute to community wealth and social renewal.

<sup>85</sup> Jobs estimates for the affordable housing and decarbonisation programmes are based on application of input/output multipliers. Note that these are gross, rather than net, jobs supported by the investment spend. For example, as jobs in the low carbon sector scale up, some of these may be filled by workers who transfer from the high carbon sector.

<sup>86</sup> [Heat in Buildings Strategy: Achieving Net Zero Emissions in Scotland's Buildings Consultation – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/heat-in-buildings-strategy/consultation/pages/achieving-net-zero-emissions-in-scotland-s-buildings-consultation.aspx)

<sup>87</sup> The ratio of geometric mean house prices (ONS House Price Index) to median gross annual pay for full-time workers (Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings) in 2020 was 4.9 in Scotland compared to 7.6 for the UK.

<sup>88</sup> Schmalz, M et al. (2013) '[Housing Collateral and Entrepreneurship](#)'

# 05 Next Steps

We now have a confirmed Vision and a set of supporting Principles to guide housing policy – and more – over the next twenty years. And we have set out a range of policies and actions to get us there.

There is much to be done with our partners to deliver those actions and develop the detailed plans to deliver the outcomes we all want to achieve. And, as COVID-19 has shown us, we must always remain agile so we can respond to new challenges and new priorities.

Over the coming months, we will set up a **governance process** and a **monitoring framework** so that we and others can assess progress towards the Vision and be held accountable. This will include stakeholders and end users, meaning we will be accountable to tenants and home owners too.

Our first step will be to review, with stakeholders, the Housing and Regeneration Outcome Indicator Framework to make sure it aligns with Housing to 2040 and helps to give us the insight we and others need to check our progress and ensure we are promoting equality in our work.

Using that information will provide an overview of the outcomes achieved from the work set out in Housing 2040. There will be separate, more detailed evaluation of specific programmes and policies at appropriate points in their cycle. We will undertake periodic reviews of Housing to 2040, setting out the progress we are making and identifying where changes might be needed to correct our course.

There is much to be done but there is much to gain. Housing matters. If we get it right, we will not only make our homes and communities better places to live, work and grow up for people now, but we will make them better places for future generations to come by building a greener, fairer and stronger Scotland.

## ANNEX A

### SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK AND SUGGESTIONS FOR THE ROUTE MAP<sup>89</sup>

Area for action	Challenges to address	Proposals for improvement
<p>Housing supply and affordability</p>	<p>Current measures of affordability do not always reflect the real cost of living, relative to people’s income and other outgoings.</p> <p>There is not enough social housing in some areas to meet demand and social landlords are facing financial pressures to deliver new homes and keep rents affordable.</p> <p>Rents in the private rented sector can be too high for people to afford and standards in these homes can be poor.</p> <p>Second homes and short-term lets can impact negatively on local housing markets, crowding out local people.</p> <p>Empty homes are a blight on communities and are a wasted resource which should be put to better use.</p> <p>Housing can be seen as being primarily for investment purposes and the tax system encourages some behaviours which prevent the housing market working well for everyone.</p> <p>There can be a lack of housing diversity and options in some areas, meaning some people can’t find a home that meets their needs.</p> <p>Housing delivery could be made more efficient, reducing waste and improving predictability of delivery, which can translate into savings for residents and developers.</p>	<p>A right to an adequate home should be at the heart of Housing to 2040.</p> <p>Affordability should be more clearly defined in relation to housing and there should be a common definition to which everyone can work. This should take account of running costs, as well as rent or mortgage payments.</p> <p>Increasing housing supply is essential, as is maintaining rent affordability. An Affordable Housing Supply Programme should continue to provide genuinely affordable, high-quality homes and an adequate supply of social housing should be maintained.</p> <p>Action should be taken to tackle unreasonably high rents in the private rented sector and there should be a growing supply of high-standard, professionally managed accommodation in the sector, along with security of tenure.</p> <p>More should be done to tackle empty and derelict homes, including looking at what additional incentives would bring more empty homes back into use, and what changes could be made to the housing land market and taxation system.</p> <p>The benefit of public sites should be maximised and a range of more innovative construction methods (such as offsite construction) should be implemented. There should be increased support for homebuyers and home ownership and changes made to taxation.</p>

<sup>89</sup> Full consultation analysis can be found at [Housing to 2040: stakeholder engagement report 2018 – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#), [Housing Exhibition](#) and [consultation report](#)

Area for action	Challenges to address	Proposals for improvement
<p>The spaces around our homes and housing's place in connected places and vibrant communities</p>	<p>Communities often aren't empowered and supported to shape their places.</p> <p>Housing availability is often driven by where developers want to build, not where homes are needed or where they can be connected to communities, transport links and services. This can be a particular issue for rural areas, contributing to rural depopulation.</p> <p>There is sometimes not enough easy access to outdoor or green space around homes.</p> <p>The regeneration of existing homes isn't given enough focus, meaning too strong a focus is on new build.</p>	<p>Housing to 2040 should take a place-based approach so our places are well designed, resilient and connected. Communities should be at the heart of this.</p> <p>More should be done to create shared green space and open spaces around homes as these help to improve areas and promote connected places. Green space can also contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation, as well as promote physical and mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>People must be able to access active travel and public transport safely and easily and have easy access to services and amenities such as shops, exercise and leisure facilities, education and healthcare.</p> <p>More focus should be given to providing homes in communities, such as in town centres, and consideration should be given to repurposing unused properties in town centres for housing.</p> <p>Housing should make a contribution to stemming depopulation and work should be done to tackle the challenges faced by those communities facing depopulation, particularly our rural and island communities, in securing affordable housing.</p>

Area for action	Challenges to address	Proposals for improvement
<p>Responding to the global climate emergency</p>	<p>Given the huge proportion of existing homes that will still be in use in 2040, focus must be given to improving the energy efficiency of those homes, particularly those in private ownership.</p> <p>Skills shortages for energy efficiency work will impact on our ability to retrofit existing homes.</p> <p>The levels of investment needed in energy efficiency and retrofit must not drive up rents or fuel costs.</p>	<p>Greater regulation and higher standards should be applied to new build housing and changes made to existing homes to enhance energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions.</p> <p>There should be a mix of regulation and monitoring alongside education, advice and support across all tenures and care must be taken to ensure we can marry climate ambitions with heritage and maintaining the aesthetics of older buildings.</p> <p>Work should be done to make sure Scotland has the skills to retrofit homes at scale and materials used for our homes should be sustainable and, where possible, locally sourced.</p> <p>Innovative methods of construction should be used to help tackle the carbon cost of new homes.</p> <p>This work must be undertaken alongside work to reduce fuel poverty.</p>

Area for action	Challenges to address	Proposals for improvement
Accessible housing	<p>There is often not enough accessible housing to meet people's needs (both in terms of new homes and existing homes) and this challenge will only increase in scale as our population ages.</p> <p>Making adaptations to homes can be difficult due to costs and planning constraints.</p> <p>There is not enough diversity in the housing market in some areas to offer homes that meet people's needs.</p> <p>The spaces around homes are sometimes not accessible enough.</p>	<p>Shortages in accessible housing must be addressed, both in relation to new homes and existing ones. Adaptations, such as widening doorways, installing accessible showers as standard and installing charging points for electric wheelchairs, can make big improvements to people's quality of life and should be supported.</p> <p>There should be a sufficient amount of future housing that is fully accessible, where flexibility is built in at the outset for homes so they can be changed to meet people's needs. Independent living should be a priority. Places should also be designed with independent living in mind.</p> <p>Alternative models, such as co-housing, communal spaces in new developments, more opportunities for self-provided housing and a tenure-neutral approach to adaptations would be beneficial. Help for people to downsize and more use of technology is also important.</p> <p>Different parts of Government and the public sector should work better together to prepare for an ageing population, particularly in the areas of health and social care and housing.</p>
Housing quality	<p>The current system of housing standards across different tenures is patchy, particularly in the private sector.</p> <p>Housing improvements are necessary but should not drive up rents.</p> <p>Practical constraints, such as mixed-tenure buildings, can prevent some improvements from taking place.</p>	<p>The quality of existing housing should be given greater focus and a single set of standards should apply to quality across all tenures. Regulation will be important, as will support for people to maintain their properties, and barriers to improvements should be removed.</p> <p>Housing quality should be seen as including energy efficiency and accessibility and should be balanced with the need to keep rents affordable.</p>



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