



What you need to know: the final vision for Housing to 2040

Background

The Scottish Government began consulting on a new vision for [Housing Beyond 2021](#) in 2018 and published a [Draft Vision for Housing to 2040](#) in July 2019 encouraging people across Scotland to respond and help to shape the final vision.

We invited CIH members to contribute to our response through focus groups and online surveys. We received over 200 responses in total which formed the basis of [our submission](#) in February 2020.

The final Housing to 2040 [Vision and Principles](#) and [Route map](#) were published on 15 March 2021. This briefing summarises the main proposals and how these might be taken forward.

The Vision and Principles

The Housing to 2040 Vision is set out under four key themes:

- **A well-functioning housing system** – it is easy to find an affordable home or to move home if required and housing is no longer seen as a means to make money.
- **High quality, sustainable homes** – homes are high quality, energy efficient and there is a high degree of tenure neutrality.
- **Sustainable Communities** – people choose to live where they want to, communities have been designed to be well connected and promote good health and wellbeing.
- **Homes that meet people's needs** – people have access to a variety of homes that will suit needs at different stages of life and people know how to access advice, information and support when they need it.

The first overarching principle establishes the right to housing as defined by the [United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#) in 1991. A further 14 principles underpin the four key themes.

The Route map

Previous consultation responses from CIH and others had highlighted the need for more detail on plans for implementing and monitoring the impact of the new 20 year vision for housing and this is covered in the accompanying Housing to 2040 Route map. The most significant proposals are summarised here.

Affordable housing supply

It is proposed that the current 50,000 affordable homes target, which has been delayed due to Covid-19 restrictions, will be completed this year and followed by **a new 100,000 homes target over 10 years** with 50,000 to be completed by 2027 and a further 50,000 by 2032. This is intended to allow social landlords to plan developments over a longer period of time while also responding to the changing environment and any unexpected events.

As with the current target, 70 percent of the affordable homes delivered will be for social rent and “other affordable tenures” such as shared equity and mid-market rent will continue to be delivered alongside social housing.

The affordable housing supply programme (AHSP) will proactively support developments in rural and island communities to prevent further depopulation.

All new homes provided through the AHSP should be digital ready by 2021/22 and all new homes delivered by social landlords should be zero emissions by 2026. This will involve fitting zero emissions heating systems ahead of the proposed 2024 regulations, focussing on modern construction methods and a new business model for delivering affordable homes. **A new zero emissions affordable homes strategy will be developed in 2021.**

The document also sets out plans for attracting more private finance to support housing supply and decarbonisation including establishing a **Green Heat Finance Task Force** and making use of the **Scottish National Investment Bank**.



Place-making

The Scottish Government will establish the **Place Based Investment Programme in 2021** making £352m available over five years to drive community-led regeneration and progress 20 minute communities.

Planning policies will be strengthened by embedding an infrastructure first approach to development, supporting more community involvement through local place plans and **actively promoting the use of vacant and derelict land for housing**.

The draft National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) will be scrutinised by Parliament later this year and will seek to direct where new developments should take place and apply the 20 minute communities concept where appropriate.

Housing rights

A comprehensive **audit of existing housing and homelessness legislation will be undertaken in 2021** to inform the best route to realising the right to adequate housing for everyone. Embedding a rights based approach will also see equalities taken into account through the AHSP and local housing strategies.

An equalities led approach to developing the new Rented Sector Strategy will also focus on the needs of people with protected characteristics, people in temporary accommodation and vulnerable people such as victims of domestic abuse.

Following the joint action plan, [Improving the Lives of Gypsy/Travellers: 2019-21](#) the Scottish Government will make **up to £20m available over five years to improve housing for Gypsy/Travellers**.

The Scottish Government recognises that lack of clarity around the definition of affordability will make it difficult to realise the right to adequate housing and commits to **developing a shared understanding of affordability**.

Supporting independent living

The Scottish Government has already committed to carrying out a **review of Housing for Varying Needs** and this work will be carried out within the next two years. The route map states that a new focus will be introduced to increase the supply of accessible and adapted homes and that NPF4 will support the

development of accessible homes in the private sector, deliver on all-tenure wheelchair accessible targets, support new developments in accessible locations and homes that can be adapted as needs change.

New building standards will be introduced to underpin a **Scottish Accessible Homes Standard** that all new homes will have to meet.

A new Rented Sector Strategy

The **draft Rented Sector Strategy will be published for consultation in 2022** with the aim of addressing availability, affordability and standards across the social and private rented sectors. It will be informed by a national network of social rented tenants and a new Tenant Participation Panel for private tenants.

In order to better understand and map out affordability issues, it is proposed that **robust data collection approaches will be put in place** which will help to inform decisions on which tools will be best suited to addressing affordability issues in local areas.

It will seek to better understand and address barriers to accessing social housing and gaps in housing options for vulnerable groups. Consultation will also explore any further support needed to encourage cooperatives in the social and private rented sector.

The Rented Sector Strategy will set out intentions to work towards a new Housing Standard for all tenures (see below).

A new Housing Bill

A new Housing Bill will be introduced early in the next Parliamentary term and will cover legislative aspects of the new Rented Sector Strategy. The Bill will include **reform of Rent Pressure Zone (RPZ) regulations** which were intended to protect private tenants from unreasonable rent increases but to date have not been used in any local authority due to the specific data required to support an RPZ application.

New tools to manage unreasonable rent increases are also promised as well as work to encourage the use of adjudication and consider preventing the First Tier Tribunal from recommending an increase in rent when a tenant asks for their rent to be reviewed. The



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Bill will also address any gaps in legislation highlighted by a planned review of purpose-built student accommodation.

A new tenure-neutral Housing Standard

Legislation will be introduced during the next Parliamentary term to set out a new Housing Standard covering homes across all tenures, including agricultural properties, mobile homes and tied accommodation.

To support implementation, targeted support will be made available for owners who need help to get their homes up to standard and a new **'Help to Improve' policy approach will be developed**. The new Housing Standard will align with climate change targets and **consultation will cover digital connectivity needs**.

The **draft Standard will be published in 2023 with legislation being brought forward in 2024/25 for phased introduction between 2025 – 2030**.

Home ownership and second homes

The **Help to Buy scheme will be phased out** as financial support is targeted towards people looking to renovate, adapt or improve the energy efficiency of their homes. This could still support first time buyers or older people looking to downsize but will focus on supporting the purchase of high quality new build

homes or support for older homes to be brought up to energy efficiency standards.

The publication is clear that access to one adequate home should be prioritised ahead of second homes and holiday homes. **Local authorities will be given powers to manage the number of second homes** where these are creating a problem and work will continue on developing guidance for short-term let licencing schemes.

Zero emissions homes

In order for all new homes delivered by social landlords to be zero emissions by 2026 there is an expectation that social landlords will fit zero emissions heating systems in all new build social homes ahead of the 2024 regulations coming into force. This will be complemented by **a new Zero Emissions Affordable Homes Strategy** and **a Zero Emissions Social Housing Task Force** both to be developed in 2021.

The energy efficiency of all existing and new housing stock will be improved through the application of the new tenure-neutral Housing Standard which will align with proposed regulatory standards for energy efficiency and decarbonisation of heat.

The CIH view

We welcome the publication of this 20 year vision for the housing sector. Access to a safe, secure and affordable home is a basic human need and getting this right improves health and wellbeing, reduces poverty and supports the economy. We are pleased to see that the importance of housing has been recognised with the first principle being that everyone has a right to adequate housing. We look forward to working with the Scottish Government to enshrine this right in law.

This right can only be realised if resources are available to deliver the good quality homes and support services people need to maintain tenancies at difficult points in their lives or move to somewhere that better suits their needs. We want to see the Scottish Government commit to the long term funding needed to realise this vision and develop a monitoring and implementation framework that is led by the Scottish Government but involves key representatives from the housing sector.

However, given the intention to improve the “affordability, accessibility and standards of the whole rented sector”, we are disappointed that the role of housing professionals is not reflected prominently within the vision, as has been in the UK government’s recent social housing white paper. We believe that a clear focus on professionalisation and supporting housing practitioners to achieve the knowledge, skills and behaviour they need to deliver on the vision is crucial. We hope that the upcoming Rented Sector Strategy and audit of homelessness and housing legislation demonstrates to the Scottish Government the need for investment in housing professionals.