

SCOTLAND'S
HOUSING
FESTIVAL



Breakfast Briefing: The Next Election

Mairi McAllan MSP
cabinet secretary for
housing,
Scottish Government

Willie Rennie MSP
Scottish Liberal
Democrats

Mark Griffin MSP
Labour Scotland

Thomas Kerr
councillor
Reform UK Scotland



Conference welcome

Gavin Smart

chief executive officer,
Chartered Institute of Housing





Rooted in Resilience

Julie Haydon

Director

corporate services and CIH

President



The Whole Rented Sector: Is Housing 2040 Still Relevant?

John Mills

head of housing services,
Fife Council

John Blackwood

chief executive,
Scottish Association of
Landlords

Alison Watson

director,
Shelter Scotland

Mairi McAllan MSP

cabinet secretary for
housing,
Scottish Government

Chartered Institute of Housing Conference in Scotland

3rd March 2026

John Mills
Co-Chair of ALACHO
&
Head of Housing, Fife
Council

The importance of the Rented Sector to Housing 2040 and in the Housing Emergency



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What the Housing 2040 strategy says about the Rented Sector



HOUSING TO 2040



ALACHO
ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL AUTHORITY CHIEF HOUSING OFFICERS

➤ **New Homes for Social Rent**

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.

➤ **Tackling high rents and stability in the PRS**

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.

➤ **New Homes fit for the future**

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.

➤ **Quality Homes**

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.



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A Time of Housing Emergencies

Strategic Statement prepared by the
Housing Emergency Programme Board

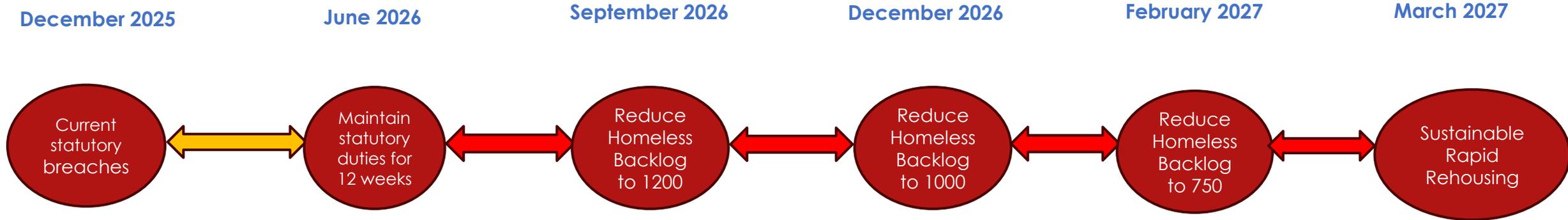


Fife's Housing Emergency Strategic Statement:
Options to deliver medium-term change to the housing system



Some Progress is being Made – Fife moving out of systemic failure

Proposed Fife Routemap to becoming legal again by Summer 2026



Proposed Actions to make progress

- Build winter resilience accommodation capacity of 30+ spaces for Winter 2026.
- Implement Pilot PSL Scheme by April 2026 and grow to 100 properties by 2026/27.
- Boost number of scatter flats to 1200 until March 2027.
- Deliver flipping tranches of 200-300 to reduce homeless backlog by stages.
- Implement prevention pathways for priority/high risk groups.
- **Maintain allocations to statutory homeless at 55-60% of annual council let and 40%+ of annual RSL lets in Fife.**
- **Maintain new build and acquisition supply to stimulate turnover on the housing stock.**
- Grow number of Housing First tenancies to 200 by early 2027.

Importance of the PRS in a Housing Emergency

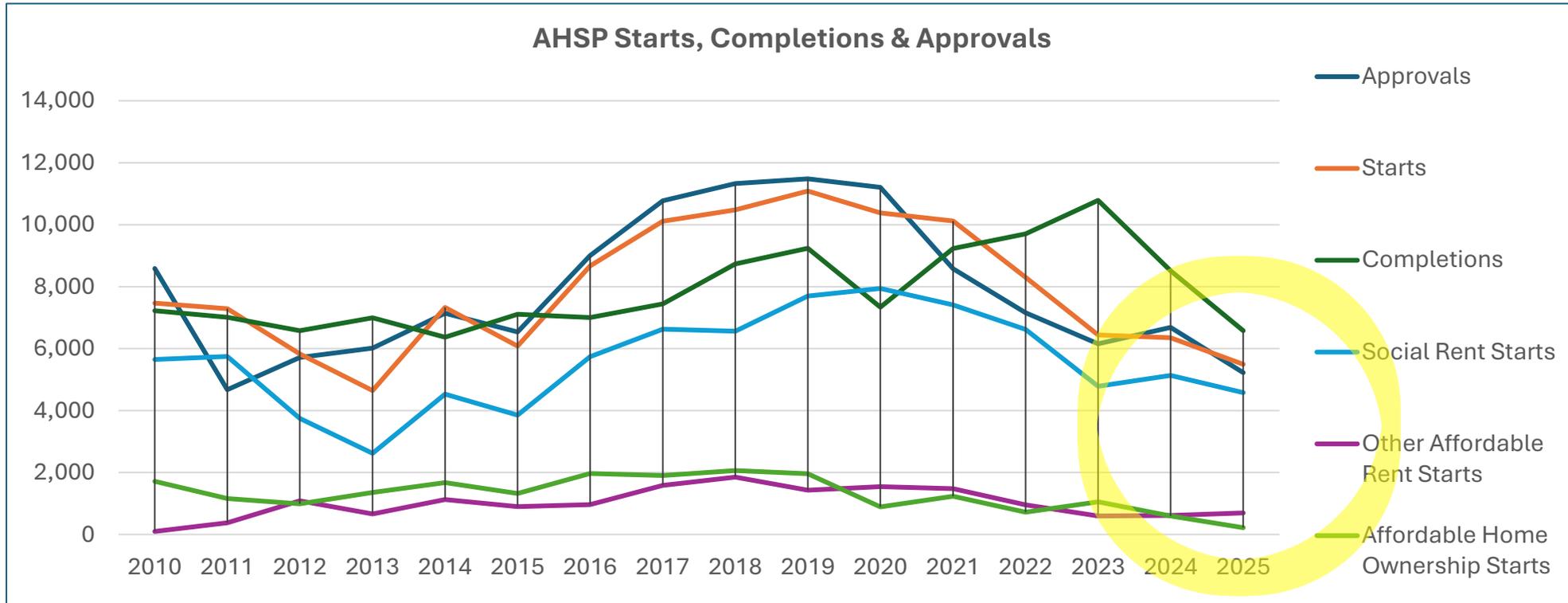
Shocks – West Wemyss, Fife

- Large scale eviction from the Private Rented Sector
- 17 facing eviction by July 2026
- 12 told “not to worry meantime”
- Feedback from original downsizing landlord who sold the properties
- Increasing standards in the private rented sector (MEES)



Most Significant Ongoing Challenge

New Housing Supply



Show Me The Bodies

Peter Apps

journalist and deputy editor,
Inside Housing and author of Show
Me The Bodies: How We Let
Grenfell Happen

Professor Vikki McCall

professor of social policy and
creative director,
University of Stirling and
Socialudo



UNIVERSITY of
STIRLING



University of
St Andrews



Newcastle
University



University of
BRISTOL



Housing LIN

sfha
Scottish Federation of
Housing Associations



ISPA

Intersectional Stigma
of Place-based Ageing

Trapped by Safety: Fire Doors, Accessibility and Stigma by Design



“Fire Trumps
Accessibility”

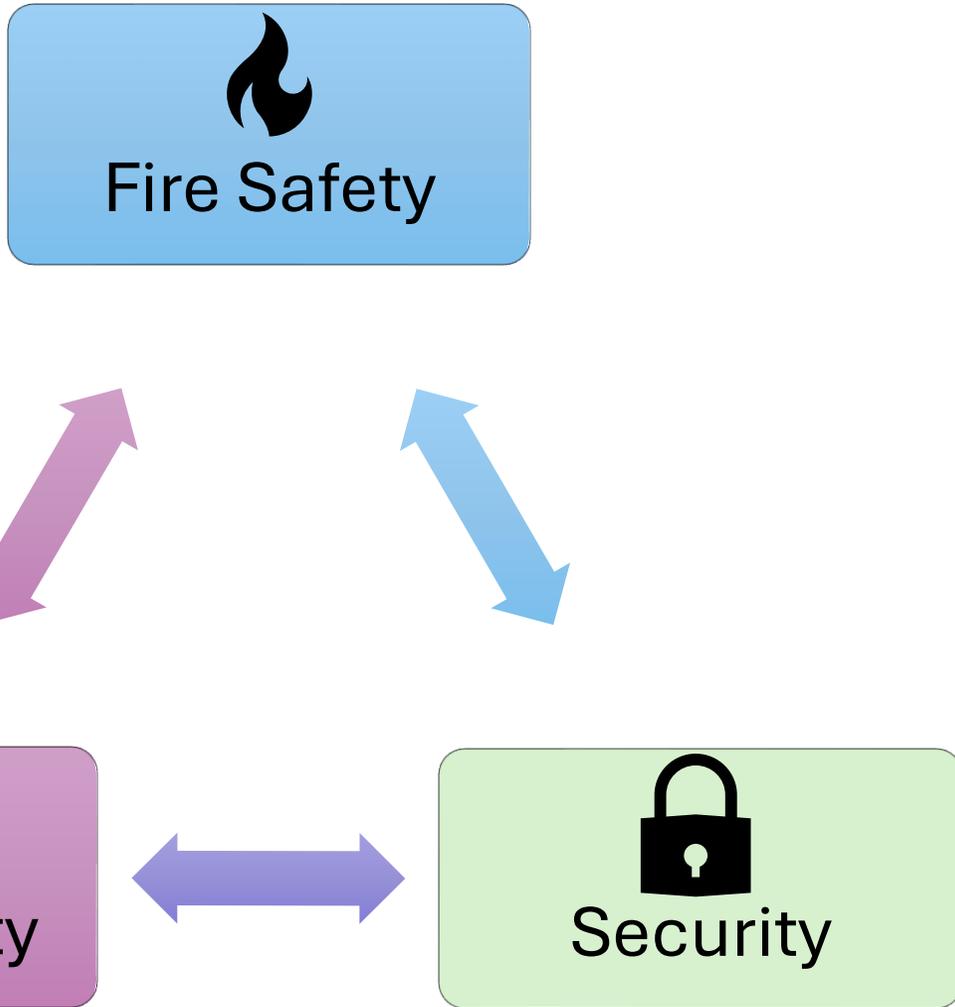


FIRE-SAFETY POST GRENFELL

- Disabled residents were disproportionately impacted in the fire
- Brought sharper focus on fire safety
- But emerging tensions between fire safety & accessibility
- Weight of doors - adaptations faced with technical issues, costs, 'knowledge gap' etc



THE RESEARCH



- Interviews with OTs, architects, housing officers, buildings managers, surveyors across Scotland
- Inter-agency working, professional knowledge, external & organisational barriers



OUR DATA

- Affects doors in communal areas; front & internal doors in flats
- Pushing open with walking stick and then 'being hit'
- Need help from others or 'stuck'
- Wedging fire doors open (fire risk)



Participant 1: I showed you my bruises, didn't I?

Participant 2: Your bruises?

Participant 1: Aye, coming through the doors.

Facilitator: When they slam?

Participant 1: Uh-huh, when the doors hit you, you know what I mean?

Participant 2: When I come in, I catch it with my backside. Did the door do that to you?

Participant 1: Aye.



STIGMATIZING DESIGN



As one Occupational Therapist described to us, automatic door openers, while technically compliant, can leave residents surrounded by a:

“sea of buttons ... in a small residential hallway”

... spaces that feel medicalised rather than homely.

Such adaptations may also be rejected by residents who do not want their homes to resemble hospital waiting rooms, highlighting how design choices carry social and emotional weight as well as practical consequences.



The research found:

- Creating barriers
- Trapping people
- Traditional fix- automatic door openers
- Look like 'hospital waiting room'
- Rejecting them on aesthetic grounds

One of the residents was very much...

“I am not having them because they look horrible”.
I totally get that, they do tend to look like a hospital waiting room, automatic door opener, you know. You can get them with a wee bit more discretion, but not much more [...]
(Occupational Therapist)



UNCERTAIN PRACTICE LANDSCAPE

- Lack of definitive answers
- Conflicting/inconsistent advice
- OTs in different areas favour different solutions
- Professionals fighting their own corner
- Takes long-time to resolve for tenant/customer





TECHNICAL, COMPLIANCE, BUDGET CHALLENGES



Maintenance & breakdowns



Specialist contractors



Fire safety one of range of compliance measures



Building warrants for adaptations

- Retrospective adaptations for new-build due to design
- Replacing fire doors expensive (door sets, hard-wiring etc)
- Different funding pressures & priorities in private housing market (multi-ownership)

IN SUMMARY

This case study illustrates that technical fixes are rarely straightforward. Professionals face a confusing regulatory environment, costly and uncertain adaptations, and frequent tensions between different professional disciplines.

Residents are too often left waiting in inaccessible homes, sometimes forced to improvise unsafe solutions such as wedging fire doors open.



If safety is prioritised without equal regard for accessibility, we risk creating environments that exclude, stigmatise, and endanger those they are meant to protect.

No one should be trapped by safety.

URGENT ACTION NEEDED

1. A multi-agency national forum to resolve strategic issues and provide clear guidance.
2. Fire safety education and CPD embedded across housing, health, and design professions, which also considers accessibility requirements and the equalities act.
3. Good practice exemplars of accessible and/or adapted fire doors to share learning across the UK.
4. Shared advice hubs to reduce duplication and cost.
5. Centering residents' voices at the centre of design and decision-making - a lesson reinforced by Grenfell.



tenant participation advisory service



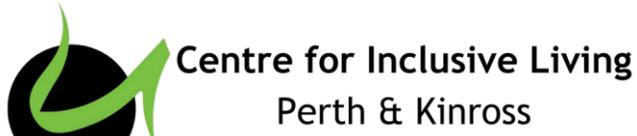
Digital Health & Care Innovation Centre



Care & Repair Cymru



Chartered Institute of Housing Scotland



Glasgow and West of Scotland Forum of Housing Associations



anderson bell + christie



We are housing Scotland



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