

DELIVERING MORE

**HOMES FOR
SCOTLAND**



HFS POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

New Parliament, New Opportunities

In partnership with

VELUX®

“Scotland is at a critical moment, with a national housing emergency that extends far beyond construction: affecting health outcomes, widening inequality and limiting economic opportunity across the country. As we approach the 2026 Holyrood election, it is essential that housing be at the forefront of political debate.

So VELUX is delighted to be partnering with HFS on the Homes Build Futures campaign, helping civic society to understand the scale and urgency of the situation and encouraging engagement with local decision-makers.

This toolkit has been developed to support HFS members in this endeavour and I am proud to attach the VELUX name to it.”



Trevor Smith
National Housing Development Manager Sales GBI
VELUX



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FOREWORD

Dear member

Following May's Holyrood election and on the back of the latest housing statistics showing all-tenure starts and completions down by 10% and 6% respectively in 2025/26, it has never been more important for our sector to seize the opportunity to meaningfully engage with MSPs. This is reinforced by the results of a survey undertaken for Homes for Scotland (HFS) ahead of the launch of the [Homes Build Futures campaign](#) last September which found that, in terms of priorities determining Scots' voting intentions, housing came bottom in the list of provided options. This contrasts with other parts of the UK and the Republic of Ireland where housing is considered the number one political priority.

Whilst we have already undertaken significant engagement with political parties to help influence their thinking on housing policy and continue to do so, it is imperative that members actively support these efforts at a local level in order to amplify this messaging and maximise impact.

It is essential that we clearly articulate to future policymakers the wide-ranging social and economic benefits that home building brings to our local communities across the whole of the country. This is especially key given the number of MSPs that stood down, and a substantial intake of new parliamentarians who may have limited understanding of the complexities of the home building process and the wider contribution our sector makes. We must therefore act on this opportunity now to build strong relationships, shape understanding and ensure that housing remains central to economic growth and social wellbeing ambitions.

How can you help?

In partnership with [VELUX](#), this toolkit has been developed to assist members engage with MSP across all parties. It includes:

- 🏠 key messaging.
- 🏠 useful supporting statistics.
- 🏠 a practical MSP briefing guide to help structure effective conversations.

I would also strongly encourage our home builder members to utilise our [exclusive online socio-economic benefits calculator](#) which can quickly and easily generate a high-level estimate to provide a more local perspective.

Given the extensive nature of our sector's strong backwards and forwards linkages, I hope all members will find this toolkit simple and straightforward to use. We have tried hard to make this process as easy as possible by providing key messaging, template documents and local authority insights. I look forward to your active support as we look to use the strength of our collective voice to deliver more homes of all tenures for the people of Scotland.

Kind regards

Jane Wood

Chief Executive
Homes for Scotland



POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT - WHERE TO START?

1. Identify your MSPs

You can use the tailored letter we have provided on our Engaging Networks platform. This is available [HERE](#) and will send individual messages to all MSPs associated with your post code in just a few simple steps.

As well as outlining key messages and offering further discussion / site visits, this enables members to include organisation-specific information.

Alternatively, you may wish to send your own bespoke and more detailed messages in which case you can click [HERE](#) to access the full list of MSPs.. This includes currently available details across all parties and can be filtered by constituency.

Remember: a third of current MSPs stood down so names may be completely new to you.

2. Background and context

Effective engagement begins well before any meeting or site visit takes place. If an elected official responds positively and wants to engage, take the time to research their background to ensure any meetings and discussions are focused, relevant and constructive. This demonstrates professionalism, builds credibility and increases the likelihood of developing a long-term relationship.

For example:

- (a) [Review their pages on the Scottish Parliament website](#) to check any government / party / committee roles that they hold. What Cross-Party Groups have they shown interest in? What questions have they submitted?
- (b) If they are new MSPs, research their social media channels, web pages and any recent press coverage to identify their strategic drivers.

By aligning your key messages with the interests and concerns that matter most to the MSP and local people, you create a more meaningful dialogue and position yourself as a trusted source of expertise.

Remember: every interaction is an opportunity to raise awareness of the social and economic benefits the new homes you are helping to deliver bring; the local challenges you are helping to address; the wider issues affecting the home building sector and your role as a sector advocate.

3. Preparation

In advance of any meeting, visit or discussion, ensure you prepare a briefing document to help inform stakeholders and guide the conversation.

Think of photo opportunities e.g. on site, in a show home, using our [Homes Build Futures campaign assets](#), with an apprentice, happy customer or recipient of local charitable/ outreach work. Also during site visits, remember to ask such questions as how much the elected official knows about the sector and their understanding of key interdependencies between private and social housing delivery. This will give you the opportunity to address any misconceptions they have regarding the sector.

[See Annex A for an example briefing](#). Key resources and information sources have also been provided in [Annex B](#) to help you tailor briefings to your local area.

4. Follow-up

Make contact to thank them for their time and follow-up on anything you committed to get back to them on / ask if they have any further questions / offer to stay in touch.

KEY MESSAGING

Scotland has now entered its third year of housing emergency, following the Scottish Parliament's declaration in May 2024.

This is not a situation that has developed overnight. It has been decades in the making as a direct result of chronic housing undersupply and failed policymaking.

The facts

- 🏠 693,000 Scottish households (28%) have been identified as being in some form of housing need.
- 🏠 250,000 people are on waiting lists for social housing.
- 🏠 Over 10,000 children are being housed in temporary accommodation.
- 🏠 A shortfall of +110,000 homes has been accumulated since 2008.
- 🏠 Housing starts and completions across all tenures are on a downwards trajectory with latest figures showing all-tenure starts and completions down by 4% and 10% respectively in 2025/2026, the third consecutive annual drop.
- 🏠 The number of SME home builders in Scotland is now at a 20-year low.

The challenges:

Land Supply

- 🏠 [The supply of deliverable land](#) is shrinking due to 20 out of 34 Local Development Plans now being out of date.
- 🏠 Many councils are not due to meet the target date for May 2028 for a new Local Development Plan, with some not being anticipated until 2030.
- 🏠 Housing completions could fall to as low as 5,000 per annum by 2031 as a direct result of failing planning policy.
- 🏠 If a deliverable land supply for new housing is not replenished, much needed investment will be lost. This will negatively impact the Scottish Government's Affordable Homes Target and all-tenure ambition to increase housing delivery 10% year on year over the next three years. Without sufficient deliverable housing sites, these objectives will not be realised.

Planning

A planning system that delays and frustrates residential development has been made worse by the lack of transitional guidance in relation to the introduction of National Planning Framework 4, now resulting in an acute shortage of land.

- 🏠 [Planning decision timescales](#) now take 40 weeks for major developments (+50 homes) and 18 weeks for local developments (49 homes or less). The statutory timescale is 16 weeks and 8 weeks respectively.
- 🏠 [Funding for planning continues to fall](#), with a -28.6% drop since 2010-11, leaving it as the most reduced and lowest funded local authority department on a national scale. The change from 2020/21 to 2021/22 was -2.4% at a national scale, while all other services increased to some degree.
- 🏠 Workforce is at the lowest level in five years at 1205 members of staff in local authorities as of 2022/23. The previous year's level was at 1242.
- 🏠 According to the [Royal Town Planning Institute's State of the Profession 2025 Survey](#), the greatest challenge for planners were staffing and recruitment, and funding and resourcing.

Housing Delivery

In the financial year 2025/2026, official statistics continued to demonstrate Scotland's falling housing delivery in both new homes completed and started:

- 🏠 17,268 all-sector new homes were built – down 10% on the previous year's 19,182 (-1,914 homes).
- 🏠 14,955 all-sector new homes were started – down 4% on the previous year's 15,648 (-693 homes).
- 🏠 The latest statistics show the total number of homes completed during 2025-26 at their lowest since Covid-19 nine years ago (2019-20), with comparative starts having fallen by 41%
- 🏠 All sector completions are now over 20% less the combined local authority forecast of 22,402, adding further pressure on households, communities, public services and the wider economy.
- 🏠 All-sector home building continues to be on a downwards trajectory after three years of consecutive decline.

Regulatory Environment

Scotland's overall regulatory environment is stifling investment and presents both short and long-term operational challenges across the sector.

Uncertainty adversely impacts business confidence and business decisions. The range of additional regulatory requirements the sector has encountered as well as those proposed also affects development viability where the cost is either deducted from the land value (if it is still viable to develop) or the developer/contractor (in the case of affordable delivery) margin is reduced.

- 🏠 Evidence collated from our members has illustrated that indicative costs of ongoing and proposed regulation on new homes has the potential to add an additional £20,000 - £30,000 to the cost of developing new homes.

The socio-economic benefits:

As well as providing warm, sustainable places to live, new homes:

- 🏠 Improve health and education outcomes.
- 🏠 Support regeneration and placemaking objectives.
- 🏠 Make developer contributions towards affordable housing and other infrastructure of **£30,500 per private home built**.
- 🏠 Employ over 79,000 people, with **every new home built supporting 3.5 jobs**.
- 🏠 Generate **£3.4bn in annual GVA**.
- 🏠 Significantly contribute towards national and local public finances through LBTT, corporation tax, NI, PAYE and council tax receipts).
- 🏠 Support the transition to net-zero with 80% of all new homes at least EPC Grade 'B' and sector operational carbon emissions already reduced by 75% based on 1990 baseline levels.

HFS MANIFESTO CALLS



A strong, delivery-focused national housing target

HFS is calling for the introduction of a national all-tenure housing delivery target of at least 25,000 new homes per year across Scotland. This would signal clear political commitment to increasing housing supply and provide a consistent measure of progress across all tenures. It would focus national and local government on aligning policy, investment and action to achieve delivery at the scale Scotland needs.



Delivery-focused structures and processes across government

Our manifesto highlights the need for stronger governance and coordination of housing policy across government. This includes a root and branch review of current structures to improve policy development, monitoring and management, ensuring delivery across all housing tenures is a priority and backed by clear metrics and accountability.



Targeted support for small and medium-sized builders

SME home builders require bespoke policies to support their growth and capacity. This includes faster and more tailored statutory consenting processes for SME projects, particularly for homes that meet higher energy efficiency standards. Addressing the disproportionate impact of planning constraints and capital tie-ups is essential to increasing sector resilience and delivery.



An enabled and supportive planning and consenting system

Simplifying and resourcing the planning system is central to our manifesto asks, with HFS calling for planning processes that facilitate residential development rather than hinder it. This includes updating development plans to reflect housing need, reintroducing a presumption in favour of sustainable development where housing land pipelines are insufficient and ensuring planning fees are ringfenced to support service delivery. A well-resourced digital planning budget and an expanded Planning Hub for Housing are also fundamental.



Building sustainable growth for the future

A coordinated approach is needed to support the transition to net zero housing, including establishing a public-private partnership through a Scottish Future Homes Hub to deliver a clear route map. This should be supported by a public information campaign to raise consumer awareness of costs and benefits, a review of Land Buildings Transaction Tax to better align with UK Stamp Duty and incentivise energy efficiency, and the development of a sector-wide skills plan to ensure the workforce can build homes fit for the future.



A supportive and focused policy environment

This includes a pause on new housing delivery-related legislation until starts and completions show a consistent recovery, better alignment of national and local policies, and adherence to evidence-based impact assessments to avoid unintended negative effects on housing delivery.



Housing recognised as an economic driver

As well as social need raising delivery, streamlining planning, ensuring policy certainty and supporting sector capacity all contribute to economic growth, job creation and community wellbeing.

HOMES BUILD FUTURES PUBLIC CAMPAIGN

The [Homes Build Futures](#) consumer campaign, developed by HFS on behalf of members (originally with the support of [Lloyds Banking Group](#) and now [VELUX](#)), seeks to emphasise the critical need for more housing of all tenures and shine a light on the consequences of not achieving this. It is informing, educating and storytelling to challenge public thinking and mobilise consumers to be advocates for more homes ahead of the Scottish Parliament election, supporting our primary manifesto call for the delivery of a minimum of 25,000 all-tenure new homes.

As we aim to make housing a top political priority, we need members to actively support the campaign. [Click here to read details on how you can get involved.](#)



APPENDIX A:

SAMPLE BRIEFING DOCUMENT AND GUIDE

This appendix highlights what you should consider for a briefing document and provides a sample template incorporating both company and housing development specific information. All details should be edited as appropriate to reflect your own circumstances / challenges. See [Appendix B](#) (Key resources and information) for relevant contextual information.

Overview of your company and its contribution to the local area. For example:

- 🏠 Your company profile in Scotland, outline your business and growth aims, linking to good quality housing provision and stimulating socio-economic growth.
- 🏠 Number of homes delivered in Scotland or the local area, any ambitions to expand or grow your business.
- 🏠 Employment footprint, including any apprentices or graduates you employ.
- 🏠 Details of charity partnerships and community outreach.
- 🏠 Any areas of best practice your company delivers on.
- 🏠 Local or national challenges your company faces in delivering homes.

Specific site or development information. For example:

- 🏠 Size of site.
- 🏠 Number of homes.
- 🏠 Tenure split, e.g. number of affordable, social, private for sale.
- 🏠 Total jobs supported by development.
- 🏠 Increase in council tax receipts / LBTT receipts.
- 🏠 Additional infrastructure provision: transport links, education contributions, healthcare contributions, greenspaces.
- 🏠 Environmental measures implemented.

What outcomes are you seeking from engagement with your invited MSP:?

- 🏠 Ensure you have clear key asks or objectives for any site visit with a stakeholder or elected official. These could include:
 - Be cognisant of the need to balance delivery of new all-tenure homes with those who may oppose them.
 - Raising a question or motion at parliament if elected.
 - Make introductions to other elected members, party officials, or Scottish Government officials.
 - Positively engage with HFS as sector representative body.



APPENDIX A:

SAMPLE BRIEFING DOCUMENT AND GUIDE

Briefing prepared for: X

- [COMPANY LOGO]
- [COMPANY NAME]
- [COMPANY OVERVIEW]
(e.g. years established, number of employees, geographical reach, homes built, company values and strategic goals)
- [DEVELOPMENT NAME]
- LOCAL AUTHORITY / CONSTITUENCY / REGION – EDINBURGH
- [DATE]

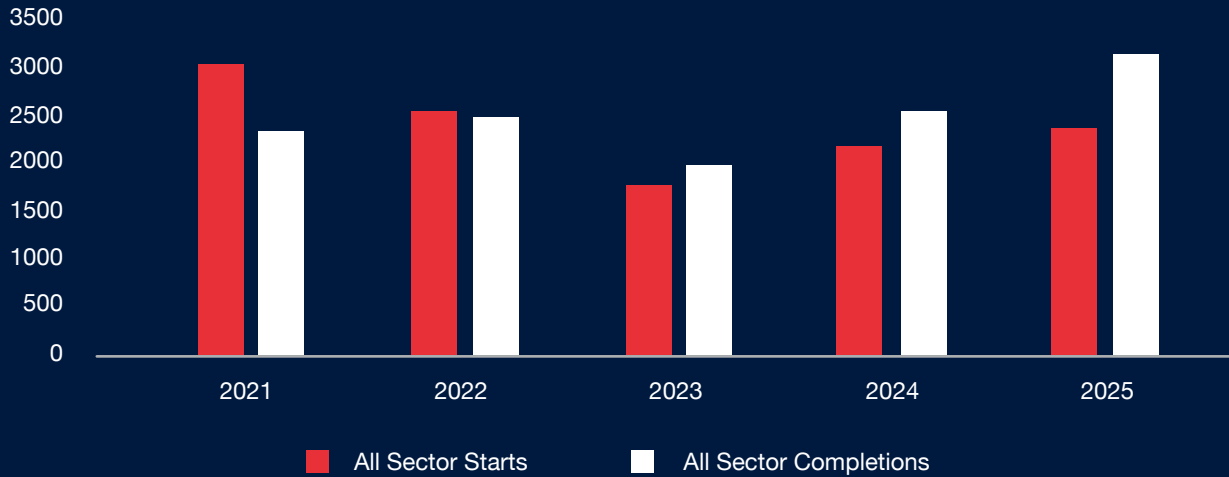
Local Authority Snapshot: Edinburgh City

Population	530,680
Households	244,791
Population Growth	+18.2% on 2001
Largest Age Group	25–44
Housing Need	63,000 households 7,000 households living in poor conditions 9,000 households requiring specialist adaptations 17,000 households overcrowded 24,000 households struggling with housing costs 28,000 households with at least concealed household
Social Housing Waiting List	24,500
Average Demand for Social Home	290 households per each property
Households in Temporary Accommodation	5,316 (+50% since 2020)
Average House Price	£297,000
Average House Price (First Time Buyers)	£240,000

Context:

- High demand versus limited and constrained land supply for new development
- Rapid population growth and inward migration
- Rising homelessness and temporary accommodation use
- Highest house prices in Scotland
- Local housing emergency declared

City of Edinburgh - All Sector Starts and Completions 2021 - 2026



[INSERT DEVELOPMENT NAME] – General Overview
and key points (to be edited as appropriate)

-  A new residential development of approximately 100 homes across a mix of tenures is proposed on a brownfield site within Edinburgh. The development will make productive use of previously developed land, supporting the city's objectives to increase housing supply while prioritising sustainable land use.
-  The scheme is expected to deliver a balanced mix of homes, including private sale properties alongside a proportion of affordable housing, helping to meet a range of local housing needs. Homes will include a mix of house types and sizes suitable for families, first-time buyers and downsizers. The development will be designed to align with current planning policy and placemaking principles, ensuring it integrates well with the surrounding neighbourhood.
-  As a brownfield regeneration project, the proposal will transform underused land into a high-quality

residential environment. Plans will include landscaped public spaces, pedestrian and cycle connections, and appropriate parking provision, helping to support a sustainable and attractive place to live. The development will also incorporate modern energy-efficient building standards, contributing to Edinburgh's wider climate and sustainability ambitions.

-  The project is anticipated to deliver significant economic and community benefits, including construction employment, supply chain opportunities, and increased local spending once homes are occupied. By bringing forward new homes on a brownfield site, the development will contribute to Edinburgh's housing delivery targets and wider growth strategy.

-  This example demonstrates how well-designed residential development can play a key role in addressing housing need while regenerating previously developed land and supporting local economic activity.

Site Summary

- 🏠 65 Private Homes.
- 🏠 35 Affordale Homes.
- 🏠 Developer contributions towards:
 - £104,960 towards sports and leisure facilities
 - £33,620 towards public open spaces
 - £11,480 towards youth and community facilities
 - £530,540 towards education infrastructure
 - £19,680 towards health infrastructure
 - £125,100 council tax revenue uplift
- 🏠 [X HOMES SOLD TO FIRST TIME BUYERS].
- 🏠 [AVG DEMOGRAPHIC PURCHASER].
- 🏠 [BEST PRACTICE INITIATIVES].

Site Challenges

- 🏠 Brownfield remediation.
- 🏠 No infrastructure financing or loan options available from Scottish Government.
- 🏠 Regulatory costs.
- 🏠 Lack of first time buyer support.



APPENDIX B:

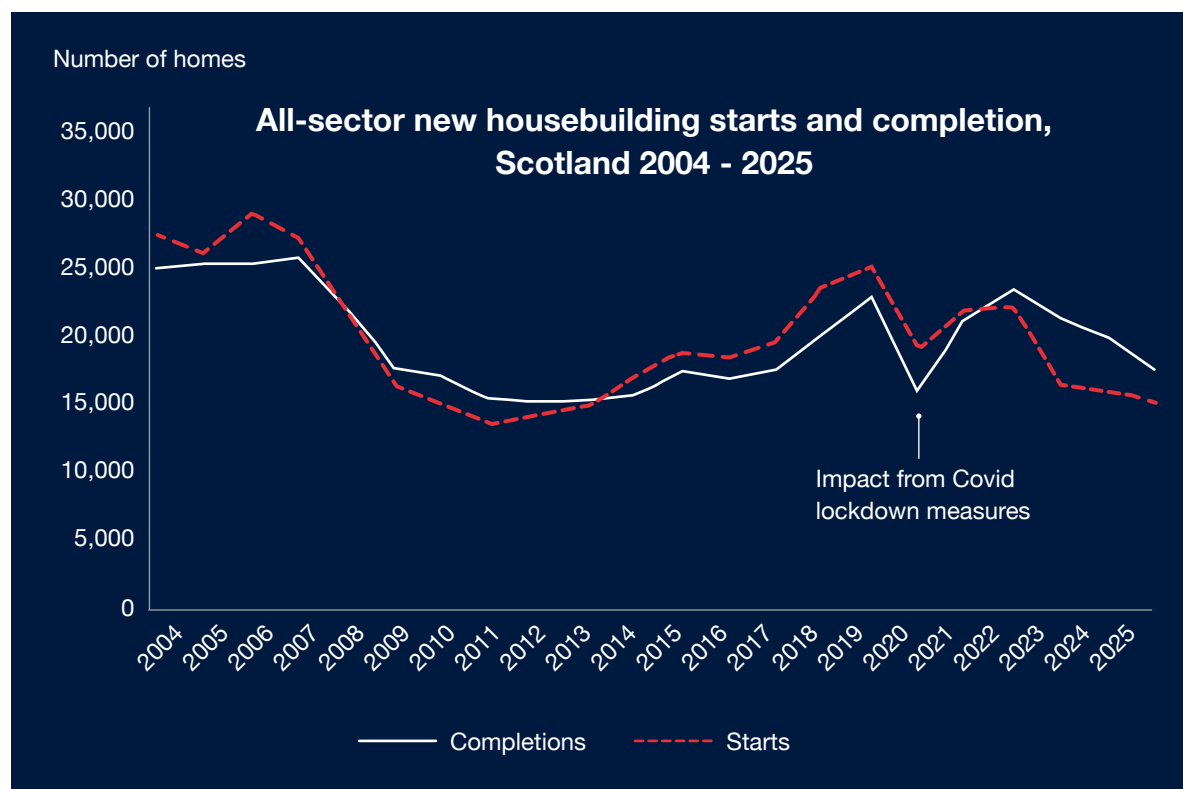
KEY RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

HFS has prepared downloadable files to assist members in developing future briefings for MSPs or key stakeholders. [Click here to access Scottish Local Authority Snapshot Information](#) and [click here to access national and local housing delivery profiles \(graphs and statistics\)](#).

Scotland's Housing Emergency – The Facts:

[National Housing Statistics](#) (Y/E March 2026)

- 🏠 17,268 homes completed, a 10% decrease on the year previous.
- 🏠 14,955 homes started, a 4% decrease on the year previous.
- 🏠 6,832 affordable homes completed, a 8% decrease on the year previous.
- 🏠 7,421 affordable homes started, a 37% increase on the year previous. (Whilst these increases are welcome, it must be acknowledged these are rising from an extremely low base.)
- 🏠 For the year ending, 35,368 affordable homes have been delivered against the target of 110,000 homes by 2032.
- 🏠 All-sector home building continues to be on a downwards trajectory.



APPENDIX B:

KEY RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

Key HFS reports and research are highlighted below to supplement briefings and engagement as required.

The Social and Economic Benefits of Home Building – Key Statistics

- 🏠 Home building plays a significant role in creating and supporting employment opportunities across Scotland. This includes people directly employed by home building firms and their contractors, as well as employees supported in the wider supply chain (i.e. in firms that supply home builders with goods and services) and in the wider economy through the spending power of these employees.
- 🏠 Delivering 25,000 homes across all tenures each year would support 87,330 jobs
- 🏠 The home building sector in Scotland is committed to the training and development of employees, in particular young people.
- 🏠 Delivering 25,000 homes across all tenures each year would support 575 apprenticeship positions.
- 🏠 There are significant interdependencies between housing, health and educational attainment.
- 🏠 The quality of housing has a direct link to educational attainment and a child's likelihood of experiencing future unemployment and poverty.
- 🏠 Delivering 25,000 homes across all tenures each year would support at least £119m in education contributions towards new school places and facilities
- 🏠 Home builders across Scotland make significant contributions beyond the construction of the homes themselves that help to support new and existing residents by providing essential community infrastructure.
- 🏠 Delivering 25,000 homes across all tenures each year would provide more than £500m in developer contributions to support local infrastructure such as schools, healthcare facilities, sports and leisure facilities as well as contributing to affordable housing.

- 🏠 The sector provides a significant direct and indirect contribution to Scotland's economy through delivering an uplift in economic output, investing in local areas and supporting public finances.
- 🏠 Delivering 25,000 homes across all tenures each year would create £3.7bn in total economic output each year.
- 🏠 At the local level, the home building sector also delivers economic benefits through financial receipts generated in the form of ongoing Council Tax on top of the locally paid developer contributions. This additional revenue represents a significant source of income for councils across Scotland, assisting with the costs of providing services to the occupants of new homes.
- 🏠 Delivering 25,000 homes across all tenures each year would generate £31m in new council tax receipts.
- 🏠 Click [here](#) to access the full report.

The Social and Economic Benefits of Home Building – Calculator

- 🏠 Designed to help members quantify the wide-ranging benefits that their home building activity provides to Scotland's people and economy according to the analysis contained in the 'The Social & Economic Benefits of Home Building (2022)'. Simply enter the number of homes on your development to give a high-level estimate of the socio-economic benefits provided by the new homes you deliver.
- 🏠 Click [here](#) to access.

APPENDIX B:

KEY RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

Existing Housing Need in Scotland

Homes for Scotland commissioned an independent national report published in January 2024 in response to concerns that levels were more complex and far higher with an alarming number of households not being counted. This includes those living in unfit properties, overcrowded accommodation and homes requiring specialist adaptations as well as households that are concealed or struggling financially as a direct result of high housing costs.

With the Housing Need and Demand Assessment tool only including those in acute need (namely homeless households in temporary accommodation and overcrowded households that have at least one concealed family), the report found:

- 🏠 14.9% had at least one concealed household – this is equivalent to 373,000 households. A concealed household is defined as an individual or group wishing to move to form their own household but unable to do so.
- 🏠 5% of households in Scotland say they are struggling financially due to high housing costs – equivalent to 185,000 households living in properties that they are struggling to afford.
- 🏠 9% were found to be living in overcrowded accommodation – equivalent to 123,000 households.
- 🏠 4% were in properties that required specialised housing adaptation or support. This is equivalent to 85,000 households living in properties that are unsuitable due to specific needs eg disabled access.
- 🏠 4% of people in Scotland were found to live in ‘unfit’ properties – equivalent to 85,000 households living in “very poor conditions”.
- 🏠 The final figure of 693,000 in housing need in Scotland takes account of overlapping need across these categories and also includes the 15,000 households in temporary accommodation.
- 🏠 Click [here](#) to access the full national report.

Local reports are available for the following areas on the [HFS Member Hub](#).

LOCAL AUTHORITY AREA

Aberdeen City
Aberdeenshire
Angus
Clackmannanshire
Dundee City
East Ayrshire
East Dunbartonshire
East Lothian
East Renfrewshire
Edinburgh City
Falkirk
Fife Central and South
Fife North
Glasgow
Highland
Inverclyde
Midlothian
Moray
North Ayrshire
North Lanarkshire
Perth and Kinross
Renfrewshire
South Ayrshire
South Lanarkshire
Stirling
West Dunbartonshire
West Lothian
Scotland (National)

APPENDIX B:

KEY RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

Scotland's SME Home Builders in 2025:

- 🏠 Scotland's SME home builders are critical to delivering more homes of all tenures across Scotland and tackling the housing emergency.
- 🏠 The number of active SME home builders in Scotland has decreased by 73% between 2007 and 2024.
- 🏠 SMEs have delivered 15% all new Scottish homes since 2020.
- 🏠 They are inherently local to their communities, providing training and jobs which form the backbone of their local construction sector, and they deliver the diverse, high-quality and energy-efficient homes local markets trust them to build.
- 🏠 SMEs are crucial to rural housing delivery and unlocking complex brownfield sites.
- 🏠 More than one-third of remote home building is undertaken by SMEs. Analysis of the geographic distribution of the SME sector shows that there is a higher proportion of new build sales in remote areas, with 36% of all such sales by SMEs in 2019-23 (compared to 14% of sales by SMEs across the country).
- 🏠 However SMEs in Scotland today are disproportionately at the sharp end of the barriers home builders face, including the slow, under-resourced planning system, the constrained land and labour markets and the raft of new regulation from government.
- 🏠 This has seen the numbers of homes sold by SMEs fall from an average of 4,000 per year before 2007 down to just 1,794 in 2024.
- 🏠 This means there are less homes for the public to access across rural communities where some aspects of the housing emergency are felt most acutely and it means there are less vacant brownfield sites being filled with homes across our towns and cities.
- 🏠 Click [here](#) to access the full report.

Scotland's Rural Voice (2025)

- 🏠 A lack of all tenure housing is a core driver in rural depopulation across Scotland.
- 🏠 45% of rural Scots view the lack of available housing stock in rural areas as a key factor driving people to move away, compared to 59% of remote rural Scots and 35% urban Scots.
- 🏠 The majority of rural Scots wish to see more new homes being built and are supportive of new development.
- 🏠 61% of rural Scots are supportive of new housing being built in their area, compared to just 22% that disagree.
- 🏠 Home building is a core foundation to providing strong and consistent economic growth across Scottish rural communities.
- 🏠 Over half of rural Scots agree that economic growth in their area is being limited by the lack of available housing. 60% of rural Scots highlight the strong economic contribution home building brings to their local area through the work it provides for smaller rural businesses and the wider socio-economic knock on impact this has.
- 🏠 The challenges of the rural housing emergency are exacerbated by the additional housing challenges faced by many rural Scots.
- 🏠 63% of rural Scottish residents report that they experience at least one challenge with their current housing, significantly more than the proportion of urban residents (58%). Main challenges comprise; irregular internet connection, financial (fixed and running costs), fuel poverty and accessibility.
- 🏠 New homes of all tenures will be essential for eradicating fuel poverty, one the most acute challenges in rural Scotland.
- 🏠 61% of rural Scots agree that more new build homes that are energy efficient and warm are needed in their area.
- 🏠 Click [here](#) to access the full report.

25 Facts: Scotland's Home, Housing and House Building Today

The 25 Facts report we published in partnership with the NHBC Foundation brings together clear evidence on Scotland's housing system and the role home building plays in supporting communities, the economy and national wellbeing. It provides an essential factual foundation for discussions with MSPs ahead of and following the 2026 Scottish Parliament election.

The evidence demonstrates that increasing housing supply is not solely a sector issue. It is central to tackling inequality, supporting economic growth and strengthening communities across Scotland.

Members are encouraged to use these headline facts to:

- 🏠 Reinforce the scale and urgency of the housing challenge.
- 🏠 Highlight the economic and social contribution of home building.
- 🏠 Demonstrate the need for a supportive policy and planning environment.
- 🏠 Ground conversations in clear evidence rather than perception.
- 🏠 Click [here](#) to access the report.



APPENDIX C: THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

This section provides some context and background to the results of the 2026 Scottish Parliament election and the current dynamics of the Scottish Parliament in its' seventh parliamentary term, including key spokespeople, Holyrood Committees and Scottish Government Cabinet Secretaries and Ministers.

The Scottish Parliament election was held on 7 May 2026. The SNP remained by some distance the largest party, winning 58 of the Parliament's 129 seats, but fell seven seats short of an overall majority. Reform UK entered the Parliament as a major force and finished level with Scottish Labour on 17 seats.

Summary of HFS party relationships

First Minister John Swinney leads another SNP minority government which requires support from at least seven opposition MSPs to secure a majority when all members vote.

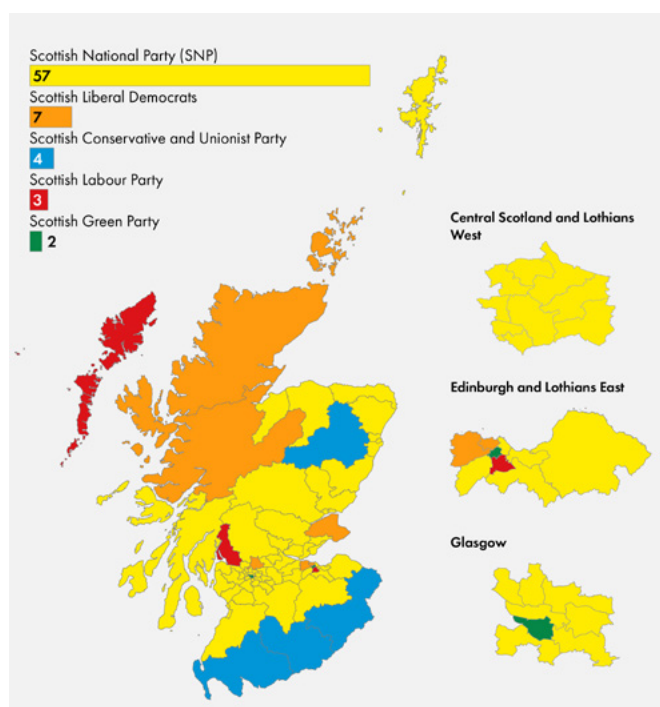
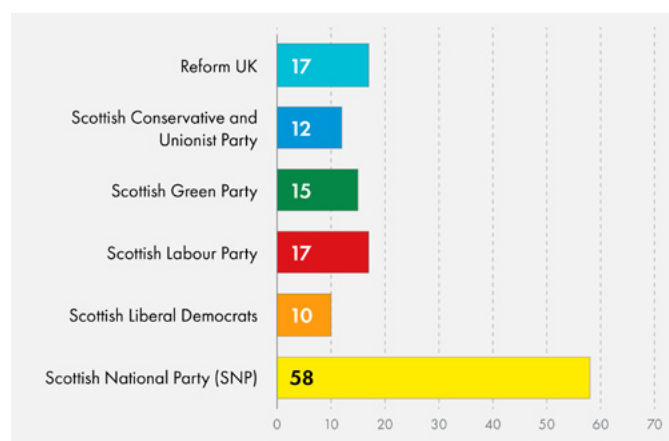
The Scottish Greens, with 15 seats, are the most obvious potential partner on budgets, climate policy, social housing and selected progressive legislation. However, support is likely to be negotiated issue by issue rather than through an automatic majority arrangement.

The Scottish Liberal Democrats, with 10 seats, may also hold significant influence. Their support could be important on budgets and reforms relating to housing, local government, public services and the economy.

Labour, Reform UK and the Conservatives will collectively have considerable capacity to scrutinise and amend government proposals. The fragmented opposition also means the SNP may be able to build different parliamentary majorities for different policies.

For the housing sector, practical implications are likely to include:

- 🏠 greater negotiation around annual budgets and housing investment;
- 🏠 increased committee and opposition scrutiny of delivery targets;
- 🏠 potential pressure for stronger affordable housing, homelessness and energy-efficiency commitments;
- 🏠 a continued need to demonstrate that planning reform and housing delivery can command cross-party support.



APPENDIX C: THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

Key Scottish Government Ministers

John Swinney MSP

First Minister

Reappointed in May 2026, John Swinney leads the SNP minority administration and will determine the Government's overall political and legislative priorities. His ability to maintain constructive relationships with the Greens and Liberal Democrats will be central to passing budgets and major legislation.

Jenny Gilruth MSP

Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government

Jenny Gilruth was appointed Deputy First Minister in May 2026. Her portfolio includes the Scottish Budget, taxation, public finances, local government finance and the coordination of infrastructure policy and investment. She will therefore be central to decisions affecting housing funding, local authority capacity, infrastructure and public-sector investment.

Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP

Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice and Housing

Shirley-Anne Somerville has responsibility for the Affordable Housing Supply Programme, Housing to 2040, homelessness, cladding remediation, tenants' rights, housing regulation and building standards. She is the principal Cabinet-level contact for housing policy and investment.

Gillian Martin MSP

Cabinet Secretary for Climate Action and Rural Affairs

Gillian Martin leads cross-government coordination of net-zero policy and is responsible for climate action, environmental protection, emissions policy, the circular economy, biodiversity and sustainable development. Her portfolio will be particularly relevant to heat decarbonisation, energy efficiency, embodied carbon and the environmental requirements affecting new homes.

Stephen Flynn MSP

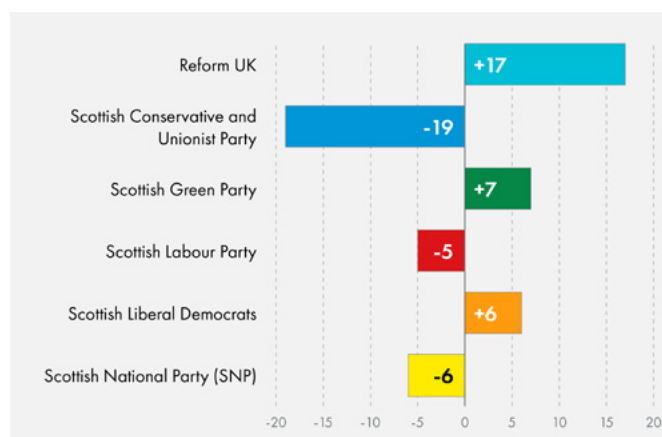
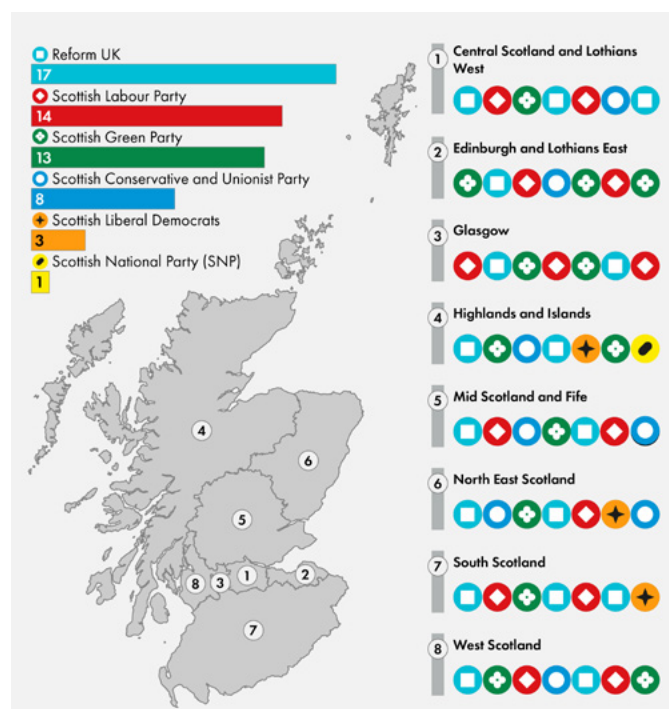
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Tourism and Transport

Stephen Flynn is the Cabinet lead for the economy and will be a key figure in policies relating to economic growth, business investment, productivity, transport and the wider conditions supporting housing delivery. He joined the Scottish Government following the election as part of the new ministerial team.

Hannah Mary Goodlad MSP

Minister for Public Finance — including planning

Hannah Mary Goodlad was elected to Parliament and appointed as a minister in May 2026. Her responsibilities include planning, non-domestic rates, community empowerment, government property and estates, community wealth and elements of public finance. She is the principal ministerial contact for the operation and reform of Scotland's planning system.



APPENDIX C:

THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

Key opposition spokespeople



Scottish Labour

Mark Griffin MSP (Central Scotland and Lothians West) – Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice and Housing

Daniel Johnson MSP (Edinburgh Southern) Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Tourism and Transport.

Claire Baker MSP (Mid Scotland and Fife) Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Climate Action and Rural Affairs.



Reform UK

Thomas Kerr MSP (Glasgow) Deputy Leader and Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice and Housing.

Malcolm Offord MSP (West Scotland) Party Leader and Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Public Service Reform

Duncan Massey MSP (North East Scotland) Shadow Minister for Energy



Scottish Greens

Iris Duane MSP (Glasgow) Spokesperson for Tertiary Education and Housing

Partick Harvie MSP (Glasgow) Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Transport and Tourism

Mark Ruskell MSP (Mid Scotland and Fife) Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Climate Action and Nature



Scottish Conservatives

Tim Eagle (MSP) (Highlands and Islands) Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Housing and Transport

Rachael Hamilton MSP (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) – Deputy Leader and Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Business and Tourism

Liam Kerr MSP (North East Scotland) Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Energy



Scottish Liberal Democrats

Morven-May MacCallum (Highlands and Islands) – Spokesperson for Housing, Social Security and Local Government

Liam McArthur MSP (Orkney Islands) Spokesperson for Economy, Finance and Tourism

Sanne Dijkstra Downie MSP (Edinburgh Northern) – Spokesperson for Climate, Environment and Energy

Holyrood committees

Social Justice, Housing and Local Government Committee

Convener: **Craig Hoy** (Conservative)

Deputy Convener: **Thomas Kerr** (Reform UK)

Key areas of the Committee's remit of relevance to HFS
Members include:

- local government (including local government finance), local governance and community empowerment
- housing and building standards (including cladding remediation)
- homelessness and rough sleeping
- tenants' rights
- planning

Climate Action Committee

Convener: **Stuart McMillan** (SNP)

Deputy Convener: **Ariane Burgess** (Green)

Key areas of the Committee's remit of relevance to HFS
Members include:

- climate change mitigation and adaptation, and climate justice
- national and international greenhouse gas emission reduction targets and achieving net zero emissions
- environmental quality, protection and regulation
- circular economy and waste
- biodiversity and nature recovery targets

Economy, Tourism and Energy Committee

Convener: **Duncan Massey** (Reform UK)

Deputy Convener: **Daniel Johnson** (Labour)

Key areas of the Committee's remit of relevance to HFS
Members include:

- the Scottish Government's economy policy
- support for business, industry, manufacturing and entrepreneurship
- fair work and skills development
- energy policy and energy consents.

Finance and Public Administration Committee

Convener: **Clare Haughey** (SNP)

Deputy Convener: **Alan Brown** (SNP)

Key areas of the Committee's remit of relevance to HFS
Members include:

- Scotland's public finances and Scottish Budget
- National Performance Framework

Rural Affairs Committee

Convener: **Mark Ruskell** (Green)

Deputy Convener: **Andrew Baxter** (Liberal Democrat)

Key areas of the Committee's remit of relevance to HFS
Members include:

- land reform and land use

