

A COMMON SENSE PLAN

Ending Scotland's Housing Crisis

Scottish Conservative & Unionist Party
February 2026

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Introduction

Housing is one of the most basic human needs and providing every family with the security of a roof over their head should be a fundamental duty of government.

Yet after nineteen years in office, the SNP has comprehensively failed to fulfil that duty.

Under the nationalists, housebuilding targets have been missed year after year, waiting lists for social housing continue to rise, and in the private sector, a lack of supply has led to rents increasing year on year. At the same time, the dream of home ownership is slipping further out of reach for many Scots, due to rising costs and a government more interested in political grandstanding than practical solutions.

But rather than working with other parties to address these issues, the SNP have allowed their own ideological dogma to dictate decision making and introduced a number of policies which have deepened this housing crisis.

Instead of working with developers to remove barriers to housebuilding, they have created a complex web of red tape which has slowed housebuilding to a crawl. Instead of giving local authorities the resources they need to tackle homelessness, they have relaxed homelessness laws, which have allowed a stream of illegal migrants to put additional pressure on homelessness services. Instead of creating more capacity in the rental market, they have introduced damaging rent controls which will only force more landlords out of the market.

It is clear that after 19 years in power, the SNP Government's approach to housing isn't working. In order to build the homes Scotland needs, we need to cut red tape, support developers and give local authorities the resources they need to process planning applications.

We need to restore competence, common sense and ambition to housing policy in Scotland. This paper sets out how we would achieve this.

Our plan to end Scotland's housing crisis

01

BUILD 80,000 AFFORDABLE HOMES BETWEEN NOW AND 2031 BY:

Proposing no more onerous housebuilding regulations until the end of the next parliament. To give developers certainty that further red tape won't scupper their long-term plans.

Scrapping the SNP's planning framework, with councils setting their own planning strategies so that they can build the homes they need. The Fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4) has made it more difficult to get homes built. We would allow councils to set their own planning strategies which would allow them to build the homes they need.

Scrapping the ban on boilers in new-build homes. The New Build Heat Standard has imposed a one-size-fits-all standard on new homes, preventing the installation of new gas boilers. It should be up to individuals, not the government, to decide which heating systems fits their needs.

Scrapping expensive green regulations on new homes. The Passivhaus regulations could potentially add an extra 8% onto the cost of a home. They should be included as guidance, not another mandate from government.

02

SPEED UP HOUSEBUILDING BY:

Piloting street votes in Scotland, with a view to expanding it across the country if it is successful. Street votes expedite the planning process by allowing a whole street to vote to approve minor planning decisions, like extensions.

Creating a purpose-built Brownfield Development Fund. Scotland is full of brownfield sites that could be unlocked for new developments, this purpose-built fund would allow these sites to be transformed.

03

TACKLE SCOTLAND'S RECORD LEVELS OF HOMELESSNESS BY:

Reversing SNP homelessness rules which make it easier for illegal migrants to access housing services. The local connection and priority need policies have made it easier for refugees to get housing in Scotland, triggering an influx of people, and overwhelming housing services. We need to bring Scotland in line with the rest of the UK to stop homelessness services from being overloaded.

Ending the use of migrant hotels and return them to their original use. The last UK Government halved the number of migrant hotels, but we need to go further. Illegal migrants need to be put into alternative accommodation, and the hotels returned to their original purpose instead.

04

MAKE HOUSING MORE AFFORDABLE BY:

Scapping the SNP's plan for damaging rent controls. Rent controls have proven to drive up rents and force landlords out of the market: they need to be scrapped.

Abolishing Land and Buildings Transaction Tax (LBTT) in Scotland on primary residences. Housing is expensive enough without the SNP Government imposing taxes on property transfers. Following on from Kemi Badenoch's announcement that a Conservative UK Government would abolish stamp duty in England, a Scottish Conservative government would abolish LBTT in Scotland to help bring down the cost of purchasing a home.

Cutting the Additional Dwelling Supplement (ADS) in half to 4%. ADS makes it more expensive for landlords to purchase properties, with these costs ultimately passed onto tenants. Cutting the rate would help bring down costs for landlords and tenants.

Guaranteeing no new mandated energy efficiency upgrades before 2031. The SNP are planning mandating a number of energy upgrades over the next few years which will impose huge costs on homeowners. We would push these changes back until at least 2031, while still encouraging the installation of clean energy systems.



Removing barriers to housebuilding

In order to address the housing emergency, Scotland urgently needs more affordable homes. But the SNP have presided over anaemic growth in housebuilding.

In 2024-25, just 19,177 homes were completed, the lowest level since 2020-21, when the pandemic limited the construction sector's ability to build houses.ⁱ This lack of progress can be seen across both the private and social sectors. In the social sector, just 4,490 homes were completed in 2024-25, which, excluding Covid, was the lowest recorded since 2016-17.ⁱⁱ In the private sector, 14,687 houses were completed in 2024-25, but this was down 13.1% on 2022-23.ⁱⁱⁱ

For local authorities, lack of funding from the government remains a crucial barrier to delivering more homes. Twenty-eight of Scotland's councils have had their affordable homes budgets cut by the Scottish Government since 2021-22.^{iv} With Scottish councils facing a funding gap of £647 million in 2025-26, it is totally unreasonable for the Scottish Government to expect local government to deliver the council houses Scotland needs.^v The Scottish Government must give local authorities the funding they need to address the housing emergency.

UTILISING EXISTING SITES

To solve the housing crisis, we must explore all opportunities for housebuilding, including brownfield sites, derelict land and empty homes. There are almost 9,000 hectares of derelict and urban vacant land in Scotland, with 50% of Scots living within one kilometre of these sites.^{vi} Many of these old brownfield sites are ripe for

redevelopment, but government inaction means they remain vacant.

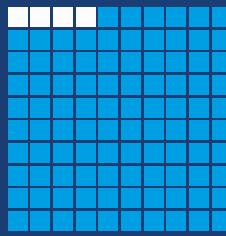
Last year, the Scottish Government's Vacant and Derelict Land Fund (VDLF) only contributed to the removal of only two hectares of vacant land.^{vii} Conversely, in 2022 the last Conservative Government committed £180 million through the second Brownfield Land Release Fund (BLRF2) over a three-year period.^{ix} This fund provided funding specifically for housing on brownfield sites, whereas the VDLF is a broader redevelopment fund, with the money from this programme going towards active travel routes and green spaces.^x

Whilst these are perfectly valid investments to make, the state of the housing crisis means we need more targeted action in this area. We would create a purpose-built Brownfield Development Fund which would focus solely on making these sites habitable and building homes on them.

Almost
9,000
hectares

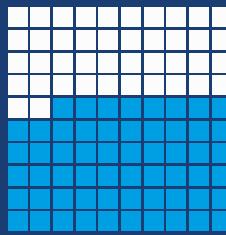
Derelict and
urban vacant
land in Scotland

Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Statistics (2024)



96%
of SMEs cite slow
planning decisions as a
key issue for their business

Scottish Housing News, 19 June 2025



58%
of SMEs said regulations
proposed or introduced since
2021 had increased costs by
more than £20,000

Scottish Housing News, 19 June 2025

CUTTING RED TAPE

But funding is not the only barrier to housebuilding. The SNP Government has created an increasingly complex web of regulations which cause delays to housebuilding and increase costs.

In April 2025, the chief planner identified 114 stalled housing sites across Scotland, totalling over 20,000 homes.^{xi} Whilst the reasons for these delays will vary, rigid planning laws are at least partly to blame, with increasing regulation bringing plans for new homes to a halt. Excessive regulation also leads to higher costs for developers, with Homes for Scotland estimating that new and proposed regulations will tack on an additional £30,000 to the building of each home.^{xii}

These planning laws have been extremely damaging for Scottish property developers, who find it increasingly difficult to get approval for new homes. The number of small and medium sized enterprises (SME) in the housebuilding sector is now at its lowest level in 20 years, with 96% of SMEs citing slow planning decisions as a key issue for their business. A separate survey found that 58% of SMEs said regulations proposed or introduced since 2021 had increased costs by more than £20,000.^{xiii xiv}

One of the biggest barriers to housebuilding is the Fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4). NPF4 sets out where and when developments and infrastructure can be built, with a number of “policies” for local authorities and developers to follow.^{xv} These myriad restrictions have resulted in many developments being delayed or even denied.

For example, Policy 16(f) of NPF4 states that “Development proposals for new homes on land not allocated for housing in the LDP [Local Development Plan] will only be supported in limited circumstances”.^{xvi} However, with some councils yet to produce NPF4-compliant LDPs, this rule has limited the number of sites for housebuilding across the country.^{xvii}

In May 2024, the Court of Session sided with a Scottish Government decision to deny permission for 250 homes to be built in West

Lothian, on the basis that policy 16 (f) of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) overrides land release policies in Local Development Plans adopted prior to NPF4.^{xviii}

It is perverse that ministers in Edinburgh dictate where and when local authorities build houses. Instead, we want to see councils lead from the front on this issue.

NPF4 should be abolished, and in its place, councils should set their own planning frameworks. Councils already have to set local development plans that abide by NPF4, so abolishing it would simply allow councils to create planning regimes which work for their local area.

To make this transition simple for developers, local authorities should work together to ensure they have common planning policies where possible, but they should also retain the autonomy to set policies that work best for them.

ROLLING BACK ON NET ZERO REGULATIONS

Red tape doesn't just impede housebuilding, in many cases, it actively harms Scotland's communities. The Scottish Government's Heat in Buildings Strategy contained a number of measures to reduce emissions from buildings, including the New Build Heat Standard.^{xix}

The New Build Heat Standard requires all new buildings and some conversions where a building warrant was applied for on or after 1 April 2024 to install "green" heating systems instead of oil and gas boilers.^{xx}

However, the original policy prohibited the installation of wood burning stoves in new builds, which are vital to heating many properties across rural Scotland. Whilst the SNP eventually relented and allowed bioenergy systems like wood burners and peat burning systems, this still exposes the SNP's ignorance of the housing needs of rural Scotland.^{xxi}

Even with this U-turn, the regulations now mean that developers across Scotland will be forced to install heat pumps and other "clean" energy systems, even when this is not practical. This is a dangerous example of the Scottish Government overreaching on housebuilding. We would scrap the New Build Heat Standard and allow developers to build homes with the heating systems they consider most appropriate.

In the coming years, developers will have a number of additional net zero regulations to navigate. The Scottish Government has committed to publishing its Passivhaus Standards by 2026, with these regulations becoming mandatory by 2028.^{xxii} In order to meet the Passivhaus standard, buildings must be designed to retain heat from the sun, dramatically reducing the requirement for space heating and cooling.^{xxiii} A proposed bill to implement the standards was introduced by Labour MSP Alex Rowley, and subsequently co-opted by the Scottish Government.^{xxiv}

Whilst all developers should consider energy efficiency when constructing homes, there are serious concerns about the additional costs Passivhaus might add to construction. In October 2023, Midlothian Council paused the construction of Passivhaus Homes, after it emerged they were set to cost over £150,000 more per unit than regular homes, and the Chartered Institute of Housing has warned the standard could add up to 8% onto the cost of each home.^{xxv}

At a time when housing demand is so high, we should be making it as affordable as possible for developers to build homes, not tacking





on additional costs. Whilst we support the Passivhaus standards being introduced, they should remain as a guidance document, so we would reverse the decision to make these Passivhaus regulations mandatory.

Reversing these changes would be a start, but the sector needs more than that. It needs certainty that more disruptive changes won't be conjured up by SNP ministers a few years down the line, potentially scuppering their long-term plans for housebuilding. That is why we would propose a freeze on housebuilding regulations, except in exceptional circumstances, until the end of the next parliament, which would give developers the long-term certainty they need to get on with the job of building homes.

EXPEDITING PLANNING

To expedite the planning process, town planners must be provided with the resources they need to produce robust LDPs. But planning departments are already suffering from chronic underfunding, with planning expenditure falling by 28.6% between 2010-11 and 2021-22.^{xxvi} This has resulted in a lack of town planners across Scotland, with the number of planners reducing by 9.5% between 2018 and 2023, and 40% of all planners in Scotland being 50 or over.^{xxvii}

This lack of resourcing has led to huge backlogs within the planning system. The average decision time for a local housing development was 19.4 weeks in 2023-24, up from 12.4 weeks in 2019-20. Similarly, major development now take an average of 59.8 weeks before a decision is made, up from 37.5 weeks in 2019-20.^{xxviii}

With so much red tape to navigate, developers need all the help they can get to ensure that their applications are approved. Last year, the Scottish Government created the National Planning Hub, with an initial focus on expediting the applications of hydrogen infrastructure.^{xxix} The Hub provides capacity, expertise, and support for planning authorities who may be struggling to make timely decisions on applications.^{xxxi} Whilst the hub is now providing advice on both housing and energy infrastructure, we want to see a primary focus on solving the housing crisis enveloping Scotland. We would expand the National Planning Hub,

with a renewed focus on expediting housing applications.

Whilst this should expedite major developments, more can be done to speed up smaller planning applications like extensions. In England, the 2023 Levelling-up and Regeneration Act introduced "street votes".^{xxxii} While not yet in force, street votes would allow the residents of a street to give themselves the right to extend or redevelop their properties. Homeowners can work with their neighbours to introduce a street plan, which would then be voted on by the street. If 60% approve, then the plan is adopted and everyone on the street now has planning permission to develop in line with the plan.^{xxxiii} This would allow councils to focus on larger developments, whilst also affording homeowners the freedom to make decisions about their properties. As soon as practicable, we would pilot street votes in Scotland, with a view to expanding it across the country if it is successful.

These solutions, if implemented successfully, would expedite the lengthy planning process and allow developers to focus on building homes, instead of navigating through a sea of red tape.

A MORE AMBITIOUS TARGET FOR HOUSING

Expediting the planning process and rolling back on excessive regulation also allows for a re-examination of the SNP's 2021 target to build 110,000 affordable homes by 2032, which is so far not on target to be achieved.^{xxxiv}

According to a report from by Shelter Scotland, the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA) and the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) Scotland, Scotland needs a minimum of 15,693 affordable homes a year in the next Parliament – a total of 78,465 over five-years.^{xxxv} This is over double the 7,444 completions Scotland achieved in 2024-25.^{xxxvi}

With the removal of excessive SNP red tape, it should be more than possible to achieve this target. That is why we would set a target to build 80,000 affordable homes in just the next five years, by 2031.





Tackling homelessness head on

Under the SNP, homelessness has become a national scandal. The latest statistics show there are record levels of homeless households and households in temporary accommodation, with over 10,000 children in temporary accommodation.^{xxxvii}

Thirteen of Scotland's councils have declared a housing emergency, with many raising concerns over pressures on homelessness services, high levels of people in temporary accommodation and a lack of affordable homes compared to high waiting lists.^{xxxviii} The Scottish Parliament also declared a housing emergency in May 2024, although little action has been taken since.^{xxxix}

With over a quarter of a million people now waiting for social housing, it is clear that whilst also building more affordable homes, the SNP must prioritise those most in need, ensuring they are given access to safe, warm homes.^{xl}

TIGHTENING SCOTLAND'S HOMELESSNESS LAWS

With local authorities already struggling to house those in need, some councils, like Glasgow, are facing additional pressures due to the influx of homeless illegal migrants arriving in the city. Projections show Glasgow City Council could be overspending £66 million on homelessness services by 2026-27, with officials suggesting that pausing dispersals to Glasgow and stopping requirements to house refugees from outside

Scotland could reduce that overspend to £13 million.^{xli} Other local authority areas, like the Highlands, may face increased demand in the future, due to the decision to house 300 asylum seekers in Cameron Barracks in Inverness.^{xlii}

This huge influx of homeless refugees is no coincidence. It is a direct result of SNP housing policy. In 2012, the Scottish Government abolished the “priority need” test. The priority need test, which still exists in other parts of the UK, gives priority to certain groups such as families with children or women facing domestic abuse when dealing with homelessness applications. Councils in Scotland therefore have a legal duty to house all refugees who declare themselves homeless, regardless of whether they are in a priority group.^{xliii xlv}

Changes to the “local connection” rule have also led to increases in homelessness applications in Scotland. Previously, an individual presenting as homeless could be asked to demonstrate their local connection to the council area. If they were unable to do so, councils could refer them to another area where they did have a local link, such as somewhere they or their family members have lived or worked. This rule was abolished in 2022. Councils are now required to house anyone declaring themselves homeless, even if they have no connection to the area.^{xlv} This rule remains in place in England.^{xlii}

In practice, what this means is that asylum seekers who are given refugee status elsewhere in the UK, and are subsequently declared homeless, can travel to Scotland and access

homelessness services much more easily than elsewhere in the UK.^{xlvi} These lax rules have led to a huge influx of refugees arriving in Scotland and put huge strain on existing services, with one in four homelessness households in Glasgow now having no local connection to any local authority in Scotland.^{xlviii}

We would address this issue by reinstating the local connection and priority need tests. In doing so, we would bring Scotland back into line with other UK nations and ensure that Scotland does not bear the brunt of the UK Labour Government's failure to address illegal immigration.

The last Conservative Government was able to halve the number of hotels being used to house asylum seekers in our last year in power, whilst the current Labour Government has failed to tackle this issue.^{xlix} But we need to go further, in partnership with a UK Conservative Government, whose BORDERS plan would significantly reduce illegal migration, we would end the use of migrant hotels and return them to their original use.

33,000

open homeless
applications in Scotland

ADDRESSING THE UNDERLYING CAUSES OF HOMELESSNESS

Closing these loopholes will stem the tide of applications, but the Scottish Government still needs to do more to reduce the huge backlog of people waiting for social housing. With over 33,000 open homeless applications in Scotland, urgent action is needed to address this issue.^l

But many of the solutions being put forward fail to address the root causes of homelessness. Housing First is a programme which prioritises access to housing as quickly as possible. Eligibility for housing is not contingent on any conditions other than willingness to maintain a tenancy.^{li} Whilst it is of course important to get homeless people into secure accommodation as soon as possible, this approach ignores many of the systemic issues which cause homelessness in the first place.

In 2023, 242 homeless people in Scotland sadly lost their lives. What is even more concerning is that over 40% of those deaths were related to drug misuse, with 10% of all homeless people assessed as having a drug and alcohol dependency.^{lii} ^{liii} Yet when our Right to Recovery Bill was debated in October 2025, the SNP and Greens voted it down.^{liv} We will continue to advocate for an approach which guarantees the right to treatment for those affected by alcohol or drug addiction.

Domestic abuse also remains a huge issue amongst homeless people, especially women. In 2024-25, 12% of homeless people highlighted a violent or abusive dispute as their main reason for becoming homeless, this almost doubles to 23% amongst women.^{lv} Whilst the recently passed Housing Act takes some steps to ensure social landlords support tenants affected by domestic abuse, we need to go further.

It is unacceptable that people experiencing domestic abuse are forced to live on the streets, whilst their abusers are allowed to remain in the home. The 2021 Domestic Abuse (Protection) (Scotland) Act sought to address this by introducing domestic abuse protection orders (DAPOs), which would stop an abuser from entering the home of the person they have abused.^{lvii} But this part of the act is only now



being implemented, with poor drafting meaning these changes will only come into place from August 2026.^{lvii} This means that whilst DAPOs have been used in England and Wales since 2024, Scotland has fallen behind due to bad legislation.^{lviii}

We welcome this legislation finally coming into force, but we want to go further. Our Prevention of Domestic Abuse Bill, which would require domestic abusers to be added to a register, would have made it easier to identify and evict these abusers.^{lix} However, we withdrew this bill after John Swinney made clear he would not support the bill.^{lx} We will continue to push the SNP to stand up for victims of domestic abuse, and we want to see the 2021 act implemented as a matter of urgency.

In conjunction with addressing these underlying issues, we would push for more social housing to be built, so that families can get out of unsuitable temporary accommodation and into safe and affordable homes, and we will continue to push the Scottish Government to give local authorities the resources to achieve this.





Making housing affordable

In September 2025, the SNP passed the Housing Bill, which paves the way for damaging rent controls to be introduced in every local authority in Scotland.^{lxii} Whilst rents have indeed increased significantly in recent years, the SNP's remedy is worse than the disease.

Between September 2022 and March 2024, Scotland had temporary rent controls in place. Over that period, private rental prices increased by 16.1% in Scotland – higher than any other UK nation or region including London.^{lxiii} Property developers have also said that rent controls led to £3 billion in lost investment for the housebuilding sector.^{lxiv} These measures have in turn, led to 6,000 landlords exiting the rental market since September 2022, further exacerbating the rental crisis.^{lxv}

The solution to lowering rents isn't more ideological rent controls, it means creating a rental market which incentivises landlords to let

their properties, combined with an increase in housing supply. We would scrap the SNP's plan for damaging rent controls. Doing so would stop the exodus of landlords from the market and stop the huge increase in rents we saw a few years ago.

MAKING HOME OWNERSHIP A REALITY

For far too many Scots, getting on the property ladder is an uphill struggle, with huge sums of capital needed upfront. The unaffordability of Scottish homes has worsened in the last 20 years, with the average property now 5.25 times more than the average salary in 2024, compared to 4.06 times more expensive in 2004.^{lxvi} This has had a knock-on effect on the number of property sales, with just 99,975 sales in 2024-25, down from 135,406 in 2004-05, a 26.1% decrease.^{lxvii}

The Land and Buildings Transaction Tax (LBTT) was devolved to Scotland in 2015 and apart for a temporary reduction during Covid, the tax thresholds have remained unchanged.^{lxviii} What this means is that those looking to purchase a property have been exposed to fiscal drag over time. This means that 64% of housing purchases were above the £145,000 threshold in 2023-24, up from 47% in 2015-16, and the number subject to the 12% top marginal rate trebled in that time.^{lxix} With so many costs associated with purchasing a property, it is wrong that government is putting up additional barriers to home ownership. At the last UK Conservative Conference,



Kemi Badenoch pledged to abolish stamp duty in England.^{lxix} This would cost around £9 billion, with the Barnett consequentials from this policy being used to fund LBTT abolition in Scotland.^{lxx} We would follow suit by abolishing LBTT in Scotland on primary residences.

Furthermore, in the 2024-25 Scottish budget, the SNP Government increased the additional dwelling supplement (ADS) from 6% to 8%, meaning the ADS rate has doubled since 2019.^{lxxi} This increase means that a landlord buying a £500,000 property, for example, must now pay £63,350, or 12.7%, in LBTT on top of the purchase price, with additional costs on landlords ultimately puts up tenants' costs in the long run. We would reverse these changes and halve ADS to 4%.

PROTECTING HOMEOWNERS FROM NET ZERO REGULATIONS

With homeowners already facing huge upfront costs when purchasing a home, it is grossly unfair that the SNP are imposing further costs on them through the Heat in Buildings Bill, which will give the government the power to set minimum energy efficiency standards for owner-occupiers.^{lxxii} Additionally, existing powers will be used to introduce a minimum energy-efficiency standard in the private rented sector, with rented properties needing to reach EPC C from 2028 for new tenancies and by 2033 for all privately rented homes.^{lxxiii}

In order to reach these standards, homeowners will be forced to add insulation to their homes, rip out their gas boilers and install heat pumps, all of which comes at significant cost. Heat pumps alone cost around £10,000 more than a traditional gas boiler, while external wall insulation can cost anywhere between £7,000 and £15,000 depending on property size.^{lxxiv lxxv}

Although the Scottish Government currently offers homeowners a £7,500 grant to install heat pumps, landlords are only eligible for a government loan of up to £10,000. This not only fails to cover the full cost of installation, but the lack of grant support may also discourage landlords from upgrading their properties — ultimately preventing tenants from benefiting from potential energy efficiency savings.



The Scottish Conservatives would abolish Land and Buildings Transaction Tax in Scotland



The Scottish Conservatives oppose this one-size-fits-all strategy for decarbonising Scotland's homes, which prioritises heat pumps over other viable technologies. The Scottish Government should instead promote a diverse range of heating solutions.

For instance, many off-grid households depend on systems such as liquid petroleum gas, electric storage heaters, or wood-burning stoves. Rather than phasing out or restricting these options, the Government should evaluate which technologies are most appropriate for each property and support homeowners in making suitable improvements when necessary.

The Scottish Government has also proposed a Social Housing Net Zero Standard, which proposes a minimum fabric efficiency standard by 2028, with social landlords not being able to re-let their properties until they reach this standard.^{lxvvi} This poses a number of challenges for the social housing sector. For one, at a time when social housing is in short supply, it seems illogical to prevent social landlords from letting out their properties without first incurring significant costs on eco-upgrades.

Secondly, without significant funding from the Scottish Government, these costs may well be passed onto tenants. The IPPR estimates that the aggregate cost of retrofitting social housing falls in the range of £250 to £300 million per year, or an average additional cost per tenancy of around £400 to £500 per year, with the Scottish Housing Regulator estimating these measures could increase annual rents by up to 80%.^{lxvii} ^{lxviii} We cannot support any measure which would exacerbate demand and increase rents for social tenants.

We do not believe expensive costs should be imposed on households, so to give them certainty over the next few years and save them from potentially eye-wateringly expensive upgrades we would guarantee that no new energy efficiency mandates will be brought into law over the next session of parliament.





Conclusion

After 19 years of SNP mismanagement, it is clear that the SNP have no solutions to the housing crisis. Housebuilding rates remain flat, whilst homelessness and rents are on the rise.

To solve this crisis, concrete action is needed to build more homes, prioritise those in need and stimulate home ownership. This can only be achieved through a regulatory reset in these policy areas.

Over time, SNP red tape like National Planning Framework 4 and the New Build Heating Standard have made it more difficult for developers to build homes. This will only be exacerbated by upcoming changes like the Passivhaus Standard and the Social Housing Net Zero Standard.

At a time when Scotland's housebuilding rates are well below where they need to be, the last thing developers need is more red tape. Instead, we must give developers the freedom to build the homes Scotland needs. That is why we will push for a regulatory reset which scraps these measures.

But increasing supply is only part of the solution, we must also address demand. Whilst councils should take reasonable steps to help those threatened with homelessness, Scotland's divergence on homelessness rules has led to an influx of people from outside of Scotland overwhelming homelessness services. It's simply not fair to people already settled in Scotland.

Bringing Scotland in line with the rest of the UK on homelessness will not solve the problem, but it will stem the tide of people coming here and allow us to dedicate more time to addressing the underlying causes of homelessness.

We also want to do more for the generation of Scots who aspire to home ownership, but have been badly let down by the SNP Government. With house prices continuing to increase, the

Scottish Government should be doing all it can to reduce additional cost barriers, like Land and Building Transaction Tax. That is why we have called for this tax on property to be abolished, with the Additional Dwelling Supplement also cut in half.

Simply put, the crisis in Scotland's housing sector cannot continue. The measures outlined in this paper must be implemented as a matter of urgency, if we are to finally bring an end to Scotland's housing crisis.

Endnotes

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