

Ariane Burgess MSP
Convener
Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee

22 January 2026

Dear Convener,

On 2 September, I published my [Housing Emergency Action Plan](#), which set out key measures to address Scotland's housing crisis. The plan focuses on three priority areas:

- Ending the practice of children living in unsuitable accommodation;
- Meeting the housing needs of vulnerable groups; and
- Supporting growth and investment in the housing sector.

Tackling the housing emergency is central to achieving the Scottish Government's overarching priorities of eradicating child poverty and growing the economy.

The First Minister has this morning (22 January) announced our intention for a 'whole Scotland' vision and approach that will seek to accelerate housing delivery across all tenures. This will represent a further tangible Government response to the Housing Emergency and includes the intention to establish a new housing agency that will bring greater simplicity, scale and speed to Scotland's approach.

We are already making good progress in responding to the Housing Emergency through our recent actions, including providing targeted investment of £120 million through our voids and acquisitions fund to support the expeditious delivery of at least 1,200 homes and helping to reduce the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation. I am particularly proud that we have helped an estimated 2,261 households with children into affordable housing in the year to end June 2025. More broadly, our action to keep rents lower than market rents benefits approximately 140,000 children in poverty each year.

Looking ahead, a central component of our approach will be the deploying of record provision of multi-year allocations for the Affordable Housing Supply Programme, supporting the delivery of 36,000 affordable homes. Our all-tenure approach will also stimulate broader developer activity by increasing investor confidence, strengthening project pipelines, and improving the efficiency of open-market acquisitions.

However, having put these foundations for success in place, if we are to take the root-and-branch action this challenge demands, we must be prepared to think—and act—differently. A new approach is required if we are to move beyond the current Housing Emergency.

In determining how to deliver on the ambition set out today by the First Minister, we will undertake a comprehensive assessment of the benefits and opportunities presented by a new delivery model and mechanism. These will include:

- Recruiting industry experts and becoming a centre of excellence, including close working with professional bodies.
- Acquiring, preparing and releasing land to enable housing development, with an emphasis on intervening where developers will not.
- Working in close partnership with the Scottish National Investment Bank to provide funding and financing for infrastructure works to address blockers.
- Supporting aggregation and procurement efficiencies, with a focus on standardisation, modern building techniques, and efficiency through scale.
- Delivering an enhanced support offer to local authorities, deploying a playbook approach to provide practical support to strengthen planning and delivery capability and accelerate homebuilding and regeneration.
- Deploying a regional model with a place-based focus, taking account of relevant local dynamics, including challenges faced by rural and island communities, with an emphasis on regeneration and shaping sustainable communities.
- Investing in skills, including running college apprenticeship programmes.
- Improved support for our rural and island communities.

The overarching aim will be to bring forward more housing at pace. Only by acting together with the full range of housing stakeholders will we effectively meet that aim.

We will seek to work with experts from across the housing sector, supported by COSLA and the Scottish National Investment Bank, to lead a design phase over the next two months. I will keep the Committee updated over the coming weeks as this significant next step in addressing the housing emergency develops.

Yours sincerely

Màiri McAllan MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Housing