



National Planning Framework 4 Early Engagement – Policies

ENABLING DELIVERY OF NEW HOMES - AFFORDABLE

Scottish Planning Policy (2014):

Affordable housing.

- *Defined as housing of a reasonable quality that is affordable to people on modest incomes. This can include social rented, mid-market rented, shared ownership, shared equity, discounted, self-build plots and low cost housing without subsidy.*
- *Plans should set out the scale and distribution of the affordable requirement and the role of planning in addressing needs.*
- *Consider allocating some small sites specifically for affordable housing.*
- *Developer contributions towards affordable housing should be identified, and viability considered as part of this. Affordable housing developments may not need to provide a contribution.*
- *Contribution of market sites is capped at 25% of the total number of homes.*
- *Rural exceptions policies can be used to support sites for affordable housing that would not normally be used for housing.*
- *The detailed policies should be set out in supplementary guidance, including whether stock should remain available in perpetuity and any specific design requirements.*

What has changed since 2014?

- The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 requires the National Planning Framework to contain ‘targets for the use of land in different areas of Scotland for housing.’
- Other relevant outcomes including meeting any targets relating to the reduction of emissions of greenhouse gases, improving the health and wellbeing of people living in Scotland, and increasing the population of rural areas of Scotland,
- Local development plans are also to address the housing needs of the population of the area, including, in particular, the needs of persons undertaking further and higher education, older people and disabled people; and the availability of land in the district for housing, including for older people and disabled people.
- The More Homes Scotland approach has been established to deliver 50,000 homes by 2021, backed by a £3.3 billion investment. Annual reporting has set out progress towards that target. Of this 35,000 homes will be for social rent.
- Alongside NPF4, work is progressing on the development of a future plan for housing ‘Housing to 2040’ which will provide a new policy context for planning. This sets out

key challenges including: our ageing population; growing and changing households; climate change; homelessness; child poverty; and managing the impact of Brexit.

- Research undertaken by Ironside Farrar on the adoption of Scottish Planning Policy in local development plans¹ has suggested that guidance on tenure integration should form part of the national policy. Affordable housing should be provided within a planned system and not seen as an 'easy exception' to policies.
- Concerns were expressed about the range of housing being provided, although it was also noted that the Planning Act seeks to broaden this with provisions relating to specific groups.
- The research also showed some support for a flexible approach to targets for delivering affordable homes, and reports on calls for this to be limited to 25% of the total number of new homes. Some suggested that the particular difficulties in achieving this in some cities should be reflected in the policy.

Proposed key objective of NPF4: To maintain the existing policy support for affordable housing provision. There is a lack of evidence that the policy is failing to deliver affordable homes, taking into account accelerated delivery in recent years and the success of the More Homes approach.

Issues to consider:

- Is the existing policy fit for purpose?
- What evidence is there to show that changes are required?
- Should tenure be made a more explicit part of housing land allocations?
- What factors should be taken into account in setting the contribution to affordable housing as a percentage of total homes being delivered?
- Does the policy need to reflect different local circumstances?
- Given our housing policy commitments and projected population and household change, what further changes or additions are required to ensure planning does all it can to support the delivery of affordable housing?
- SPP recognises that rural exceptions policies can be used to support sites for affordable housing that would not normally be used for housing. What more can be done to recognise the transformational role of housing in relation to the wider rural economy and the need to deliver untapped housing demand?

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www.transformingplanning.scot

¹ [Adoption of Scottish planning policy in local development plans](#)



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