

## Housing Discussion

Options available to deliver Housing in Scotland have never been greater.

Through our More Homes Scotland approach, the Scottish Government have committed to investing over £3 billion to deliver at least 50,000 affordable homes over the lifetime of this Parliament, 35,000 of which will be for social rent. This is a huge opportunity to meet the housing needs of communities across Scotland, working in local areas and supporting the industry and local authorities to deliver their specific housing priorities with quality homes, in mixed communities, that fit local needs.

Recognising the specific needs of the communities that we work with, we continue to develop initiatives to help deliver our ambitions. Examples such as the Rural Housing Fund and Island Fund, where the Scottish Government has committed £30 million to give opportunities for Communities and Landowners to engage in delivering affordable housing. Or the self-build loan fund pilot run in the Highland Council area, which will be reviewed in 2018. These initiatives supplement traditional mechanism, such as the Croft house grant scheme to provide a range of housing options for our communities.

In addition we have acted on the challenge of infrastructure across Scotland, particularly in rural areas, with a housing infrastructure fund. We are working with local authorities to identify, as part of their Strategic Housing Investment Plan, the key priorities for consideration.

But this is only part of the process and we aim, through our planning review, to strengthen the role of the planning system and link development proposals with infrastructure investment. This will require stronger commitment from infrastructure providers and support by greater national and regional co-ordination to create a fairer and more transparent approach to funding infrastructure. Our consultation <https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/planning-architecture/a-consultation-on-the-future-of-planning/> will look at reforming planning and in particular speed up the process.

We recognise the challenge. All of this will be backed up through working together with the Joint Housing Policy Delivery Group and others, to evolve our approach as necessary and work with the industry to identify where Government support can help address those challenges.

The opportunity is currently there for rural housing – the discussion today should focus around :

- There is an unprecedented number of opportunities to deliver more housing in rural areas, what are the collective highlands and islands authorities doing to ensure they monopolise the opportunities available to them?