

# Its time

to build the  
social homes  
that Scotland  
needs.

**#BuildScotlandsFuture**

**No one should be on a waiting list for a roof over their head. No one should be denied the security of their own home, now or ever. No one should live day by day unsure of where they are sleeping at night or worrying about how they'll make their rent payments each month. When people suffer, Scotland suffers. Let's stand together and **Build Scotland's Future.****

**This guide is designed to support you and your community to organise and campaign for more social housing in Scotland. We believe campaigning is personal and you can organise your activities in any way you like. We will provide suggestions of how you can campaign in a safe way during the Covid-19 pandemic - you should consider all Government advice before planning your activities. Your local Community Organiser is always on hand to help with advice, guidance, resources and more. For Glasgow, you can get in touch with [meghan\\_oneill@shelter.org.uk](mailto:meghan_oneill@shelter.org.uk). For Edinburgh, you can contact [Maddie\\_barink@shelter.org.uk](mailto:Maddie_barink@shelter.org.uk)**

## **What is social housing?**

The Scottish Government defines social housing as:

**‘Housing owned and managed by public authorities (mainly councils) housing associations, and registered social landlords (RSL)’**

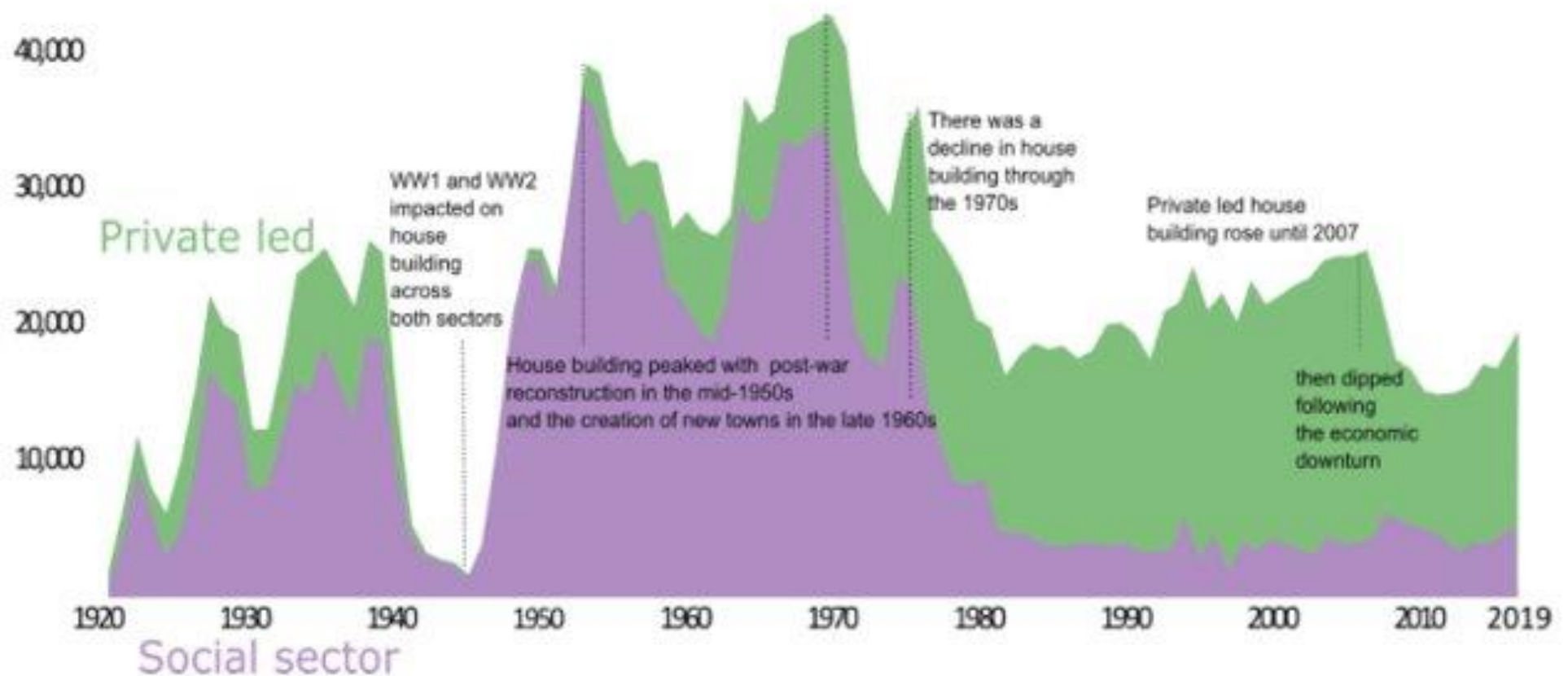
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## Social housing: a brief history

- 🏠 **1919:** the 'Addison Act' was passed in parliament, paving the way for 500,000 new social rented homes to be built. It is credited with establishing the principle of large – scale, state – funded social rented homes.
- 🏠 **1970's:** social housing reached its height after the post war efforts to rebuild what was lost. Post WW2, the phrase of 'homes fit for heroes' was coined – there were efforts to build good quality housing and provide a higher standard of living in Britain. Scotland had the highest proportion of social housing in Europe.
- 🏠 **1980:** The 'Right to Buy' was passed, giving people living in social rented homes the chance to buy and own their home. Although in principle this was an empowering step forward, in practice it led to the decimation of social housing as there was not enough investment put back into building more social homes. In Scotland, since 1980, more than 500,000 social rented homes have been lost.
- 🏠 **1999:** The Scottish Parliament is formed, and housing becomes a devolved power.
- 🏠 **2015:** Shelter Scotland publishes the 'Affordable Housing Need in Scotland' report calling for the next (now current) Scottish Parliament to commit to building 60,000 new affordable homes (12,000 new homes per year of parliament).
- 🏠 **2016:** The current Scottish Government is formed and pledges to deliver 50,000 new affordable homes, 35,000 of which are for social rent over 5 years. Although this was 10,000 fewer than the recommendation, it was a significant increase from the previous five years which saw the Government commit to delivering 30,000 homes.
- 🏠 **2016:** Right to Buy is abolished in Scotland.
- 🏠 **2018:** a new report by Shelter Scotland, Scottish Federation of Housing Associations and the Equality And Human Rights Commission estimates that between 45,387 and 49,773 affordable homes are likely to be delivered in the current parliamentary term, 34,850 of which will be affordable homes.
- 🏠 **2020:** Coronavirus pandemic means that having a safe place to stay home has never been more important.
- 🏠 **2020:** Shelter Scotland releases new 'Affordable Housing Need in Scotland' report calling for the next Scottish Parliament to commit to building 53,000 new affordable homes, 37,100 should be social rented homes. This is an increase of just 1 new home per day above what the current target is.

## A change in social housing over time



You can see a clear decline in social housing over the years. Scotland may have some of the most progressive housing laws in the world, but there is still much more to be done.

# Key Facts and issues around social housing

## Long waiting lists

There were 131,900 households on local authority housing waiting lists across Scotland, and a further 25,000 on transfer lists as of March 2018

## Homelessness has been rising since 2010

In 2018- 2019, a household became homeless every 18 minutes. In the same year over 14,000 children. This equates to 38 children becoming homeless every day

## Too many households in temporary accommodation

On 30 September 2019 there were 11,432 households and 7,252 dependent children in temporary accommodation.

The average time spent by households in temporary accommodation in 2018-19 was 6 months.

## A rise in people living in private rented homes

A Scottish Household Survey revealed that 15% of households now live in the private rented sector. This has more than doubled in just the last ten years.

## Welfare cuts

Cuts to the Local Housing Allowance has meant a growing gap between private rent levels and what can actually be covered by the allowance.

## Poor housing conditions

Scottish House Conditions survey revealed that:

1 in ten households in Scotland are affected by damp or condensation

619,000 households live in fuel poverty

And

53,000 households are overcrowded in Scotland. For context, this represents 2% of all households in Scotland.

**There is a clear need for genuinely affordable, housing that meets high quality building standards**

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## Andrew's story

**Andrew (38) from Edinburgh has been fighting against Scotland's housing emergency for almost a decade. He's currently living in a private let with his fiancée but he's behind with his rent due to the impact of coronavirus on his work and they are worried that they may lose their home. He's been bidding on social properties in the city for nine years with no success.**

"I've been through homelessness before almost 10 years ago and it was horrendous. A previous relationship ended quite amicably. I decided I would take the responsibility of moving out and left my ex-wife with our social tenancy in 2011. . .

The first night I was left roaming the streets with everything I owned in a courier bag and two black bin liners. No one told me where to go that night so I ended up sleeping on a bench in the meadows. It was gut-wrenching. Absolutely soul-destroying.

"When I went to the council they sat me in a little room and said we'll assess your 'claim' for homelessness. I was sat there with an eviction notice and nowhere to go and they told me that I had made myself intentionally homeless so the best they could do for me was 60 days in a hostel.

"The hostel had a curfew and I had to be in from 10pm at night to 8am the next day but I had taken on another job with a furniture factory and they had me starting early. **One day the work van**

**broke down on the road back from a job in Dundee and by the time I got to the hostel at 10:45pm they'd packed all my belongings into black bags and that was me out that night back to the bench in the Meadows. It was brutal. I was working two jobs but they didn't care."**

"The council put me on Edindex and I've been bidding regularly ever since. By now I'll have made hundreds of bids and I take care to go for properties I think other people won't want but I've not come close to an offer of a tenancy.

"I met my fiancée six years ago and we managed to get the deposit together for this place and now we're struggling again due to coronavirus. We're behind two months rent. I've had enough of zero hours contracts. That's all I've had for ten years and it's been killing me. There's no security. It's no way to live."

**"If we could get into a social rented house, god, it would just mean security, that's the word – security. We've been in this private rental five years and the landlords have been great but social rented accommodation feels like your own place in the way a private let never would. In a private let you always feel like the landlord can just snap their fingers and change your life completely by making you move. It would be more affordable too."**

**Andrews' story is just one of thousands of people whose lives would be positively impacted by having access to a social rented home.**

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# Build Scotland's Future campaign overview

## What is the campaign?

Build Scotland's Future will be a year long campaign that is focussing on getting the next parliament to commit to building more social homes in Scotland

## What is the commitment to social housing we want?

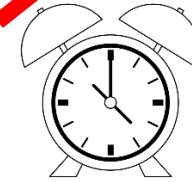
As outlined in the history of social housing, this year Shelter Scotland released a new affordable housing report. In this report, we have established that the next Government will need to commit to building **at least 37,100** new social rented homes.

## How do we get this commitment?

We want all political parties in Scotland to commit to this target in their election manifestos.

## What is a manifesto?

A manifesto is a publication that will be issued by a political party before an election. It will outline a set of policies and principles that a party will commit to. Manifestos will be published before a UK general election and the Scottish Government elections.



## **It's time to build the social homes that Scotland needs**

The Scottish Government must commit to building at least 37,100 homes in the next parliament to help to protect people from homelessness, provide hope for people struggling to get by, to secure jobs and reinvigorate our communities across the country.

We're not just talking about bricks and mortar, we're talking about security. We're building safety. We're building stability. We're building a brighter future for our people.

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# Get organised! Your very own action pack

We have created a Housing Rights Defenders Action pack to help you get organised around social housing and campaign for a safe place to call home. You can organise a pack to be posted to you simply by getting in touch with your local Community Organiser. Your pack will include:



**Posters** We will have two sets of posters you can use! One will have a message supporting the building of more social housing. One will have blank space for you to write your own message of support. Stick them up in your windows, ask friends and family to do the same, hand them in to local businesses and more!



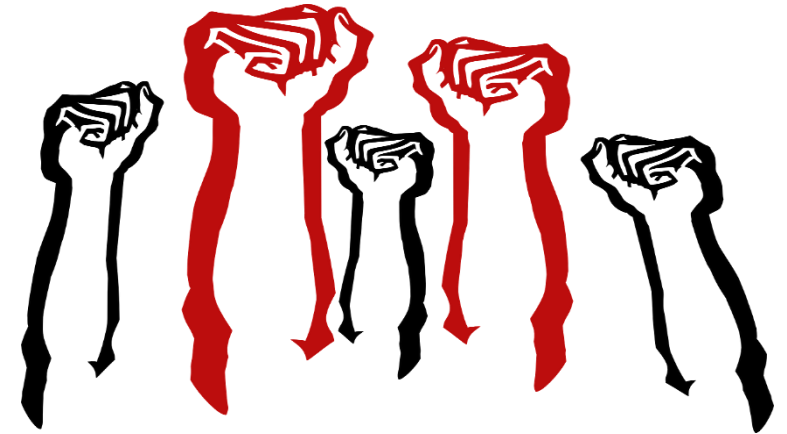
**Template letter** Want to write to your MSP, but don't know where to start? We have a template letter that you can use to send an email or letter to your MSP calling for more social housing.



**Letter writing guide** Want to write your own letter from the heart to your MSP? We have a guide packed full of useful tips to help you write an influential letter to your MSPs.



**Postcards** We have created postcards for you to use to send shorter messages to your MSPs. Send just your own messages, ask friends and family to fill out postcards, or encourage others in your area to get involved! The more people standing together, the more collective power we have!



Visit [scotland.shelter.org.uk/get\\_involved/community\\_organising/resources](https://scotland.shelter.org.uk/get_involved/community_organising/resources) for more resources to help you fight for a Scotland where everyone has a safe place to call home!

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# Get organised! campaigning suggestions

We believe campaigning is personal – that means there is no right or wrong way to get organised and create change! It's entirely up to you how you would like to campaign. Below are just a few suggestions of ways you might like to take action.

## Get social

You can Tweet your MSPs asking for them to publicly support the campaign. You can share posts online, start your own local HRD Facebook group and more! Use our guide on 'using social media to influence change' for hints and tips, which can be found on our resource page or your local HRD Facebook group. Be sure to use **#BuildScotlandsFuture** for any of your social media posts!

## Hold group meetings

Just because you can't meet in person doesn't mean you can't meet at all. Why not hold a regular meeting and invite people to join from your local area? It's a good way for you to share important

updates, but also a chance for you to share your passion for social housing, get others involved, plan for online activities and generally have some contact. There are plenty of ways to hold virtual meetings - check out the 'safe campaigning activities' guide for some useful links or get in touch with your local Community Organiser for support.

## Write to your MSP

You can use our template letter to send a message to your MSP asking them to support the campaign, or you can use our 'how to write an influential letter' guide to write your own letter from the heart.

## Start your own petition

You might want to start your own petition, outlining to your MSP why you, and the people who are signing the petition want to see more social rented homes in Scotland. It's a great way to get others involved and shows decision makers how many people care about the issue! Check out our 'campaigning safely during coronavirus' guide for hints and tips on how to start your own petition.

**And finally... be sure to get your action pack sent to you packed with fun resources to help you get organised!**

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