



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee

Paul McLennan MSP
Minister for Housing
Scottish Government

20 January 2025

Dear Paul

Housing Inquiry

Thank you for attending the Committee's meeting on the 14 January to provide evidence on the Scottish Government's response to the national housing emergency and on the budget. I am writing to follow up on some of the points which were raised during the session.

There were a number of items on which you noted your intention to come back to the Committee with further information, and I look forward to receiving that in due course:

- Details of the development of key performance indicators for monitoring progress in tackling the housing emergency, including indicators for consideration and the timescales for implementation of the indicators and what reporting will take place on the results of monitoring the indicators;
- What discussions are underway within the Scottish Government on innovative methods of building at scale in rural areas.
- The results of ongoing monitoring of local connections. The Committee is particularly interested in the causes of homelessness reduction in some local authorities and whether a factor could be that people are moving areas and presenting as homeless in urban authorities.
- Whether there is data available on the numbers of empty properties which are situated above commercial premises.
- What work is underway to explore the opportunities presented by carbon sequestration in new-builds through using Scottish timber, which companies might invest in, in order to offset their scope 3 emissions.

I also note there are a number of reports which will be published during 2025, and I would be grateful if you could keep us updated about those:

- Report on the definition of 'affordable housing'
- Housing Investments Taskforce report
- Review of Affordable Housing Supply Programme.

Similarly, you referred to there being ongoing discussions about how the Affordable Housing Supply Programme budget for 2025-2026 will be used, and I would be grateful if you could keep the Committee updated.

I note also your commitment to engaging with Argyll and Bute Council about the issues they raised with the Committee on the need for increased flexibility in the Affordable Housing Supply Programme budget.

You also committed to sharing details of the Housing to 2040 Board, including Membership, and took on board the suggestion I made to ensure that membership includes representatives of community-led housing associations and housing cooperatives.

Finally, the Committee would welcome an update on what progress has been made in establishing how progress towards delivery of Housing to 2040 will be measured. During the course of our inquiry into housing we have heard from stakeholders how the Housing to 2040 strategy provides a long-term vision but lacks deliverability.

On behalf of the Committee, I request a response by 20 February and I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Ariane Burgess
Convener, Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee

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