

THE MORE HOMES SCOTLAND APPROACH

Update on progress to end October 2016

More investment for more housing

More affordable homes

- Official statistics published on 13 September show that during 2015-16, the number of new house builds started, across the public and private sector, rose to 16,910, a 4% increase on the previous year and the highest number of starts since 2008-9.
- The number of affordable homes approved over the year to the end of June 2016 has increased by 26% on the previous year, bringing the total number of approvals over the year to 8,067.
- Updated Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) guidance was issued to local authorities in July, covering five-year plans for housing and infrastructure. The SHIPs are due to be submitted to the Scottish Government by 30 November 2016.
- The Minister for Local Government and Housing visited Shrubhill on 13 September to officially mark the start of work on site - this development demonstrates the National Housing Trust (NHT) approach (150 NHT units) and how this can unlock wider market development (with a total of 374 homes at Shrubhill).
- A number of bids have been received for the Mid Market Rent invitation and they are currently being assessed.

More private rented sector (PRS) homes

- The PRS Champion post has been extended until 2017. The PRS Conference on 6 October went well with recognition from the sector of good engagement with the Scottish Government on PRS proposals and a strong level of interest in the Rental Income Guarantee Scheme (RIGS).
- An updated flyer was published at the PRS Conference to set out the key reasons and opportunities for investment in Scotland and work on research for the demand for PRS housing has been completed (through the PRS Working Party).

Supporting home ownership

- OMSE sales are progressing well.
- There is continuing strong demand for the Help to Buy scheme.
- There are signs of improvement in the mortgage market, with lenders increasing Loan to Value ratio for new-build lending to 85% (up from 80%).

Supporting infrastructure, land and housing delivery

- The guidance note on the Housing Infrastructure Fund was published on 30 June; 27 local authorities have submitted sites which have been RAG rated. The Scottish Government is working with local authorities to prioritise “green” sites and the first invitation to apply has issued. The Scottish Government continues to raise the profile of the Fund and would like to see more non-public sector sites coming forward through SHIPs.

- The Scottish Government has increased collaboration with Scottish Water on housing with a quarterly officials subgroup, shared information on key sites and held a Ministerial discussion with the CEO in September which outlined SW's organisational restructuring to help focus on housing target delivery.

More effective planning, place-making and design

- An independent panel produced a comprehensive and evidence-based package of 48 recommendations, detailing how the planning system can be improved. Their report was [published](#) on 31 May 2016.
- Scottish Ministers published their [response](#) to the report of the independent panel on 11 July 2016 with a commitment to produce a White Paper by the end of the year.
- More than 100 people participated in six working groups: the first meeting of these groups took place on 12/13 September 2016 and worked well in bringing together feedback, options and ideas for the White Paper. The Scottish Government has published the initial outputs from the working groups [online](#) and further meetings are now being held.
- Invitations to participate in Simplified Planning Zone Pilots are now on the Scottish Government's [website](#). The closing date is 11 November.

Providing expert advice

- A range of options are in development, including collaboration with Planning on support for skills and capacity in local authorities. This will be delivered through the Planning Review, and through on-going engagement with local authority leaders.

Working together

- There is a growing understanding across the sector of the need for increased momentum and urgency to increase the rate of affordable housing approvals in the first three years of the five year period – particularly on social rent, the most challenging part of the overall target.
- The RSL procurement capability assessment pilot has been completed and we are looking to discuss roll-out options with the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations and Glasgow and West of Scotland Forum of Housing Associations.
- Regular quarterly bilaterals between the Minister for Local Government and Housing and COSLA's Spokesperson for Community Well-being are now in place.
- The Scottish Government is working in a range of ways to engage local authority leaders further in the delivery of affordable homes across Scotland. The next scheduled event will be attendance by the Minister for Local Government and Housing at the COSLA Housing Conveners meeting on 13 December.

More Homes Division - 31 October 2016