

**MINISTERIAL ENGAGEMENT BRIEFING:
TOM ARTHUR, MINISTER FOR PUBLIC FINANCE, PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY WEALTH
Briefing for Homes for Scotland Online Conference**

What	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homes for Scotland (HfS) 2021 Online Conference - 'The Challenges of Change' • Key note address to session 1 – A Changing Planning System • Category – Conference for key stakeholders
Where	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EventsAir platform • Conference provider – Conference Care
When	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wednesday 15 September • Minister: 09.40 – 10.00 • Morning session will run from 09.30 – 11.30 • The event has been organised to coincide with Scottish Housing Day
Key Message(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want to see more quality homes being provided in quality places to meet the needs of the people of Scotland. • Challenges of current policy, climate change, covid recovery and sustainable economic growth reinforce the need to do things differently. • We want to work positively with the industry on how we achieve change – this can be done through future opportunities for discussion as we consult on NPF4
Who	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair of the planning session is Tammy Swift-Adams, Director of Planning at HfS • Other speakers to follow the Minister: Robin Holder (Holder Planning), Richard Holland (Taylor Wimpey) and Pam Ewen (Fife Council).
Why	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To speak directly to the house building industry • To trail refocused national policy on planning for housing in advance of the publication Draft NPF4.
Expected outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building relationships with the industry • Industry awareness of direction of policy change in NPF4
Speech details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 minute speech and 10 minute Q&A. • Audience: Approx. 75 attendees are expected – all from HfS member companies comprising home builders, land promoters and associated industry, including consultancy, legal and finance.
Supporting official	Fiona Simpson, Interim Chief Planner / [redacted] Carrie Thomson, Principal Planner / [redacted]

**MINISTERIAL ENGAGEMENT BRIEFING:
TOM ARTHUR, MINISTER FOR PUBLIC FINANCE, PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY WEALTH
Briefing for Homes for Scotland Online Conference**

<i>Briefing contents</i>	<p>Annex A: Event Programme Annex B: Attendees Annex C: Contextual Background Annex D: Speaking Note provided separately</p> <p>Annex E: Programme for Government & Planning Annex F: National Planning Framework Annex G: Planning Performance & Fees Annex H: Housing to 2040 Annex I: End of First Home Fund and Help to Buy Annex J: Q&A</p>
<i>Media Handling</i>	N/A
<i>Social Media</i>	Some great discussion with @H_F_S members at the Planning session of their annual conference exploring ‘the challenges of change’. I look forward to continuing the conversation when we publish Draft NPF4 this autumn.

**MINISTERIAL ENGAGEMENT BRIEFING:
TOM ARTHUR, MINISTER FOR PUBLIC FINANCE, PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY WEALTH
Briefing for Homes for Scotland Online Conference**

Annex A – Event Programme

Session 1 – A Changing Planning System: 9.30-11.30		
Chair: Tammy Swift-Adams, HFS Director of Planning		
9.30 (10 minutes)	Tammy Swift-Adams Director of Planning Homes for Scotland	Chair's opening remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting the scene • Progress to date • Key challenges
9.40 (20 min: 10 min + 10 min Q&A)	Tom Arthur MSP Minister for Public Finance, Planning and Community Wealth	NPF4 and Wider Reform: Opportunities for Home Builders. What the Scottish Government wants to achieve for and through home building – how NPF4 and wider reform will open up better opportunities for home building to be supported through the planning system, and what the industry should expect to need to do a bit differently to be able to take advantage of those opportunities.
10.00 (15 minutes)	[redacted]	[redacted]
10.15 (15 minutes)	[redacted]	[redacted]
10.30 (15 minutes)	[redacted]	[redacted]
10.45 (10 minutes)	Comfort break	
10.55 (30 minutes)	Panel Debate /Q&A	
11.25 (5 minutes)	Tammy Swift-Adams Director of Planning, Homes for Scotland	Chair's closing remarks
11.30	Session close	

**MINISTERIAL ENGAGEMENT BRIEFING:
TOM ARTHUR, MINISTER FOR PUBLIC FINANCE, PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY WEALTH
Briefing for Homes for Scotland Online Conference**

Annex B – Attendance

[redacted]

**MINISTERIAL ENGAGEMENT BRIEFING:
TOM ARTHUR, MINISTER FOR PUBLIC FINANCE, PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY WEALTH
Briefing for Homes for Scotland Online Conference**

[redacted]

**MINISTERIAL ENGAGEMENT BRIEFING:
TOM ARTHUR, MINISTER FOR PUBLIC FINANCE, PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY WEALTH
Briefing for Homes for Scotland Online Conference**

Annex C – Contextual Background

- The conference is timed to coincide with Scottish Housing Day – 15 September
- The Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government, Ms Robison, is also taking part in events as part of Scottish Housing Day:
 - Scottish Housing Network event to speak about housing and the climate emergency, covering priorities for the sector to meet net zero targets.
 - Chartered Institute of Housing event to provide an overview of Scot.Govt. plans to reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2045.
- There were 17,029 new build homes completed across all sectors in Scotland in the year to end June 2020, a decrease of 21% (4,439 homes) on the previous year
- Activity levels were affected by the introduction of COVID-19 lockdown measures from mid-March to late June 2020.
- Decreases were seen across private-led completions (23% or 3,725 homes), housing association completions (8% or 340 homes) and local authority completions (26% or 374 homes).
[housing-statistics-scotland-quarterly-update-new-housebuilding-affordable-housing-supply-published-15-june-2021.pdf](#)
- Guidance from the Scottish Government in May 2020 encouraged planning authorities to allow construction operations to be carried out beyond conditioned hours once it recommenced, to allow safe operation while distancing and to spread working patterns across the day.
- Correspondence from HfS indicates the economic benefits arising from homebuilding are as follows. The figures are based on research undertaken by HfS by Lichfields in 2015.

	Per Home	Achieved in 2019
Jobs	4	89,472
GVA	£205,000	£4.6bn
Local Spend Year 1	£5000	£111m
Council Tax	£990	£22m
Section 75 contributions	£5,378	£120m

- Recent research on Section 75 contributions on behalf of PAD suggests figures for 2019-20 are substantially higher - approx. £500m gross / £30,000 per new home.

**MINISTERIAL ENGAGEMENT BRIEFING:
TOM ARTHUR, MINISTER FOR PUBLIC FINANCE, PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY WEALTH
Briefing for Homes for Scotland Online Conference**

Annex D – Speaking Note

Provided under separate cover

**MINISTERIAL ENGAGEMENT BRIEFING:
TOM ARTHUR, MINISTER FOR PUBLIC FINANCE, PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY WEALTH
Briefing for Homes for Scotland Online Conference**

Annex E – Programme for Government (PfG) & Planning

The Scottish Government's Programme for Government 2021-22 was published on 7 September. The core priorities include leading Scotland safely out of the pandemic, urgently confronting climate change and driving a green, fair economic recovery, along with plans to help secure a just transition to net zero.

The programme sets out actions that we will take over the next twelve months and also across the next five years of Parliament. It contains some specific commitments that will be of particular interest to planning professionals, including those relating to:

- Extensive public consultation and parliamentary scrutiny on National Planning Framework 4
- Delivering an effective, fair mechanism for capturing a share of the increase in land value
- Reforming and modernising the compulsory purchase system
- Defining 20 Minute Neighbourhoods and supporting the roll-out of the Place Based Investment programme
- Introducing a new 'Our Place' website containing information, tools and resources to help support the development of places and services that improve our health, prosperity, and quality of life, and protect our environment
- Beginning delivery of the 5 year £35 million digital transformation of planning, starting with digital engagement and improving online application processes.

**MINISTERIAL ENGAGEMENT BRIEFING:
TOM ARTHUR, MINISTER FOR PUBLIC FINANCE, PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY WEALTH
Briefing for Homes for Scotland Online Conference**

Annex F: National Planning Framework

Lines

- NPF4 will be a long term spatial plan that aims to set out where development and infrastructure is needed to support sustainable and inclusive growth.
- NPF4 will guide spatial development, set out our national planning policies, designate national developments and highlight regional spatial priorities.
- NPF4 will set targets for land for housing and update our housing policy.
- NPF4 will need to address a very different set of circumstances to NPF3.
- NPF4 will focus on 4 key themes – net zero emissions; resilient communities; wellbeing economy; and better, greener places.
- NPF4 will prioritise the types and locations of development that will help meet our emissions reduction targets; plan our future places in a way that reduces the need to travel and builds in natural solutions; support a sustainable and green economic recovery helping us to recover from the impacts of covid-19; and will explain how we expect the principles of 20 minute neighbourhoods and local living to work in different parts of the country.
- We will lay a draft NPF4 in the Scottish Parliament later this Autumn.
- A public consultation will run alongside Parliaments scrutiny of NPF4.
- A final NPF4 will be approved by Parliament before it is adopted by Scottish Ministers (expected summer 2022)

Background

In November 2020, we published, and consulted on, a Position Statement setting out the direction of travel for NPF4. The Position Statement committed that we will align with Housing 2040 and set out a long term view of the homes required to meet our future needs. It stated that we will focus on the location, quality and type of homes needed for people of all ages, reflecting long term population and household trends.

The 2019 act requires NPF4 to meet a set out high level outcomes including meeting the needs of people living in Scotland and in particular the housing needs for older people and disabled people.

Infrastructure

- Scottish Ministers fully recognise the importance of infrastructure provision to support communities and the creation of quality places;
- Mitigating the impact of new development on its surrounds and local community is a key factor in the planning decision making process;

**MINISTERIAL ENGAGEMENT BRIEFING:
TOM ARTHUR, MINISTER FOR PUBLIC FINANCE, PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY WEALTH**

Briefing for Homes for Scotland Online Conference

- Scottish Planning Policy makes clear that when identifying locations for new development, planning authorities must take account of infrastructure requirements;
- Through the Scottish Government's review of the planning system, the infrastructure first approach to planning and development was identified as a priority and is now being embedded in the new system;
- The infrastructure first approach recognises the importance of aligning development and infrastructure provision, which includes identifying infrastructure capacity, need and what is required to support its delivery;

**MINISTERIAL ENGAGEMENT BRIEFING:
TOM ARTHUR, MINISTER FOR PUBLIC FINANCE, PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY WEALTH
Briefing for Homes for Scotland Online Conference**

Annex G: Planning Performance & Fees

Lines

- The performance of the system remains a key priority in our reforms. The performance of the system is not the sole responsibility of Planning Authorities and all players must play their part in ensuring that the system can function effectively and efficiently.
- Scottish Ministers remain committed to the principle that any increases to planning fees must be linked to improved performance.
- Consultation in 2019 sought views of stakeholders on a new approach to monitoring performance, the role of the National Planning Improvement Coordinator and revised planning fee regime.
- Implementation of these provisions and some other aspects of the Act were paused due to the Covid-19 pandemic however, given their importance, work has recently recommenced and the High Level Group on Planning Performance met yesterday to discuss some of these issues and how we could include the users of the system in the group going forward.
- We are committed to continuing dialogue with stakeholders as we take our proposals forward.

Background

In 2019 we published a consultation which looked at reviewing the Planning Performance and Fee Regimes and implementing the provisions of the Planning Act relating to the monitoring and improvement of planning authority performance, to improve the quality of both planning services and outcomes for communities. These include a new statutory performance reporting requirement and provisions enabling the Scottish Ministers to appoint a National Planning Improvement Coordinator to work with planning authorities and others involved in planning.

Research conducted by the RTPi indicates that:

- 25% (40.8% in real terms) decrease in planning budgets between 2009/2010 and 2016/2017
- 25.7% staffing cuts in planning departments
- Average spend on development planning and development management is 0.38% of local authority budgets

**MINISTERIAL ENGAGEMENT BRIEFING:
TOM ARTHUR, MINISTER FOR PUBLIC FINANCE, PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY WEALTH
Briefing for Homes for Scotland Online Conference**

Heads of Planning Scotland (HoPS) research into costing the planning service in Scotland showed that in relation to fee income that the fees collected do not meet the costs of delivering the core application processing costs (65.6%)

HoPS research into the impact in the first 12 months of the increase of the maximum planning fee to £125,000 in 2017 showed that:

- £4,218,242 additional fee income was generated across Scotland
- Additional income varied from £500,000 to £0 across the country.
- 10 councils reinvested uplift income totalling £1,412,018. (33% of overall uplift)

HfS response to Consultation – Key Points

“Homes for Scotland supports the principal of increasing resources for planning resources, but we can only give outright support to higher fees if the specific proposals are clearly justified and where there is a clear path in place to achieve demonstrable and corresponding service improvements for applicants.

From their members’ perspective: ‘As the industry paying probably more than any other in planning fees, the following pre-requisites would be a fair means of balancing the needs of planning authorities against the needs of home builders:

- Homes for Scotland to attend High Level Group on Planning Performance
- Local commitments to investing fee income in development management
- No fee changes until National Planning Improvement Coordinator is in post
- Further technical consultation on the detail of final fee proposals
- No further fee increases until post 2025

**MINISTERIAL ENGAGEMENT BRIEFING:
TOM ARTHUR, MINISTER FOR PUBLIC FINANCE, PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY WEALTH
Briefing for Homes for Scotland Online Conference**

Annex H: Housing to 2040

Lines

- We are working across Government to ensure Housing to 2040 continues to keep strategic alignment with other key areas of policy such as planning reform.
- We cannot deliver the ambitions in Housing to 2040 alone and will work with local authorities, housing providers, landlords and the construction and house building sector to achieve them.
- We have set an ambition to deliver a further 100,000 affordable homes by 2032, with at least 70% of these for social rent, once the current 50,000 affordable homes target has been delivered. This long term ambition is unprecedented and underlines our commitment to delivering more affordable homes.
- The Shared Policy Programme with the Scottish Green Party builds on this to deliver 110,000 affordable homes by 2032 of which at least 70% will be available for social rent and 10% will be in our remote, rural and island communities.
- The financial implications of agreed Housing to 2040 commitments and the shared Scottish Government/Scottish Green Party Policy Programme will be settled as part of the Budget-setting process.
- The pandemic has highlighted the importance of home, and the need for homes and the spaces around them to support people to live well. That is why we are committed to expanding our social and affordable housing stock. And it is why we are taking steps to further improve the quality of homes delivered through our investment in affordable housing.

Background

In March, Scotland's first ever long-term national housing strategy was published with a vision for what we want homes and communities to look and feel like for the people of Scotland. It sets out the Scottish Government's aim for everyone to have a safe, high quality home that is affordable and meets their needs in the place they want to be. It is the culmination of extensive engagement with the housing sector, wider stakeholders and the public.

Housing to 2040 recognises the vital role that housing plays in meeting other objectives for people in Scotland, such as tackling poverty and inequality, creating and supporting jobs, stemming depopulation, ensuring we meet our energy efficiency and fuel poverty targets and tackle the climate emergency, and making sure we have connected, cohesive communities to live in.

**MINISTERIAL ENGAGEMENT BRIEFING:
TOM ARTHUR, MINISTER FOR PUBLIC FINANCE, PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY WEALTH
Briefing for Homes for Scotland Online Conference**

Housing plays an important part in economic growth, and investing in housing means investment in construction, bringing money into our economy and supporting jobs. Housing to 2040 sets out a 20-year plan to deliver good quality, energy efficient, zero emission homes with access to outdoor space, transport links, digital connectivity and community services.

Housing to 2040 puts our ambitions for Place at its core, creating not only quality homes but quality places too. We want our homes to be located in quality places where people want to live and work. It will be up to all of us not just the Scottish Government or public sector, to play a role in that delivery – the private sector, including housing and infrastructure providers will be critical to achieving that.

Affordable Warmth and Zero Emissions Homes in Housing to 2040

- Our aim is to ensure that all new homes achieve zero emissions. This will avoid expensive future retrofit and speed up our carbon reduction efforts.
- We will aim for all new homes delivered by Registered Social Landlords and local authorities to be zero emissions homes by 2026 and are already working with stakeholders to develop a strategy to deliver this – the Zero Emissions New Build Affordable Homes Strategy. This will help to drive greater use of offsite construction and embed a new business model for affordable home delivery.
- We are also looking at the various supply chains to consider how more use can be made of Scottish suppliers (such as timber) and those that are based on natural and ethically produced products. This will make supply chains more resilient and improve the efficiency of the design and construction processes.
- Our aim is that existing homes are adapted and retrofitted to improve their energy efficiency and decarbonise their heating, ending their contribution to climate change. Housing to 2040 will therefore work alongside the draft Heat in Buildings Strategy.
- It is our aim to maximise housing's contribution to Scotland's green recovery.
- We estimate that the total investment in buildings that will be required to align with our net zero targets will be in the region of £33 billion.
- The scale of this investment presents a very significant opportunity to boost local economies and create good, green jobs and will involve a significant ramp up of the capability and capacity of supply chains in Scotland.

**MINISTERIAL ENGAGEMENT BRIEFING:
TOM ARTHUR, MINISTER FOR PUBLIC FINANCE, PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY WEALTH
Briefing for Homes for Scotland Online Conference**

Annex I: End of First Home Fund and Help to Buy

This announcement is to be made Friday 10 September.

Lines

- As we set out in our Housing to 2040 strategy and in line with our Net Zero targets, we are shifting our focus to helping people renovate, adapt or improve the energy efficiency of their homes. As such we will not be re-opening the First Home Fund pilot or Help to Buy schemes. Together these schemes have helped more than 27,000 households to buy a home.
- The schemes were set up to support buyers at times when mortgage lenders were less likely to lend to those with a smaller deposit – Help to Buy in particular aimed to support the housebuilding sector and buyers after the financial crash in 2008. However, the steady recovery in the higher loan-to-value mortgage market and the strong housebuilding sector mean that the time is now right for the Scottish Government to step back.
- Our [LIFT](#) scheme will continue to help people on low to moderate incomes to buy their first home. And our first-time buyer relief for Land and Buildings Transaction Tax means that an estimated eight out of ten first-time buyers will pay no tax at all.”

Background

Homes for Scotland, in their [2021 manifesto](#), called for the continuation of the First Home Fund and Help to Buy schemes to support home ownership aspirations.

Officials will call Homes for Scotland and UK Finance on the morning of the announcement to give advance notice of the decision and explain reasoning.

The main Help to Buy scheme and the First Home Fund closed earlier this year. The Help to Buy Smaller Developers Scheme remains open for applications this financial year but will not continue in 2022-23. The Low-cost Initiative for First Time Buyers (LIFT) scheme will continue in 2022-23. [Homeowners: Low-cost Initiative for First Time Buyers \(LIFT\) - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

Help to Buy and First Home Fund applications approved for completion in 2021-22 will continue to be funded.

The future of the Energy Efficiency Equity Loan Pilot, which is helping existing home owners to make energy efficiency improvements and repairs to their property, is being explored as part of a [call for evidence](#)

**MINISTERIAL ENGAGEMENT BRIEFING:
TOM ARTHUR, MINISTER FOR PUBLIC FINANCE, PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY WEALTH
Briefing for Homes for Scotland Online Conference**

The Help to Buy Scheme and First Home Fund are funded using the allocation of Financial Transactions received from HM Treasury and the funding available to the Scottish Government has been reduced considerably and has resulted in some difficult choices about future allocations.

The rationale for establishing these schemes was to address a financial market failure by bridging the gap between buyer deposits and the reduced availability of high LTV mortgages. However, there has been a steady recovery in high LTV mortgages. Although this was temporarily interrupted by the impact of Covid-19 in 2020, there has been a strong rebound since. The most recent UK Finance data shows that the number of new mortgages to first-time buyers in Scotland increased by an annual 27% in the first three months 2021.

Our [LIFT](#) scheme will continue to help first-time buyers on low to moderate incomes access home ownership and our first-time buyer relief for Land and Buildings Transaction Tax means that an estimated eight out of 10 first-time buyers will continue to pay no tax at all.

As signalled in Housing to 2040, we want to shift the focus of our support to helping people to renovate, adapt or improve the energy efficiency of their homes. One part of this is considering the future of the Energy Efficiency Equity Loan Pilot which is being explored as part of the current [call for evidence](#)

Since 2007 our range of shared equity schemes have assisted around 47,000 households to buy a home with funding in excess of £1.5 billion over this period.

In early 2021 the CEO of Springfield Properties declared that the housebuilding sector no longer needed Government support. Innes Smith, chief executive of Springfield, told the Herald that the record profits being made by housebuilders showed that the industry did not need help at state-level to boost sales. He argued support should be given to sectors which are more in need.

LIFT (OMSE and NSSE) is more effectively targeted at households on lower incomes on the margins of accessing home ownership, as shown both by the fact that average household earnings in OMSE (£26,200 in 2019-20) were more than a third lower than in the FHF and HTB, and also by the fact that average purchase prices (£136,000 in 2020-21) were significantly lower than in the FHF (£155,000 in 2020-21) and HTB (£179,000 in 2020-21) OMSE has also been used to a greater extent by households previously in the social rented sector (24%), as compared to 6% for HTB and 11% for the FHF.

**MINISTERIAL ENGAGEMENT BRIEFING:
TOM ARTHUR, MINISTER FOR PUBLIC FINANCE, PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY WEALTH**
Briefing for Homes for Scotland Online Conference

Annex J: Q&A

Q When will Draft NPF be published?

A We will lay a draft in the Parliament for scrutiny later this autumn and consult publicly at the same time. We will publish a programme for engagement soon and hope that you will all participate constructively in the consultation.

Q Why does the policy need to change?

A Housing is one of the most contested areas of the planning system.

The current policy is not easy for everyone to understand, it results in lengthy debates about numbers and sets the system up for conflict.

This means the focus has been taken away from where it's really needed – on the quality of development and actual delivery.

We want to change that to have a more positive approach

The changes takes forward the recommendations of the independent panel who called for the NPF to bridge the gap between planning and delivery. It also delivers on the new requirements of the Planning Act.

Q What will Draft NPF say on planning policy for housing?

A As we outlined in the Position Statement, Draft NPF will refocus housing policy on quality and place...

- It will replace the current focus on maintaining a 5 year supply of effective housing land
- It will promote a pipeline of deliverable housing land into the long term
- It will look to incentivise delivery by releasing more land from the longer term supply once building begins on sites with planning permission
- It will support homes and services being bought together
- It will help to diversity delivery and reflect future needs of communities

Please do consider the detail of this in the draft that we publish and let us know your views.

Q How will NPF ensure delivery without 5 year effective land supply?

Q How will NPF ensure a pipeline of housing land?

A NPF will work with the Local Development Plan over a longer 10 year time frame. There will need to be better collaboration of information locally as plans are prepared and once they are in place. This will be supported through changes to the development plan system and through more consistent approaches to monitoring of housing land.

**MINISTERIAL ENGAGEMENT BRIEFING:
TOM ARTHUR, MINISTER FOR PUBLIC FINANCE, PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY WEALTH**

Briefing for Homes for Scotland Online Conference

Q What role has the Housing Advisory Panel had in the process?

A The Panel has had an advisory role. We were clear from the start it was not a decision making role. The panel comprises of a number of people with a wide range of planning and housing interests and experience. As if often the case in planning for housing, views have been strong and there has not always been consensus. However, we have listened to opinions expressed and taken these into account as work has progressed.

Q Will the statutory targets in Draft NPF4 be higher than the estimates published previously?

Q Why publish such low figures if you weren't intending for these to be in NPF4?

A We were clear at the outset that the initial estimates were a starting point. They were largely based on national, statistical inputs. We committed to have wider input and it was through the local information, expertise and ambition that we expected the estimates to be adjusted.

We have published the responses from authorities - many of which have increased their estimates - and have had follow up discussions with a number of them where we needed further information or clarification.

We will provide a Proposed Minimum All-Tenure Housing Land Requirement for each planning authority in Draft NPF4. Alongside it we will publish an Explanatory Paper, that sets out how we arrived at the requirements. We expect there to be considerable interest and scrutiny in this area of NPF4.

Q Why is the Scottish Government proposing to express housing targets in the form of housing land requirements rather than clearly express the number of homes it wants to see built?

A Expressing the figure as a minimum all-tenure housing land requirement is a 'does what it says on the tin' approach.

As a minimum requirement it prevents the figure being interpreted as a cap to development: planning authorities will be able to have higher local housing land requirements in their LDPS where there is evidence for it and the industry will then be able to fulfil and exceed delivery of homes above the minimum national requirement.

It relates to housing land as that is what the statutory requirement is for and it's land that the planning system regulates and allocates through the LDP.

Q Will Housing Land Audits still be carried out / be the same in the future if the policy changes?

A We published research on housing land audits that highlighted a number of issues, particularly around the consistency of them across Scotland. Effective monitoring of housing land programming and delivery locally will be important and we will bring forward more work on this as NPF4 progresses.

**MINISTERIAL ENGAGEMENT BRIEFING:
TOM ARTHUR, MINISTER FOR PUBLIC FINANCE, PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY WEALTH**

Briefing for Homes for Scotland Online Conference

Q What do you think to the 25,000 new homes figure Homes for Scotland are promoting on behalf of the industry?

A Housing delivery has increased following the recession and I recognise that in 2019 over 20,000 homes were delivered.

I want Draft NPF4 to provide strategic, long-term figures – to combine consideration of past trends, with future projections and policy ambitions.

It's also important to bear in mind that this is about setting a **minimum** rather than a precise figure or a cap, to allow for more flexibility and provide an approach which will stand the test of time.

I appreciate there will be a lot of interest in this and would encourage you to read our report and engage with us constructive on the proposals we set out in the draft NPF4.

Q Homes for Scotland proposed the figure of 25,000 homes a year should be a National Development in NPF – will it be included?

A The draft NPF4 is coming soon – later this year. We're going to have a really great conversation through the wide engagement and consultation and through the parliamentary process. But I hope you will forgive me if I do not start to drip-feed the draft's content before we publish and take it to the Scottish Parliament. There isn't long to wait now.

Q Why has the Scottish Government limited input to the NPF4 housing work rather than collaborate with HfS and Scotland's home building sector?

A We have not limited input, rather we have actively encouraged the input of Homes for Scotland and the home building sector.

We were clear earlier this year when we wrote to planning authorities that we expected to see input and joint working locally.

I understand Homes for Scotland provided significant effort to that local input and has corresponded with us on a frequent basis.

And you will all have an opportunity to consider and respond to the draft NPF4 when it's published.

**MINISTERIAL ENGAGEMENT BRIEFING:
TOM ARTHUR, MINISTER FOR PUBLIC FINANCE, PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY WEALTH**

Briefing for Homes for Scotland Online Conference

Q Does the Minister agree that the Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) tool, and therefore the approach to setting the housing figures in NPF4, does not take account of many types of existing housing need?

[Reference may be made to:

- Those who are overcrowded in their current homes
- Concealed (but not overcrowded) households (i.e. adults living in HMOs or with friends / parents / adult children)
- Those living in homes that are physically unfit
- Households in homes that are not affordable to them
- Households in unsuitable homes (e.g. families without outdoor space)
- Homeless households not in temporary accommodation.]

A I know this is complex and we want to take an evidence based approach to this work.

There are many categories that may fall into existing need, and where there is robust evidence available locally, authorities have the ability to factor them into HNDA and have been able to input them to NPF4.

Q When will we know the timescale for the future reform work programme e.g. the consultation on Development Planning regulations and guidance?

A We expect to have an updated programme in the near future. Currently efforts are understandably focussed on the priority of Draft NPF.

Q What is the Minister's view on the Grahams Dairy decision?

A We were disappointed with the decision. We have reviewed Lord Clark's judgement and will learn lessons for future practice.

Q Why is the SG not appealing the decision or consulting on changes to SPP?

A We want to move forward in a more positive way and find a better solution to the overall issue that is fair to all interests. We are therefore focusing efforts on Draft NPF4. We believe that progressing interim changes to SPP could cause confusion during Parliamentary scrutiny and public consultation.

It is for decision makers to decide the most appropriate method for calculating the 5 year effective housing land supply. We have advised planning authorities they should seek their own legal advice on the implications of the judgement for plans and decisions.

**MINISTERIAL ENGAGEMENT BRIEFING:
TOM ARTHUR, MINISTER FOR PUBLIC FINANCE, PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY WEALTH**

Briefing for Homes for Scotland Online Conference

Q When will there be a new Chief Planner in post?

A The recruitment process is underway and we hope to have the new person in post as soon as possible. I'm sure once established, they will be keen to meet with key stakeholders, including yourselves.

Q What is Community Wealth Building?

A Community wealth building (CWB) is a practical approach to local economic development that supports the delivery of a wellbeing economy for Scotland. It delivers actions that give the people of Scotland a greater stake in our economy and wealth, making it work for us and our planet.

The 5 core principles of CWB are:

- **Inclusive Ownership:** Developing more local and social enterprises that generate community wealth, including social enterprises, employee owned firms and co-ops.
- **Spending:** Maximising community benefits through procurement and commissioning, developing good enterprises, fair work and shorter supply chains.
- **Workforce:** Increasing fair work and developing local labour markets that support the wellbeing of communities.
- **Land and property:** Growing the social, ecological, financial and economic value that local communities gain from land and property assets.
- **Finance:** Ensuring that flows of investment and financial institutions work for local people, communities and businesses.

Q What do you think to the recommendations of the recent report by the Scottish Land Commission on 'Land for Housing'

[Housing - Housing & Development - Our work - Scottish Land Commission](#)

A We are committed to having the right amount of land available in the right places to provide the high quality homes that Scotland needs. This is particularly important in meeting our commitment on affordable homes.

We recognise the importance of land and development to addressing Scotland's housing needs and the contribution it can make to health, well-being and strong communities. We therefore welcome the work that has been done by the Scottish Land Commission to consider both the current challenges and the potential approaches to addressing them.

Introduction

- Thank you for the invitation to speak.
- Pleased to be joining you on Scottish Housing Day.
- My portfolio is different to the previous Planning Minister, also covering community wealth building and town centre regeneration, as well as public finance.
- This does not signal a move away from aligning planning and housing.
- It reflects the potential of planning to be an enabler, a facilitator, to a very wide range of strategies and programmes across government.
- The immediate future of how we plan our places and how we develop is going to be crucial to Scotland's recovery.
- Our places and how our communities work have become even more important to us over the last year and a half.
- I am pleased and proud to be the first Scottish Government minister to have 'Community Wealth' in their title.
- And I am just as pleased to be able to link that up with my role as Planning Minister. It's about striving for stronger, resilient communities.

- Thank you all for your involvement in planning reform and NPF4 to date – working with us and with local authorities.
- I want to work positively with you all as we move forward
- I would encourage you to keep working with me and my officials as we progress the changes to the planning system.
- We're committed to working across our portfolios to achieve better outcomes for Scotland.

Challenges and Opportunities

- Working together will be necessary to address significant challenges ahead.
- Scotland, like the rest of the world, is facing the challenge of climate change which will demand different choices.
- We have also faced the pandemic of the last 18 months.
- These challenges reinforce the critical importance of our homes and the places they are in.
- They emphasise the need to do things differently.
- We have an opportunity ahead of us with NPF to discuss how we do this.

- Over 20,000 homes were delivered across Scotland in 2019, before the pandemic.
- Latest statistics show that new build home completions decreased sharply in 2020 due to the lockdown, and I recognise the ongoing challenges arising from access to materials and the impact on development costs.
- I applaud your resilience over the last 18 months.
- And the efforts being made to continue the positive signs of recovery emerging.
- We need to build on this.

A Changing Planning System

- We are implementing the provisions of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019.
- Some of that had to pause when the pandemic struck, but we are pushing on with some priority changes.
- Most immediately we are bringing forward National Planning Framework 4 in the coming weeks.
- When we consult on the draft, we are going to have a really exciting conversation about Scotland's future development.
- We have been developing NPF4 following two very helpful rounds of early engagement. Thanks to all for contributing their views to date. We're taking these into account as we move towards a draft NPF4.

- Thanks also to those who have actively contributed to our wider reform work, including on development planning and local place plans.
- Some of you want to be even more involved, and that's really positive, so please be reassured that we will consult and engage widely following publication of the draft NPF4.

The Case for Change

- We set out the direction of travel for NPF4 in the Position Statement last November and signaled that we expect planning for homes to change.
- This was reinforced in Scotland's first long term national housing strategy – Housing to 2040 – in March of this year.
- We want everyone to have a safe, high quality home that is affordable and meets their needs in the place they want to be.
- Planning for housing has become a complex numbers game, it's difficult to understand and – as you will know – it often leads to conflict and sometimes to litigation too.
- This diverts attention and resources away from delivering the quality homes and places where people want to be.
- Whilst it's important to get the numbers right, it's also important not to lose sight of those quality homes and places.

- We should be working towards a future where communities see the benefits of new homes in the areas they live.
- A future where public and private sectors work together and with communities to deliver the homes and services that are needed for a more sustainable and fairer Scotland.
- In draft NPF4 we will set out how we think planning can help to achieve that.
- And we need to support you to deliver homes and places that will stand the test of time:
 - Homes that are well designed and well located.
 - Homes that help us to reduce emissions
 - And homes which better respond to the needs and circumstances of our many different places.

New Policy Direction

- There is now a great opportunity to reset old relationships and to build new ones.
- Consultation on Draft NPF4 will enable more discussion and further each-others understanding.
- From early stages of planning reform, there's been support for the development plan as the cornerstone of the system, but there also needs to be flexibility to change.

- NPF4 will set out requirements for housing land across Scotland.
- I know there were concerns about the initial numbers we published earlier this year – but we were clear these were a starting point.
- Since then, input from authorities and others, including a number of yourselves, is resulting in those figures being adjusted.
- And rather than any figure acting as a cap, we were clear the figures will be a minimum.
- This will provide greater confidence in a baseline at an early stage.

- Local Development Plans will have an important role in taking forward this minimum to establish a long-term pipeline of deliverable housing land.
- And we want the system to respond positively to that pipeline being delivered – with the release of more land that is in line with the overall strategy.
- We will also set out policy support for more diverse homes.
- This includes homes that are more climate and nature friendly, well designed, homes that meet the needs of all people, and that use existing infrastructure first to make places more locally livable.

Conclusion

- This all might sound like a big change – a change that could impact on development costs.
- Many of you will already be expecting change.
- Lessons from living through the pandemic have reinforced the value of our places, and the value of good quality homes for all.
- We need to keep working together - to try and change the conversation and demonstrate the benefits of new homes.
- Whatever you think, we want to hear your views on both the numbers and the new proposed policy in the draft NPF4.
- This is a pivotal and exciting time for planning in Scotland, and I look forward to the discussions to come over the next few months.

From: [redacted] on behalf of Minister for Public Finance, Planning & Community Wealth
Sent: 15 September 2021 09:02
To: 'Tom.Arthur.msp@parliament.scot'
Cc: Arthur T (Tom); Minister for Public Finance, Planning & Community Wealth
Subject: FW: IMMEDIATE Homes for Scotland conference Q and A
Importance: High

Minister,

Please see the below.

We have added to OneNote.

Thanks

[redacted]

From: Simpson F (Fiona) <Fiona.Simpson@gov.scot>
Sent: 15 September 2021 08:52
To: Minister for Public Finance, Planning & Community Wealth <MinisterPFPCW@gov.scot>
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: IMMEDIATE Homes for Scotland conference Q and A
Importance: High

Mr Arthur

We have just received the Homes for Scotland's stand by questions for this morning's session. Please find below suggested answers.

Kind regards

Fiona

Minister

1: You have come into post at a high-pressure time, both in terms of your Planning team's workload and tensions with stakeholders on some key components of NPF4.

Is it your remit to see through the direction of travel begun by the previous Minister, or will you be able to make significant changes between the draft NPF4 and the final policy?

Obviously it wouldn't be right to say much about the content of NPF4.

I'm conscious the work is well advanced and we're building on extensive engagement.

Remember this a draft and subject to change following Parliamentary engagement and consultation.

2: Can you outline what it is being done to respond to some of the concerns raised by Homes for Scotland and various local authorities over the methodology for setting NFP4 housing numbers?

We have been open about this process.

We were clear the numbers we issued were a starting point and we expected them to increase. We've since had input from local authorities and their stakeholders locally.

We will propose adjusted figures alongside the draft NPF4 and invite views on them, as well as an explanatory report.

Thank you for your input to date – no doubt we'll discuss it further with you during the consultation period.

3: From where we stand now it feels the parliamentary stage of NPF4 could be as fragmented as the passing of the Planning Bill was. Do you or the Scottish Parliament have a contingency plan to manage that?

Will you and the relevant parliamentary committees be actively engaging with stakeholders like HFS during the consultation period?

Parliamentary process is for Parliament to decide.

Remember we'll be engaging with stakeholders and the public alongside this.

4: So far, discussions on future housing numbers has mostly been confined to councils and home builders – the people who best understand the detail and implications. How will you communicate the new approach, and what the numbers mean, to the general population?

Is there a risk the move to minimum housing land requirements – which seems to mean very low targets - will only help those who are fundamentally opposed to home building?

Of course it's important to broaden engagement to involve the public.

We want a minimum that is reasonable and this baseline will provide confidence to stakeholders including developers, communities and infrastructure providers.

Our intention is to support home building not to limit it. The explanatory report will help explain all of this.

5: If NPF4 pushes home builders as radically as the Position Statement suggests it might, there could be big costs increases and potentially a reduction in the number of new homes that can be built whilst industry adjusts to the changes. What work are you doing to scope those risks?

What support will be in place to support the industry in making the changes you want?

Will there be a transition period, or will all of the policy changes become active at once?

This is a draft and subject to consultation and parliamentary scrutiny.

We want to work with you to support delivery.

I would encourage you to play an active role in the engagement.

6: You will have heard a lot about what home builders are wary of in terms of future policy – is there anything coming down the line that you point to that is likely to give the industry some real hope and excitement?

Again, it's not appropriate to get ahead of ourselves on the policy, but I do think the NPF4 is an excellent opportunity to bring people together to deliver better development.

We have great opportunities to do this right now with both planning reform and NPF4. As a new Minister my door is open.

Fiona Simpson | Interim Chief Planner | Planning & Architecture | Scottish Government | [redacted]



From: [redacted]
Planning & Architecture Division
19 July 2021

Minister for Public Finance, Planning & Community Wealth

ENGAGEMENT WITH HOMES FOR SCOTLAND ON PLANNING

[redacted - out of scope]

Medium-Term: Prior to submission of NPF to Parliament

16. HfS have invited the Minister to deliver the key note address at their half day planning conference, being organised to coincide with Scottish Housing Day on 15 September. It will 'examine the challenge of the change that is happening across so many policy areas related to housing delivery'. This could provide an opportunity to speak to HfS members ahead of publication of NPF4. The formal invite has now been received and advice will be provided separately. We will consider how timing of the above meeting with members may link with this address and we will align with key messages in the Position Statement and in Housing to 2040.

[redacted - out of scope]

Recommendation

20. The Minister is invited to note the proposals outlined for engagement with Homes for Scotland officials and their members on National Planning Framework and planning reform, including:

- [redacted],
- [redacted],
- [redacted],
- Potential for you to speak at HfS half day conference,
- [redacted],
- [redacted], and
- [redacted].

[redacted]
Planning & Architecture Division
19 July 2021

Copy List:	For Action	For Comments	For Information		
			Portfolio Interest	Constit Interest	General Awareness
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Economy Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government			X X		

DG Communities
 Director for Local Government & Communities
 Director for Housing & Social Justice
 John McNairney
 Fiona Simpson
 [redacted]

From: [redacted] on behalf of Minister for Public Finance, Planning & Community Wealth
Sent: 19 July 2021 16:22
To: [redacted] Minister for Public Finance, Planning & Community Wealth
Cc: Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Economy; Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing & Local Government; DG Organisational Development & Operations; Director for Local Government & Communities; Director for Housing and Social Justice; McNairney J (John); Simpson F (Fiona); [redacted]

Subject: RE: Engagement with Homes for Scotland on planning
Attachments: Housing - Homes for Scotland - Engagement - Submission - July 2021.docx

[redacted]

Mr Arthur has considered and is content with the recommendations:-

- [redacted],
- [redacted],
- [redacted],
- Potential for you to speak at HfS half day conference,
- [redacted],
- [redacted], and
- [redacted].

With regards potential dates for any of the above, please advise us as soon as you are able so holds can be put in the diary pending confirmation.

[redacted] - to note

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: 19 July 2021 10:34
To: Minister for Public Finance, Planning & Community Wealth <MinisterPFPCW@gov.scot>
Cc: Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Economy <CabSecFE@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing & Local Government <CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot>; DG Organisational Development & Operations <DGODO@gov.scot>; Director for Local Government & Communities <DirectorforLocalGovernment&Communities@gov.scot>; Director for Housing and Social Justice <DirectorHSJ@gov.scot>; McNairney J (John) <John.McNairney@gov.scot>; Simpson F (Fiona)

<Fiona.Simpson@gov.scot>; [redacted]

Subject: Engagement with Homes for Scotland on planning

[redacted]

Please see the attached routine submission for Mr Arthur from [redacted].

Thanks,
[redacted]



From: [redacted]
Sent: 16 September 2021 09:41
To: [redacted]
Subject: RE: HfS Conference - Ministers speaking notes

Thanks [redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: 16 September 2021 08:44
To: [redacted]
Subject: HfS Conference - Ministers speaking notes

Morning [redacted]

After the conference yesterday we spoke about the Ministers speaking note. Please find it attached.

[redacted]



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From: [redacted]
Sent: 08 September 2021 18:27
To: redacted]
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: SG questions ref Tom Arthur conference speech and member message

Hello all

I had a catch up this afternoon with [redacted] from the Planning and Architecture Director at Scottish Government.

We were mainly preparing for an HFS / SG meeting on planning in October, but [redacted] also asked a few questions in relation to the Minister –

- **HFS Conference:** Can SG have a list of the attendees? They would usually include this in the Minister’s briefing notes.
- **HFS Conference:** Could [redacted] resend the joining instructions and the information on the rehearsal sessions, to [redacted] in the Ministers’ private office ([redacted] and MinisterPFPCW@gov.scot) and copy [redacted] in? Something has gone awry in the emails as private office say they haven’t heard from us but I know [redacted] did send an email has been waiting on a response.
- **Message from Minister:** We thought the week beginning 27 May would be good for the Minister’s message for our Weekly update. It can follow on from his speech at our conference but also give enough of a gap for the two bits of engagement not to merge into one. [redacted], have you liaised with private office on this previously?

[redacted] is copied in so you have her

email address. [redacted]

[redacted]



From: [redacted] on behalf of Minister for Public Finance, Planning & Community Wealth
Sent: 10 September 2021 12:47
To: [redacted]
Cc: Minister for Public Finance, Planning & Community Wealth
Subject: RE: HFS virtual conference 2021 - The Challenges of Change: A Changing Planning System

Hi [redacted],

Mr Arthur is content with the proposed quote and pictures.

Thanks,

[redacted]

From: [redacted] On Behalf Of Arthur T (Tom), MSP
Sent: 09 September 2021 16:38
To: Minister for Public Finance, Planning & Community Wealth <MinisterPFPCW@gov.scot>
Subject: FW: HFS virtual conference 2021 - The Challenges of Change: A Changing Planning System

Hi

Tom has asked me to forward this to yourselves for SG Comms

Regards

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: 08 September 2021 15:00
To: [redacted]
Subject: RE: HFS virtual conference 2021 - The Challenges of Change: A Changing Planning System

CAUTION: This e-mail originated from outside of The Scottish Parliament. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi [redacted]

Further to the below, we have developed some graphics for ourselves and conference speakers to use on social media should they wish. Please let me know if you are happy with this - the quote is just a suggestion and can be amended should Mr Arthur wish.

Kind regards
[redacted]

(Please note my working pattern is Tues – Thurs .30am – 4.30pm)

From: [redacted] **On Behalf Of** Arthur T (Tom), MSP
Sent: 08 September 2021 12:31
To: [redacted]
Subject: RE: HFS virtual conference 2021 - The Challenges of Change: A Changing Planning System

Hi [redacted]

Tom can do Friday at 11am – will an invite be sent to Tom for this?

Regards

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: 08 September 2021 08:59
To: Arthur T (Tom), MSP <Tom.Arthur.msp@parliament.scot>
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: RE: HFS virtual conference 2021 - The Challenges of Change: A Changing Planning System

CAUTION: This e-mail originated from outside of The Scottish Parliament. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi [redacted]

Many thanks for your response. The speaker rehearsals are being managed by our third-party provider, Conference Care who have suggested this Thursday or Friday at 11.00am?

Please be aware that the firewalls for Scottish Government/Parliament caused issues for our other MSP accessing the platform (still ongoing) so this may also be an issue for Tom. We suggest he does not use his government device (laptop) to access the platform and use a personal laptop if he has one available.

Kind regards
[redacted]

From: [redacted] On Behalf Of Arthur T (Tom), MSP

Sent: 07 September 2021 15:58

To: [redacted]

Subject: FW: HFS virtual conference 2021 - The Challenges of Change: A Changing Planning System

Good afternoon

I refer to your email to Tom's Ministerial Team regarding the above.

Unfortunately it appears that Tom had not received your previous email to arrange a time for the rehearsal for the conference. Can you let me know when you would like to carry this out and I will check Tom's diary for a suitable time.

Kind regards

[redacted]

From: [redacted]

Sent: 07 September 2021 14:05

To: Minister for Public Finance, Planning & Community Wealth <MinisterPFPCW@gov.scot>

Cc: [redacted]

Subject: RE: HFS virtual conference 2021 - The Challenges of Change: A Changing Planning System

Hi [redacted]

Further to the below, our contacts at Conference Care have been trying to get in contact to arrange a speaker rehearsal for Mr Arthur and in order to familiarise him with the virtual platform.

Can you confirm whether you have received an email to arrange which would have been sent to Tom.Arthur.msp@parliament.scot ?

Kind regards

[redacted]

From: [redacted] MinisterPFPCW@gov.scot

Sent: 27 August 2021 11:50

To: [redacted] MinisterPFPCW@gov.scot

Cc: Tammy Swift-Adams [redacted]

Subject: RE: HFS virtual conference 2021 - The Challenges of Change: A Changing Planning System

Hi [redacted],

I'll follow up and get you a contact number.

However, the email will be Tom.Arthur.msp@parliament.scot.

Thanks
[redacted]

From: [redacted]

Sent: 25 August 2021 11:08

To: Minister for Public Finance, Planning & Community Wealth <MinisterPFPCW@gov.scot>

Cc: [redacted]

Subject: RE: HFS virtual conference 2021 - The Challenges of Change: A Changing Planning System

Hi [redacted]

Further to the below, would you be able to forward a contact number and email address that we can pass onto our third party provider, Conference Care in order that they can organise a speaker rehearsal/details to familiarise Mr Arthur with the online platform?

My colleague Tammy will forward a more detailed Speaker Brief shortly. Meantime, please find attached our programme for the event noting Mr Arthur's speaker slot/ Q&A between **9.40-10.00**.

Should you have any queries, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards
[redacted]

From: [redacted]

Sent: 10 August 2021 09:51

To: MinisterPFPCW@gov.scot

Cc: [redacted]

Subject: HFS virtual conference 2021 - The Challenges of Change: A Changing Planning System

FAO: [redacted]

Dear [redacted]

Please find below further detail with regards Mr Arthur's speaking slot at the HFS virtual conference on 15 September.

HFS Director of Planning Tammy Swift-Adams will be back in contact with further information, but please don't hesitate to contact me should you require anything meantime.

Kind regards
[redacted]



**HFS VIRTUAL CONFERENCE 2021
THE CHALLENGES OF CHANGE: A CHANGING PLANNING SYSTEM
WEDNESDAY 15 SEPTEMBER**

09.30 – 11.30