



# **Housing & Homelessness in Edinburgh**

**Joined Up For Jobs Forum**

**Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2025**

# Context: Edinburgh's Housing Market & Pressures



**7% projected population increase** between 2018-2028. Compared to 2% for Scotland as whole.

Between 36,000-52,000 new homes needed by 2040; **24,000-35,000 need to be affordable.**

**c.20,000 Council homes. 15% of all homes are for social rent;** lower than the Scottish avg of 22% & lowest amongst major cities

Highest **proportion of homes built before 1945 (48%)** compared to the Scottish avg of 30%.



**66% of all homes are flatted.** Almost half of Council homes are in mixed tenure blocks.

Over **5,000 households** are currently in temporary accommodation

There were **over 3,800 homeless applications** in 2023/24



Almost **200 people bid for each social home** that is available to let.

**17% of Edinburgh residents estimated to be living in poverty** in 2022

**24% of homes are in the private rented sector.** Higher than the Scottish avg of 13%.



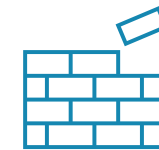
**Average private rent is over £1,360 pcm;** 35% higher than Scottish avg.

**Avg house price is c.£335K;** compared to Scottish avg of £192k

**Around 1,000 Council homes** are void. Reduced by 20% since Jan '24 but remains a key pressure & priority.



AHSP Grant funding **benchmark not responding quickly enough** to latest market/ cost increases.



**Unprecedented increases in construction costs and labour shortages**

**Housing (Scotland) Bill** creating uncertainty for investment

Additional pressures on homelessness services due to removal of local connection, prevention duties and migration impacts of global conflicts

# Context: A time of unprecedented challenge for the housing and homelessness sector

- The Council declared a Housing Emergency on the 2nd November 2023. 8 other Local Authorities have also declared housing emergencies, along with the Scottish Parliament on 15 May 2024.
- This crisis has been developing for many years due to the cumulative impact of a range of factors, including:
  - Comparatively **low proportion of social housing in Edinburgh**
  - **Rising costs** and a sustained gap between grant funding allocation and requirement
  - **High demand** and increased pressure on homelessness services
  - **Aging stock**, much of which is mixed tenure
  - Increasing **legislative/ compliance standards** put on Local Authorities, complex policy framework and competing priorities
  - **High house prices** and private sector rents
- This crisis has placed those who need the most support under real and increasing pressure. Whilst this is recognised as a nationwide crisis, it is in Edinburgh where it manifests most acutely.
- A Housing Emergency Action Plan has been developed with actions across a range of areas.



# Context: Homelessness in Edinburgh

- National statistics recently published show an increasing trend in terms of homelessness in Scotland, with the trends below being the highest since records began.
- Edinburgh specific:
  - Edinburgh has the highest number of households in temporary accommodation in the city with 5, 310 households
  - Edinburgh had the second highest number of households making a homeless application in 2023/24 with 3, 814 applications
  - Edinburgh had the second highest number of households assessed as homeless with 3, 375 households assessed as homeless in 2023/24
  - Edinburgh has the highest number of open cases – where a household has been assessed as homeless and the Council has a duty to provide settled accommodation. At 31 March 2024 there were 7, 067 open homeless cases in Edinburgh.
  - Last year 52% of households who presented for homelessness assistance did not have a support need. For those who did, the most prevalent need was a mental health need (37% or 1, 462).
  - Recent increase in presentations from people who have recently left Home Office accommodation following a positive asylum decision and Ukrainian Displaced People.
  - Projected gap between demand and projected supply available, which at the end of March 2026 is projected to be 749 bedspaces. The gap between demand and supply to eradicate the compliance risk of unsuitable temporary accommodation is 1,660 bedspaces by the end of March 2026.

# Current Strategy for homelessness

- Edinburgh Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan has 4 strategic objectives:
  - Preventing homelessness in the first place
  - Where temporary accommodation is required it meets the needs of the household
  - Supporting people to access settled accommodation as quickly as possible
  - Reducing the number of households rough sleeping in the city
- A host of actions are underway under each of these objectives. However, due to continued increases in demand for temporary accommodation, delivery of the strategy needs significantly upscaled and accelerated to ensure that the Council can meet current and future demand.
- This will be delivered by changing the mix of temporary accommodation with a focus on eliminating the use of unsuitable temporary accommodation. The strategy will focus specifically on increasing the number of self contained properties and homeless accommodation with support services in the stock mix. Ultimately, the objective is to eliminate all other forms of temporary accommodation from the stock mix.
- Range of measures being considered to significantly increase supply, including suspending the criteria for the Acquisitions and Disposals policy to seek to purchase homes for temporary accommodation, regardless of current block ownership, for an initial period of 12 months.

# Areas of interest for Joined Up For Jobs Forum

- Introduced significant programme of prevention activity which last year prevented 461 households from becoming homeless.
- 2 programmes focused on employability:
  - Work with encompass and the Councils PRS team, currently supporting 20 households
  - Pilot programme with Councils Early Intervention Team working in Job Centre
    - 58 customers seen
    - 32 were already homeless- all were given advice or referred to appropriate service
    - 17 identified as being at risk of homelessness
    - 7 prevented from homelessness: 41%
    - Pilot will continue at High Riggs

# Local Housing Strategy (LHS) - Overview

Edinburgh's draft Local Housing Strategy;

- Covers all tenures and types of housing
- Sets out key strategic objectives and proposed actions for delivering housing and related services
- Highlights key challenges and actions

It is a statutory requirement that local authorities produce a Local Housing Strategy.

This is the draft LHS Vision:

***People in Edinburgh can access affordable, suitable and settled homes that are warm, safe and high quality. People can access the right support, at the right time, to enable everyone to be part of a thriving community.***

## LHS Structure

Introduction:

- Overview
- Vision & Objectives
- Strategic Context
- Edinburgh's Local Context

Appendixes

- Consultation & Engagement Report
- Integrated Impact Assessment IIA

Chapter 1. Deliver homes that provide choice and affordability for all  
**Housing Supply**

Chapter 2. Support private renters, home-owners and landlords  
**Privately owned homes**

Chapter 3. Ensure homes are modern, warm and sustainable  
**Energy Efficient, quality homes with climate change considered**

Chapter 4. Prevent and respond to homelessness  
**Homelessness**

Chapter 5. Provide suitable homes with the right support to meet people's needs  
**Housing for particular needs**

Chapter 6. Develop vibrant, connected, safe and inclusive communities  
**Neighbourhoods, community and place making**



# LHS Consultation & Engagement – Have your say

Consultation and engagement underpins the development of the Local Housing Strategy.

## Three-Phase Engagement Approach

- ✓ **Phase 1: Early Engagement Survey & Discussions** (May – June 2024) – Survey explored respondents housing circumstances and priorities. 345 responses received, including 21 from external organisations. **Affordable homes, housing supply** and **homelessness** emerged as the top three priorities (with linkages between the three commented on by many).
- ✓ **Phase 2: Targeted Engagement** (Aug – Oct 2024) – series of workshops, targeted community outreach events and partnership meetings/ forums. Over 550 people engaged in this phase.
- ❑ **Phase 3: Formal Consultation** (Feb - April 2025) – draft survey published online for an [8-week consultation](#) along with some additional targeted engagement sessions. Wider feedback can be also be submitted via email: [localhousingstrategy@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:localhousingstrategy@edinburgh.gov.uk)

