



Developing a new Local Housing Strategy for the Scottish Borders for the period 2023-2028

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 places a statutory requirement on Councils to produce a Local Housing Strategy (LHS) which sets out the strategy, priorities and plans for the delivery of housing and related services across the area. The current LHS for the Scottish Borders covers the period 2017-2022 but has been extended by one year to 2023 to allow for the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Housing Need and Demand Assessment to be undertaken. This assessment will inform the new LHS.

This new plan will build on the significant progress made on the issues identified in the current [LHS 2017-2022](#) and will address newly arising housing matters particularly in response to the publication of new LHS Guidance and the Covid-19 pandemic. There are also a number of policy areas which have developed considerably since the current LHS was prepared, including, for example, the publication of Housing to 2040, Planning Policy and NPF4, Climate Change and related policies, Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal, Ending Homelessness Together and Rapid Re-housing Transition Plans, the approach to Place Making, the establishment of the South of Scotland Enterprise Agency and the Borderlands Growth Deal. Now is an ideal time to begin developing a new Local Housing Strategy.

Housing has a fundamental impact on the lives of people across the Borders. It is essential that we listen to local communities and stakeholders to identify the housing needs that matter most and to understand what action can make a real difference to their lives and have a positive impact on the area. We will be consulting widely on the new draft Local Housing Strategy in order to gather as many different opinions, ideas and perspectives as possible. To achieve this we are taking an all-encompassing approach which will include surveys and workshops to allow for more detailed discussion on key topics. We will offer different groups and stakeholders their own workshops if required for further detailed discussion.

There are also a number of well-established groups that will support the development of the new LHS including, for example, the Borders Home Energy Forum, The Borders Homelessness and Health Strategic Partnership, The Borders Housing Alliance, the H&SC Strategic Planning Group, the Community Planning Partnership and Local Area Forums. The LHS is a corporate document, agreed and supported by all relevant Council departments with the Housing Strategy Team leading on its development.



Proposed Timescales

Stage 1 – Preparation: This stage is almost complete and sets out how we plan to develop the LHS over the upcoming 18 months.

Stage 2 – Early Engagement and Evidence Gathering: Early engagement and consultation will be carried out between **September 2021 and March 2022**. During this period we will invite local communities, key stakeholders and other interested parties to provide their views on what the key priorities should be and to identify what actions are likely to make a positive difference. Engagement will be facilitated by surveys, workshops, focus groups and a range of other activity which will be detailed in the Consultation and Engagement Plan. To support the early engagement activity and help stimulate discussion on the main housing issues four topic papers will be prepared based on detailed supporting evidence and data:

- Housing Delivery and Place Making
- Climate Change, Energy Efficiency and Housing Quality
- Homelessness
- Particular Needs and Specialist Provision

Stage 3 – Preparation of First Draft: The first draft Local housing Strategy, framed by the early engagement work and Stage 2 activity, is a key step towards the preparation of a new LHS. It will set out a series of proposed priorities for action across a range of housing related issues. The draft LHS will be developed between April – August 2022.

Stage 4 – Formal Consultation: Consultation on the draft LHS will be carried out in the autumn of 2022. The draft LHS will also be submitted for an independent examination via the “peer review” process at this time. All responses to the formal consultation will be assessed and outcomes used to further inform the development of the proposed LHS.

In early 2023 the proposed LHS will be presented to the appropriate Council Committee for consideration and, if approved, will be submitted to the Scottish Government no later than **31st March 2023**.

Our [early engagement survey](#) will be available from 1st October – 30th November 2021.

Further Information

To keep up to date with LHS 2023-28 development activity please visit our dedicated [Local Housing Strategy 2023-28 web page](#).

You can also email us at: LHS@scotborders.gov.uk