



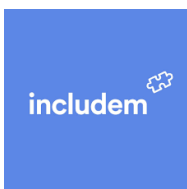
SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES

Policy 7:

In order to ensure that every young person in Scotland has accessible, affordable and secure housing, the Scottish Government should invest in social housing* and allocate funding to local authorities – particularly in rural and island communities – to ensure housing is fit for local need.

**Social housing is housing paid for from taxes and is often cheaper and affordable for people with lower incomes. It is also often more secure than the private housing sector.*

Endorsed by:



What's this all about?

Young people told us they are concerned that a growing number of landlords are renting properties on a short-term basis, such as holiday lets, rather than allowing this housing to be rented for the long-term. Young people are also worried that homelessness is a growing problem, and suggested that more houses need to be built and made available to tackle this. Young people said they feel social housing would help young people and their families who live in or are at risk of poverty. They suggested that having more social housing would give young people more stability and security, more opportunity to focus on their education instead of needing to work to pay rent, and would enable them

to thrive within their communities. However, young people also said that social housing needs to be diverse and suit each community's needs. They told us that social housing waiting lists need to be shorter, that social housing should be accessible for people with disabilities, and that it should be maintained by local councils to a high standard.

"Homelessness is a massive issue, and no young person should have to deal with it. I absolutely support the creation of more housing for those who need and want it."

– Young trans male aged 14-17, Dundee

"Putting money in to improve the standards in current social houses for young people, as well as expanding and building new ones is a great step to protect the most vulnerable young people in society."

– Young man aged 22-26, Aberdeen

What are young people in Scotland calling for?

- **Young people call on the Scottish Government to invest in new social housing developments that reflect the needs of different communities—including young people, families, care-experienced people, and those facing homelessness.**

"As someone living in Orkney, the housing situation is dire. All rents are holiday lets, with a handful of private rents taken up immediately, and people on years-long waiting lists for social or council housing."

– Young woman aged 22-26, Orkney

- **Decision makers should prioritise long-term, secure social housing tenancies for young people and their families, particularly in rural areas and areas of deprivation.**

"We need more affordable and available housing, but we have enough houses, just that some people have two. There should be more laws to stop people from having second homes unless they're renting them out at affordable prices."

– Young woman aged 14-17, North Ayrshire

- **Decision makers should uphold minimum quality standards for social housing, addressing issues like mould, structural damage, and accessibility for disabled tenants.**

"I work in a law clinic that provides free legal advice. The housing clients I have worked with are often becoming ill due to mould, and regularly live in homes which are uninhabitable. I once worked with a woman who lived in assisted living which had a hole in the floor meaning she could not use half her residence as her wheelchair could not get over it. I've worked with people going without hot water or heating for months on end and once exposed sewage near their property. Landlords often disregard their legal obligations and local authorities should do more to protect the vulnerable from housing exploitation."

– Young person aged 18-21, East Ayrshire

Evidence and Support

- [Includem](#)'s Housing Report titled [Housing - Young People and Families Experiences](#) says since the declaration of the National Housing Emergency in May 2024, no additional money for the Affordable Housing Supply Programme budget has been made available for 2025. In 2024-25, the Scottish Government's affordable housing supply programme (AHSP) budget is almost £600 million, a cut of 22% in real terms from the previous year.
- [Includem](#)'s [URSPACE Housing Report](#) published in August 2025, surveyed young people about housing. 40% of young people told them they have a negative feeling about where they currently live, 64% said it had been hard to find somewhere to live, 22% said that availability of housing is the biggest problem facing young people and 20% said the one thing they wanted to see change about housing was to be listened to more.

What has SYP done?

The [SYP Policy Log](#) includes policies on improvements to the rented housing sector (including rent control system and improving the rights of tenants); protection of the right to property; introduction of Housing First policy for all of Scotland; better quality student accommodation; investment in welfare services in colleges and universities including housing support.