



25 September 2025

Dear Applicant

**Our Ref: EIR 916**

Your request for information received on 03 September 2025 has been handled under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR).

**Request**

*Looking at the use of Section 76 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and its role in the provision of affordable housing.*

*Please provide me with data per annum on the following questions:*

- 1. What is the unit count of affordable housing that has been developed, or is currently being developed in Northern Ireland in the last 5 years.*
- 2. How many social homes/ developments in the last 5 years were agreed with and under Section 76, in order to mitigate the impact of the developments upon surrounding communities?*
- 3. How many of these social homes delivered under Section 76 are currently unoccupied with no buyer?*
- 4. Are there any Section 76 building sites currently delayed due to uncontracted units, and if so, how many?*

*I would like this information to be provided in this format:*

*Annual breakdown of figures for each year up to 2025:*

*2020:*

*2021:*

*2022:*

*2023:*

*2024:*

**Our response**

**1. What is the unit count of affordable housing that has been developed, or is currently being developed in Northern Ireland in the last 5 years.**

The Housing Executive manages the Social Housing Development Programme (SHDP) on behalf of the Department for Communities. The table below details the total new social housing Completions delivered through the SHDP during the period 2020/21-2024/25 across Northern Ireland. Please note that, in addition to the new social housing Completions outlined the table below, there are currently 5,419 new social homes under construction across Northern Ireland.

<b>SHDP year</b>	<b>Total Completions</b>
<b>2020/21</b>	1,304
<b>2021/22</b>	835
<b>2022/23</b>	1,449
<b>2023/24</b>	1,403
<b>2024/25</b>	1,410
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,401</b>

Please note that, although the Housing Executive is aware of other affordable (non-social rented) tenure provision by housing associations during this period (e.g. where a social rent-led scheme also included e.g. intermediate housing for sale/Co-ownership/Equity Share properties, the Housing Executive does not hold comprehensive records of all affordable housing provision across Northern Ireland during this period.

**2. How many social homes/ developments in the last 5 years were agreed with and under Section 76, in order to mitigate the impact of the developments upon surrounding communities?**

As affordability increasingly becomes more challenging, the Housing Executive supports the delivery of affordable housing, including social housing to help address affordable housing need and demand. Social housing can provide high quality, long term, affordable housing with support services. The Housing Executive supports Section 76 (S76) Agreements to provide social housing within mixed-tenure residential neighbourhoods. Mixed-tenure developments help to promote sustainable and balanced communities that are welcoming to all.

A S76 Planning Agreement is legally binding and is usually signed by the Applicant and a Council, to secure specific Planning obligations necessary to make proposed development

acceptable. One of the uses of such an agreement is to secure affordable housing (social or intermediate housing). The Planning Agreement must be signed and completed before Planning Approval will be issued by Council. However, it should be noted that Planning Conditions are also used to secure social housing tenure.

S76 Agreements and Planning Conditions are being used to secure affordable housing following the introduction of Affordable Housing Policies in adopted Local Development Plan's Plan Strategies. Seven Councils have Plan Strategies adopted, and affordable housing policies are now in operation but at an early stage, with live Planning Applications still to be determined. However, it is anticipated that the number of S76s will increase as LDP Plan Strategies are adopted across all Council areas. Currently, we are aware of one development containing social housing secured by S76, as a result of Belfast City Council's Plan Strategy affordable housing policy (HOU 5) that is now under construction. This is the Loft Lines development in Belfast City Centre and will provide 81 social housing units.

The Housing Executive is not normally a co-signatory on S76 Agreements, and therefore we cannot provide a definitive list of all social housing that has been added to stock through S76 agreements. However, Councils are required to monitor delivery of all housing units approved for their respective areas and may be better able to provide the information you request.

**3. How many of these social homes delivered under Section 76 are currently unoccupied with no buyer?**

**4. Are there any Section 76 building sites currently delayed due to uncontracted units, and if so, how many?**

The Housing Executive does not hold information meeting the description of your request. As explained above, the Housing Executive is not normally a co-signatory to S76 Agreements. Therefore, the Housing Executive cannot provide a definitive list of all social homes developed under a S76 Agreement which are currently unoccupied or where sites are delayed due to uncontracted units.

Clanmil Housing is partnering with Pirrie Belfast Ltd, the developer of the Loft Lines scheme and will allocate homes to social housing applicants on completion; the anticipated completion date is late 2025.

This concludes our response.