

Why construction needs to adopt innovation to solve housing crisis

7 months ago



As another UK regional authority launches its housing strategy to try to alleviate a chronic shortage of homes, innovators ask will this be the moment their game-changing solutions are adopted.

The Dumfries & Galloway Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2025–2030, the latest to set out a comprehensive framework for addressing housing challenges across its region, pledges to adopt innovation.

The strategy promotes community-led housing and encourages innovative models such as cohousing and modular construction to diversify housing supply and empower local communities.

It cites innovation as a practical lever for:

- Tackling housing affordability and supply challenges;
- Supporting independent living and ageing in place;
- Achieving climate goals and energy efficiency;
- Enhancing community resilience and regeneration.

Aligning with national strategies like *Housing to 2040* and responding to the Housing Emergency declared in June 2024, it recognises the need for collaborative action to address housing pressures.

Under its number one priority to building more homes the strategy aims to:

- Address housing shortages and affordability issues;

- Deliver 460 new homes annually (45% affordable, 55% market);
- Align housing delivery with economic development and regeneration efforts;
- Promote community-led housing and brownfield development.

Resource projections include more than £267M in affordable housing investment, £36M in general fund housing services, and £237M from Registered Social Landlords (RSLs).

Industrialised construction methods have the capability to supercharge new housing, also creating manufacturing opportunities and jobs.

Located within the same Dumfries and Galloway region, [VASO](#) by Eco, offers a solution to the housebuilding shortage across the UK with its innovative recycled glass product.

Those behind VASO by Eco urge their own home area to embrace a pioneering approach to housing by adopting such innovation and act as a catalyst for others to follow.

As a partnership, VASO by Eco, Nith Valley Leaf Trust (NVLТ), South of Scotland Community Housing, and South of Scotland Enterprise recently commissioned a feasibility report for development of a brownfield site in Dumfries and Galloway with construction utilising the VASO by Eco system.

The VASO Build solution would represent a 20-week timesaving compared with traditional construction which could see £14,585 in additional rent income for the client.

Gary Robertson, Eco Group Opportunity Strategist, hopes the Dumfries & Galloway Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2025–2030 will pave the way for many more schemes which embrace such innovation.

Gary said: “Dumfries and Galloway Council’s Housing Strategy rightly calls for boldness and innovation. With homelessness breaches soaring to 380 in one year, the urgency is clear.

“The Council must be brave enough to embrace transformative solutions like VASO By Eco—developed locally in Dumfries and Galloway —which offers rapid, affordable, and sustainable housing.

“By applying community wealth building principles, the region can harness this innovation to create jobs, regenerate communities, and meet housing needs swiftly.

“The strategy’s ambitions demand more than plans—they require action. Innovation is here. The question is: will Dumfries and Galloway be bold enough to use it?”

Gary added: “The strategy sets out five strategic priorities, including building more homes, supporting independent living, extending housing options, achieving affordable warmth, and improving housing condition. VASO By Eco’s innovation directly supports all five.

“It describes the need to Accelerate Housing Delivery – VASO’s modular build system can erect a four-bedroom house super structure in just four days, with panels manufactured in under four hours. This rapid deployment capability directly supports the strategy’s priority to increase housing supply to meet urgent demand and economic growth targets.

“VASO panels are made from recycled glass and offer superior thermal performance, fire resistance, and durability. They are backed by a 60-year Lloyds of London warranty. This supports the strategy’s priority to achieve affordable warmth, energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty.”

VASO by Eco also meets several of the other objectives of the strategy such as:

- Independent living and employment through housing-led interventions – VASO by Eco’s flat-packed units require minimal skilled labour, addressing the region’s construction skills shortage and enabling retraining and upskilling;
- Climate emergency response and net-zero ambitions – VASO by Eco uses recycled materials and is engineered to withstand extreme weather, fire, and flooding;
- Digital Integration and Innovation – VASO by Eco integrates Building Information Modelling (BIM), semi-autonomous construction, and bespoke design tools which supports smarter planning and aligns with an emphasis on innovation and partnership.

Gary said: “VASO By Eco’s speed and efficiency can provide a systematic solution to the housing shortage. It will allow the UK to be at the forefront of a building solution which will help solve the housing crisis here and in other places around the world.

“With VASO by Eco we have a solution which is going to prove a complete game-changer for the Scottish, UK, and worldwide construction industry.”

Commentators have repeatedly said a different approach to housebuilding is needed to meet the UK’s shortfall of homes.

Recent reports have highlighted the need for different thinking and solutions such as modular construction, circular manufacturing, and innovative offsite housing models.

Prosper’s “Housing Supply For A Growing Economy” report highlighted the need to accelerate the adoption of Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) and invest in offsite manufacturing and innovation.

Garry Legg, Head of Strategy, Planning and Partnerships, at South of Scotland Enterprise, earlier this year said: “There is a unanimous consensus that we must do things differently to address the housing challenge, with partners in the South of Scotland already coming together to take the action they know is required.

“The South of Scotland is up for, and ideally placed to be, Scotland’s testbed for doing housing differently.”

Those who are embracing such innovative technology and different ways of approaching construction are left wondering why others charged with solving the housing crisis have been slow to adopt new ways of thinking.