

✓ **MAKING A DIFFERENCE!**



Excellent news for tenants: THE REVISED CHARTER IS APPROVED

Pages 6 and 7



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editorial

Ane Cook, Head of the Scottish Government's social housing team, reflects on some of the housing highlights of the past year and what's in this edition.

In May 2016 we welcomed our new Minister for Local Government and Housing, Kevin Stewart MSP. Mr Stewart is very keen to continue engaging with stakeholders housing issues and meets regularly with professional and landlord organisations and the Registered Tenant Organisation (RTO) Regional Networks.

The review of Scottish Social Housing Charter certainly dominated my team's work, and the Housing calendar, last year as we embarked on a series of 12 consultation events across Scotland between May and July to get views on reviewing the Charter. It was great to see so many of you at the events and thanks to all those landlords, tenants, tenant representatives and stakeholders who took part in the discussions and responded to the formal consultation. We had an excellent response to the consultation with over 100 responses being received.

We considered everyone's views and ideas carefully and amended the

Charter accordingly – with the clear message coming through that only minor changes were required and that the Charter has been working well and is helping to improve the standard and quality of services tenants and others receive. The revised Charter was scrutinised by the Local Government and Communities Committee and approved by the Scottish Parliament on 8 February, this will replace the current Charter from 1 April 2017. You can read more about this on pages 6 and 7.

We have also continued to work on the guidance on the Social Housing provisions of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014, and published final draft versions of the guidance on our website: <https://beta.gov.scot/policies/social-housing/>. We don't yet have a date for the changes to come into force, but you can read about how we are progressing on pages 8 and 9.

The general Programme for Government continues to go forward which you can access at: <http://www.gov.scot/About/Performance/programme-for-government>

I know that readers will certainly be interested in the continuing welfare reform developments, and of which there will be extensive consultation over the coming months. The

Minister for Social Security, Jeane Freeman MSP, outlines the new social security system for Scotland on page 18.

The Registered Tenant Organisation Regional Networks have begun to review how they are organised, to build on their achievements and ensure that they continue to work effectively with the Scottish Government on national housing issues. Further information will be provided as the review progresses and you can look out for these on the Regional Network website: <https://www.regionalnetworks.org.uk/>

And finally we are pleased to announce that we will be publishing a scrutiny practice guide and making available all the materials used in the 'Stepping up to Scrutiny' programme as a free training toolkit, and launching them at the CIH conference – so by the time you read this seek out your copies.

I do hope that you enjoy this edition of our newsletter!

Anne Cook
Social Housing Services
Manager



foreword

This is my first contribution to the Tenant Participation newsletter and since my appointment last year as Minister for Local Government and Housing, I've been meeting tenants, landlords and other stakeholders to get a better idea of how the housing sector is working for everyone in Scotland.

We have high housing standards in our country and that's something we can be proud of. When I spoke at the International Union of Tenants (IUT) conference in Glasgow last October, I was able to tell the delegation of our tradition of social housing and how we put tenants at the heart of our policy and decision-making. I was amazed by the number of delegates from overseas who commented on how well they thought the Charter was working here and who hoped that something similar could be introduced in their own country. However we can't be complacent: I want to make sure we continue to improve, and that landlords get into the habit of identifying what they are doing particularly well, of sharing their good practice, and of learning from others in the sector.

At the beginning of February I was delighted to join tenant representatives and others to give evidence to the Scottish Parliament's Local Government and Communities Committee, when it was considering the revised Scottish Social Housing Charter. I was pleased to hear of stakeholders' support for the current Charter, and for the revised version; and I welcomed the Committee's decision to recommend that the Scottish Parliament should approve the revised version.

It's clear that the Charter has worked well in helping landlords to deliver good services for tenants, and encouraging tenants to hold their landlords to account. I was pleased in particular to learn that the Charter has enabled the development of tenant-led scrutiny of landlords' performance and that this has led to positive changes in the services that landlords deliver. I wholeheartedly support tenants and landlords working together in this way.

The revised Charter will take effect from April 2017 and I encourage you to build on the achievements that

have been made so far. When I met the Registered Tenant Organisation (RTO) Regional Networks last October it gave me a chance to hear from tenants and residents directly about the impact of our housing policies on their communities. Using the collective expertise and knowledge of tenants is extremely important to meet our targets and understand the impact of our policies. I greatly value the work that tenants and residents do locally and nationally. They positively contribute to and influence our housing policies. I value their voices and will ensure they are involved in shaping a housing sector that works for us all.

This is just a snapshot of some of the exciting things happening in the housing sector at the moment. There is much still to come and I look forward to working with as many of you as I can in the future.

Kevin Stewart
Minister for Local
Government and Housing

Healthy start to delivering ambitious 50,000 affordable homes target

2016-17 is the first year of the Scottish Government's five-year commitment to invest over £3 billion to deliver at least 50,000 affordable homes – 35,000 of which will be for social rent. This commitment is key to building and sustaining a fairer and more prosperous Scotland.

Our previous 30,000 affordable homes target was exceeded by more than 10% – 33,490 much-needed homes were delivered in communities across Scotland, with 22,523 of these being for social rent. From Stornoway in the north to Annan in the south, Oban in the west to Dundee in the east, many more households now live in safe, warm and affordable accommodation.

By harnessing all of our skills and capacities, we can continue to deliver more of the right homes in the right places to make a positive impact on people's lives. Our bold and ambitious target for another 50,000 households to have access to good quality, affordable homes presents a huge opportunity to continue to meet local housing needs, empower

communities, benefit people's health and improve educational attainment.

As Housing Minister Kevin Stewart noted on a visit to an affordable housing development in Edinburgh during autumn 2016: ***'High quality, energy efficient, affordable homes form the cornerstone of socially and economically sustainable communities and we will continue to work hard with the entire housing sector to deliver more homes for the people of Scotland.'***

It was great to see that affordable housing approvals over the year to the end of September 2016 were up by 34% compared to the previous year – this is a really healthy start to the 50,000 affordable homes target. Close

working with partner organisations, including housing associations, local authorities and the private and voluntary sectors, will continue to be crucial to ensure that we build on this increase in the pace and scale of delivery.

These are such exciting times for housing. We really look forward to working with you to transform our ambition into reality. We ask you all to do all that you can to help deliver this programme for households across Scotland. And, in return, we will do all we can to support you in this.

Please contact: MoreHomes@gov.scot if you have any questions, or visit our website <https://beta.gov.scot/policies/more-homes/>

Review of the Scottish Social Housing Charter



When the first Scottish Social Housing Charter came into force in 2012 we said we'd review it and put a revised charter to Parliament for approval by April 2017. We are delighted that Parliament approved it on 8 February.

Our review considered the impact of the Charter, how landlord performance in meeting it is reported, and whether its 16 outcomes and standards needed to be changed, updated or added to.

Initial consultation

A stakeholder group, including members of the Registered Tenant Organisation Regional Networks, advised us what the review should include and how to involve the widest range of stakeholders.

Between May and July 2016, we held 12 events across Scotland. These let over 400 tenants, housing professionals and others discuss what the Charter has achieved and offer views on what changes should be made. We went to the annual general meetings of most of the regional networks, talked about the Charter at tenant and landlord events

across the country, and at Tenant Information Scotland (TIS) and Tenant Participation Advisory Service Scotland (TPAS) conferences.

TIS and TPAS also helped us encourage harder-to-reach groups to join the conversation. Between them they got the views of 500 people.

We also asked the Scottish Housing Regulator, responsible for monitoring and reporting on social landlords' performance against the Charter, to help with the review. Their evidence paper brought together evidence from the regulator's publications about how landlords have performed against the Charter.

Views on the current Charter were generally positive, with most largely in favour of keeping the current outcomes and standards unchanged.

Formal consultation

A formal Charter review consultation in summer 2016 received 106 responses. Most respondents thought the quality of landlord services had improved because of the Charter. Further analysis reinforced the view that

- they did not want fundamental changes to the Charter at this relatively early stage of its existence;
- the outcomes and standards should remain largely the same; and
- to alter the Charter substantially would reduce the positive impact it has made on the services landlords provide.

A copy of the analysis can be viewed at www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/11/1336

Tenants, Registered Tenant Organisations, the nine Regional Networks and tenant representative bodies generally supported the Charter and felt it had improved the quality of services. They also thought it had given tenants more opportunities to get involved with their landlord in monitoring performance and helped them hold their landlord to account.

The revised Charter

During the consultation we heard examples of the positive impact the charter has had. In light of this, we limited changes to those few that tenants and landlords suggested to us would help improve the quality of services that social landlords deliver. The changes, fine-tuning the original Charter, are:

- highlighting of all the standards and outcomes should be reflected across the whole of a landlord's activities;
- updating the narrative, which describes the scope of the standard or outcome, to reflect recent developments in best practice, including the impact of digital developments on the delivery of housing services;
- adding a requirement that landlords should meet the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing by December 2020;
- amending the neighbourhood and community outcome to recognise more explicitly that meeting this outcome requires landlords to work with other agencies to achieve it; and



Anne Cook at the Glasgow event.

- strengthening the Gypsies/ Travellers outcome by adding that local councils and registered social landlords with responsibility for managing sites meet the minimum site standards set in guidance on standards that the Scottish Government issued in May 2015.

We're grateful to the tenants who took part in the review. Their views are reflected in a revised Charter that continues to identify the standards and outcomes that matter to tenants

and other customers of social landlords; that are the responsibility of social landlords to deliver; and that can be assessed by the Scottish Housing Regulator.

A hard copy will have been sent to all registered tenant organisations and social landlords.

If you would like a copy contact michael.boal@gov.scot or phone 0131 244 0643.



Tenants come together to discuss the review of the charter..

Update on Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 Guidance

In previous newsletters we've explained the changes introduced by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014. Tenants told us they want to know when the allocations, tenancies and antisocial behaviour changes will happen and what they will mean.

We don't yet have a date for the changes to come into force as the commencement order for the provisions still has to be laid in Parliament. As soon as we have definite dates we will make sure they are well publicised: guidance on aspects of the legislation is available on the Scottish Government's website and at <https://beta.gov.scot/policies/social-housing/>. Rather than cover all the Act's changes this article focuses on changes to the rights of tenants with a Scottish Secure Tenancy agreement, in particular:

- assignation (signing over their tenancy to someone else);
- subletting their home
- adding a joint tenant to the tenancy; and
- succession to the property on the tenant's death.

Landlords will tell tenants about changes to their tenancy rights before they happen. There will be enough time before the law changes to give everyone – landlords and tenants – time to prepare. Landlords will also need to tell tenants how they should be notified of changes to who is living in the property, for example in writing or online.

The vast majority of social housing tenants in Scotland have a Scottish Secure Tenancy, which gives tenants rights to pass their tenancy to someone else, to add someone as a joint tenant, to sublet or to have someone in the household succeed to the tenancy in the event of their death. Tenants will keep these rights, but there will be changes to the rules. These include:

Assignation – under the new rules anyone who wants to be assigned a tenancy must have been living in the property as their only or principal home for at least 12 months before an application to assign is made (at the moment it is six months).

There are also new reasons when a landlord can refuse an application for assignation, such as where passing the tenancy on to someone else would result in the home being under-occupied.

Subletting – under the new rules a tenant applying to their landlord to sublet the property must have lived there as their only or principal home for 12 months (at the moment there's no minimum period).

Joint tenancies – under the new rules the proposed joint tenant must have lived in the property as their only or principal home for 12 months before making an application for a joint tenancy (currently there's no minimum period).

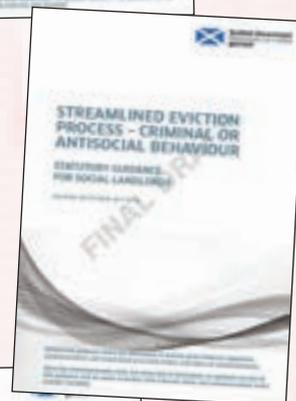
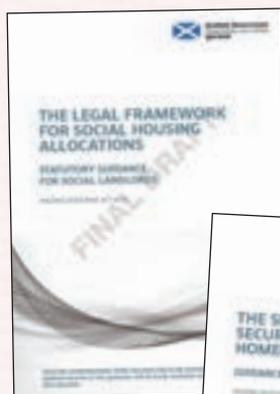
Succession – under the new rules, partners, other family members or carers will have to have lived in the property for at least 12 months as their only or principal home before being able to succeed to it. Currently the only qualifying period is six months for partners.

There will still be no qualifying period for the tenant's spouse, civil partner or joint tenant to succeed in future. But in all cases that person must have been living in the house as their only or principal home at the time of the tenant's death.

Where a new residency requirement has been introduced, such as in the examples above, the landlord must have been notified that the person is living in the house, because the qualifying residency dates from the time that the landlord was notified. So, if the person needs to have lived in the house for 12 months, the 12 months will start from the date the landlord was notified, not the date the person moved in (if that is different).

The Act's changes mean tenants will keep their rights to pass on their tenancy, sublet, add a joint tenant, or have someone succeed, but the new residency requirements will help stop abuse of the system and make it fairer.

Please contact socialhousing@gov.scot if you require further information on this.



Scotland's social landlords are making good progress in achieving the first Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH) milestone set for 2020

EESH launched three years ago and levels of compliance are already high with the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR), which has responsibility for monitoring landlords' compliance, reporting that 69% of social housing met the standard at April 2016.

The vast majority of social houses in Scotland already meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) which means improved living conditions for tenants across almost 600,000 homes in Scotland. By setting minimum energy efficiency ratings, EESH will build on that success, it will help social landlords provide warmer, more energy efficient homes for their tenants.

EESH minimum energy efficiency ratings for properties (shown in the table below) vary depending on the type of property and the fuel used to heat it. Achievement of EESH by social landlords will mean that the vast majority of social houses will be either an EPC band C or D by 2020. Social landlords have the flexibility to

decide on the appropriate measures to be installed in individual properties to best enable them to meet the required energy efficiency ratings. To date, they have funded EESH from their own resources as well as utilising a range of UK and Scottish Government funds.

Minimum SAP ratings to pass the EESH

Dwelling type	EE Rating (SAP 2009)		EE Rating (SAP 2012)	
	Gas	Electric	Gas	Electric
Flats	69	65	69	63
Four-in-a-block	65	65	65	62
Houses (other than detached)	69	65	69	62
Detached	60	60	60	57

The Scottish Government has set targets to reduce carbon emissions by 42% by 2020 and 80% by 2050. The 2020 target has been met and EESSH compliance to date has helped reach it; progress towards full EESSH compliance by the 2020 milestone, will help achieve the longer target.

It is social tenants who will benefit most from EESSH as landlords provide warmer, more energy efficient homes. It will make a positive impact on levels of fuel poverty as improved energy efficiency will help reduce fuel bills. In conjunction with meeting regulations specifying minimum energy efficiency of new boilers, potential average savings of around £210 per year per household are estimated.

Tenants have an important role to play in maximising the benefits of the energy efficiency measures installed in their homes. Simple changes such as those listed below, can make a big difference in managing energy use more effectively:

- turning down the thermostat to between 18 and 21 degrees;
- reducing the hours the heating is on;

- turning down the hot water thermostat to a maximum of 60 degrees;
- buying energy efficient appliances such as light bulbs, TVs and other products when they need to be replaced; and
- washing clothes at low temperatures.

The Scottish Government believes all people in Scotland, whether they rent or own their house, should be living in a warm home that is affordable to heat. To achieve this, a number of measures have been put in place to provide support to those who need it the most – and the latest statistics show that almost 100,000 fewer households were in fuel poverty in 2015 than in the previous year. This is welcome news, but we know there is much more to be done. We have allocated over £650 million since 2009 and we will make available £0.5 billion over the next four years to tackle fuel poverty and improve energy efficiency. This means that by the end of 2021 we will have committed over £1 billion to making our homes and buildings warmer and cheaper to heat.

As a result of Scottish Government efforts and investment, the energy efficiency of Scotland's housing stock has improved steadily since 2007 – the share of the most energy efficient dwellings (rated C or above) increased by 74% since 2010 and we now have proportionately 40% more homes with EPC rating C or above than England. The energy efficiency measures being installed in both social and private homes across the country, will help families who are struggling to make ends meet by saving money on their heating bills.

The Scottish Government is going further by looking at proposals for regulation of energy efficiency in private housing. Consultation on minimum standards of energy efficiency in private rented housing will be launched early in 2017.

When EESSH was launched it was agreed that a review would take place in 2017. The review which is soon to get underway will be conducted in two stages. The first stage is likely to look at progress to date and consider issues such as funding and harder to treat properties. The second phase will look beyond 2020 and consider options to go further in the wider context of the Scottish Energy Efficiency Programme (SEEP).

Please contact Agnes Meany on Agnes.Meany@gov.scot if you require further information about this.

The SHR celebrates its fifth anniversary

April 2017 sees our fifth anniversary as the independent regulator of Scottish social landlords. We have just one statutory objective: to safeguard and promote the interests of tenants, homeless people and others who use social landlords' services.

There's much to look back on from another busy year. Getting more information to tenants about their landlords' performance against the Scottish Social Housing Charter remained a priority. Last August we published our third suite of landlord reports for every Scottish social landlord. We updated our online comparison tool, which lets tenants compare their landlord's performance over time and against others.

We published a report looking at how landlords performed in 2015/16. It showed they continue to perform well across almost all the Charter's standards and outcomes. Overall, landlords continue to deliver good services and tenant satisfaction remains high. Nine out of ten tenants are satisfied with their landlord's overall service.

Last May we published our new plan for involving tenants in our work. This restates our commitment to tenants being at the heart of our work, building on existing initiatives.

We continued to work with our national panel of tenants and service users, which has almost 500 members and lets us hear directly about tenants' priorities. The panel has highlighted tenants' concerns about future rent affordability and what makes for tenants being 'satisfied customers'. The quality of homes, affordable rent and speed of emergency repairs feature highly.

We recruited tenant advisors as another way of bringing a tenant's perspective to our work. This built on the work of our previous tenant assessors who worked successfully with us for 10 years. Tenant advisors are also involved in our scrutiny of individual landlords and help us test landlord services, through activities such as mystery shopping and reviewing landlords' websites and publications.

We speak directly to tenant organisations and meet regularly with our Registered Tenant Organisation liaison group. And our board members are midway through a cycle of meetings with each regional network. In the last year we've also spoken at both TPAS and TIS conferences.

Talking to tenants helps us understand what's important to



them, and we reflect this in our work. For example, we published a report in late 2016 highlighting the importance of landlords consulting with tenants annually on rent levels. The report included recommendations for landlords about understanding what is affordable for tenants, asking tenants how they want to be consulted and telling tenants how their views have been considered.

Involving tenants and other service users directly helps make sure we stay focused on the issues that matter to them. This will continue to be key to our work.

Find out more about the regulator and its work at www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk where you can also sign up for a regular electronic newsletter, 'SHR Update' and follow @SHR_news on Twitter.

To contact the Scottish Housing Regulator about any of the issues raised call 0141 242 5642.

The CIH Excellence Awards 2016 Ceremony, held in Glasgow last November, celebrated the fantastic work going on in housing across Scotland

Link Housing Association scooped the CIH Excellence in Scrutiny Award sponsored by the Scottish Government. Anne Cook, head of the Scottish Government's Social Housing Services Team, was delighted to present the award which recognised the achievements made by the association to develop scrutiny activities that deliver service improvements and good outcomes for their tenants.

The association had clearly demonstrated that they had worked collaboratively with their tenants to develop effective scrutiny arrangements across their organisation, and had embedded these into their landlords' performance management arrangements. They were also able to demonstrate positive outcomes for their tenants in line with the requirements of the Scottish Social Housing Charter.

The other finalists, pipped at the post, were Trust Housing Association, East Ayrshire Council and Irvine Housing Association. All were praised for their scrutiny work.

Link Housing Association staff and tenants completed the 'Stepping up to Scrutiny' programme which the Scottish Government commissioned the CIH and HouseMark Scotland to deliver. The training and learning programme was designed to improve housing organisations' understanding of the scrutiny requirements of the Scottish Social Housing Charter and related regulatory framework. It supported social landlords and tenants to deliver this in practice and strengthened the connection between performance management, continuous improvement, value for money and scrutiny.

The 'Stepping Up to Scrutiny Trainer Toolkit' and the 'Practice Guide for Tenants and Landlords' have now been published. They are designed to help social landlord organisations develop and improve their scrutiny activities and practices in addition to understanding the scrutiny activities linked to the Scottish Social Housing Charter and related regulatory framework.

You can read more details about the awards on the CIH website:

www.cih.org/excellenceawards

You can find out more about the practice guidance and toolkit by accessing the links below:

- <http://bit.ly/practice-guide>
- <http://bit.ly/trainer-toolkit>

If you want to find out more about 'Stepping up to Scrutiny' please contact Ann Marie Stanley on Annmarie.Stanley@gov.scot



International Union of Tenants Conference (IUT) 2016 – cooperation across borders



Magnus Hammar, Secretary General, International Union of Tenants, gives an overview of the conference.



The Wheatley Group hosted the IUT congress which was sponsored by TPAS and the Scottish Government.

The 20th IUT world congress, held in Glasgow last October, saw 150 delegates from 25 countries discuss whether control of rents are outdated or a necessity – a hot topic in many countries where tight housing markets have caused spiralling private rents.

Opening the congress, Kevin Stewart, Scottish Minister for Local Government and Housing, said, ‘The Scottish private rented sector is today three times bigger than 15 years ago, representing 14% of the national housing stock. The Scottish Government is reforming the private rented sector to make it more professional and work better. Recent legislation has created a new private residential tenancy to security, stability and predictability for tenants while providing appropriate safeguards for landlords, lenders and investors.’

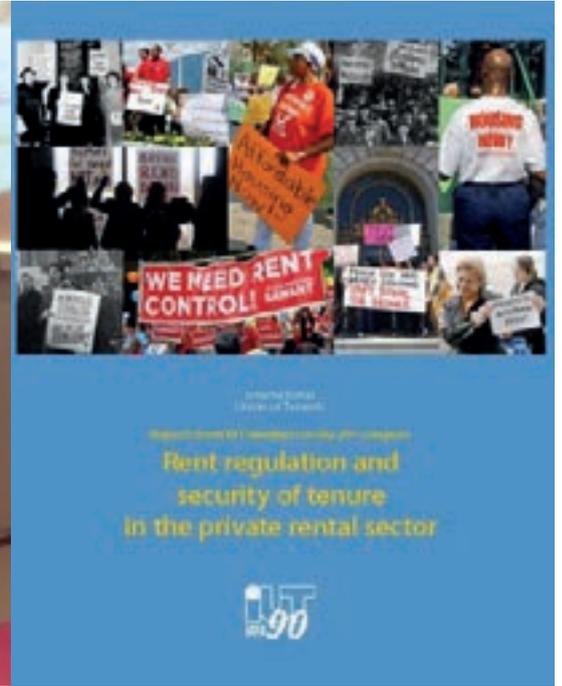
Scotland has a comparatively progressive housing policy, particularly in social housing and this was noted by the Minister in which he gave a commitment to good housing and tenant participation. More remains to be done in the private rented sector, where tenants are still rather insecure if, say, the house they live in changes ownership, or the landlord announces large rent

increases, though the Private Housing Tenancies Act 2016 is a way forward.

The initial rent for new private tenancies is regulated in Sweden and in the Netherlands, and for the majority of private leases in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany and Italy.

IUT advocates tenure neutrality, where the consumer is financially indifferent between owning and renting a home. It means the method of financing housing, and the tax system and subsidies do not distort consumer choices between renting and owning.

IUT president Sven Bergenstråhle said: ‘In some countries there are huge subsidies for homeowners therefore developers prefer houses for sale. Europe needs subsidies to support decent housing for all, but any subsidy must be tied to conditions that give in lower prices and rents. Otherwise subsidies just contribute to “doping” the prices.’



‘Many economists argue that deregulation gives a better supply of rental housing, but this rarely happens. It’s a myth. Free rent setting for new tenancies hampers mobility of workers and students. What we need is affordable rental housing in the cities where the jobs and education opportunities are.’

Social housing is not the problem but the solution, said Sorcha Edwards, Secretary General of Housing Europe, representing social landlords. ‘The private market is blocked; its unaffordability is affecting the purchasing power and competitiveness of cities, local economy and key workers. Most of the buildings in Europe were built between 1946 and 1970. There was a big mobilisation to deliver large proportions of social housing. We now have to push for a similar level.

‘According to a Housing Europe study, public spending for housing in the EU decreased from 1.1% of GDP in 2003 to 0.8% in 2012. There is an increasing role of private finance both at EU and national levels, and a “revisualisation” of the social housing sector. Today, according to EU figures, 81 million Europeans are overburdened by housing costs.’

Rent control in the private rental sector was discussed by Dr Marietta Haffner, from Delft University of Technology: ‘There are no clear links between the level of regulation and the size of the private rental sector,’ said Dr Haffner. ‘It’s a common argument that tougher regulation of the private rental sector leads to a smaller sector, but my observations show no support for that. Regulations are a way of guaranteeing affordable housing for more people, and make it possible for the tenants to feel more

at home. There are also benefits to landlords in the form of better transparency and decreased turnover rates’.

The IUT congress adopted and signed the IUT congress statement, ‘We need a 21st century rent control’ and are calling for controlled rents in the private rental sector, anywhere in the cities where escalating rents are pricing people out of housing where they live and work.

To find out more information please visit: www.iut.nu/conferences.htm

Health and social care integration

Health and social care integration – what does it mean for housing in Scotland?

The increasing challenges associated with an ageing population means more pressure on our vital services. We're responding to this challenge by better integrating our health and social care services.

Good quality housing plays a key part in this. We know that independent living is key to improving health and wellbeing, so successfully integrating health and social care will ensure that more people are cared for and supported at home or in a homely setting.

Delivering the national health and wellbeing outcomes set out in legislation* involves more than health and social care services. We've made sure that it underpins local planning, with requirements to 'connect' with citizens, communities, service providers, carers and others when strategic planning. Some housing functions are part of local integration arrangements, with the lead responsibility for these shifting to health and social care.

For example, it isn't only about enabling independent living for people, but also about being more effective in preventing admissions to hospital, helping people return home more quickly after hospital admission and contributing to tackling the health inequalities affecting people in Scotland.

Housing organisations have a track record of providing holistic support to tenants, residents and homeless people, so they're well placed to align their services with integrated health and social care services. Examples of housing services which contribute to the achievement of national health and wellbeing outcomes include:

- providing and maintaining modern homes which meet the diverse needs of tenants, including those with particular needs;
- arranging and undertaking adaptations to council and housing association homes, and helping owners and private tenants to fund and undertake adaptations; providing preventative services such as Care and Repair and 'handyperson' schemes;
- repairing and upgrading social rented housing;
- providing technology and telecare to help people manage their lives at home;
- ongoing housing support to those who need help to manage their life in their home; from low-level activity (such as tenancy support) to more intensive support for those with complex needs; and

- advising those facing difficulties with their housing, including those facing increasing frailty and those at risk of homelessness; this can include advice on housing choices, welfare advice, advocacy support, befriending services, and help finding alternative housing.

The national health and wellbeing outcomes set out in the legislation drive change and so each partnership is forming a strategy around the needs of its local population. Locality planning is included in the legislation meaning that each partnership must identify at least two (with some identifying as many as four or five) localities within its area, the needs and priorities for each requiring its own plan to reflect that area and its community. Partnerships and services are starting to form new working relationships across all services and are engaging with local people as never before. Through health and social care integration people will see change that reflects their needs and aspirations and see the benefit of dynamic new partnership working.

Please contact Kate.Cunningham@gov.scot for more information.

* The outcomes are set out in the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes) (Scotland) Regulations 2014.

George McGuinness MBE, Chair of the Glasgow and Western Isles Regional Network, has been involved in housing advocacy for almost 40 years

How do you think health and social care integration can change lives for tenants in Scotland?

I've seen services trying to work together over the years and this really is a new model and people are more focused on its delivery than they ever have been in the past and there is more work going on now. Before, it wasn't joined up. There was hope and promises, but lots of failure and disappointment.

To me housing and health is the key to life. Without warm, safe housing lives would be affected, children would struggle at school, families suffer. Housing officers used to be responsible for up 800 houses. Now that number is closer to 200 meaning they get to know their tenants, they see when someone is starting to struggle long before it is a problem so that changes can be made and support offered to keep people in their home and in their community.

What would you like to see integration achieve in future?

I'd like to see us being more proactive. Health, housing and wellbeing should be our mantra.

The uniqueness of people needs to be appreciated, where one person might need support in one area and respond quickly, another person might take much longer to respond and we need to be plan for this. We all need different types of support at different times and no one solution can ever fit us all. That type of planning is a sticking plaster and can't last.

I witnessed a telecare consultation in the Highlands where an older gent spoke to his doctor online saving him a 60-mile round trip. They spoke about test results, how he was feeling and afterwards he felt better and his doctor felt better knowing that he was well and coping. If I struggle I might only need a hand rail. It might only take widening a doorway to keep me in my home. We have all the solutions right now and I hope we're starting to use them all at last.



George McGuinness MBE.



Minister for Social Security, Jeane Freeman MSP, outlines the new social security system for Scotland.

Last month I marked another milestone as we build our new social security system for Scotland, when we responded to the consultation which has taken me to communities across Scotland over the past few months.

From Stornoway to the Scottish Borders, I've asked people about social security and listened to their personal experiences of the current system.

What's impressed me most was the number of people who spoke to me and were willing to not only share their own stories, but also tell me their ideas and views about Scotland's system could, and should, work better.

There's one thing I heard most of all – and it stuck with me:

“People using social security services should have the right to expect to be treated as human beings.”

Yes, they absolutely should. And in our Scottish system they will be. Social security is a human right and that rights based approach will be the foundation on which we will build.

And the starting point for us is to enshrine that rights based approach and our founding principles of dignity, fairness and respect in the foundation and daily operation of the agency

Those principles will be reflected in a charter to make sure that the government has a duty to deliver on this promise, and gives people



Angela Constance, Cabinet Secretary for Communities, Social Security and Equalities and Jeane Freeman, Minister for Social Security, meet members of the public to consult on the new devolved powers.

confidence that this is about much more than warm words – we are working with and for everyone in Scotland.

We have a clear path we need to follow to make sure that we transfer these powers safely and securely and the 1.4m people who reply on this critical financial support continue to receive the money they expect, on the right day and at the right amount.

It is why I am pleased that one of the first uses of our powers is to give tenants the choice of having the housing element of Universal Credit payments made directly to landlords in the private rented sector as well as those in social housing.

I know that the social security system we are building can make a real and positive difference to people's lives.

I want to work with people in designing our system. That is why on 3 March I announced our plans to recruit 2,000 people with lived experience of the benefits. By joining, people can share their experience of receiving benefits and help to shape the new system.

People will be recruited to the panels in two ways – by direct invitation mailed to a representative sample of recent benefit recipients and by an open invitation, publicly asking for volunteers.

More information about the Experience Panels and how to register can be found at www.gov.scot/socialsecurity

It's only through listening to people who have personal experience of the benefits system and by working with experts in the field that we will make that positive difference.

I am confident that we will.



In memory of...

Last year the tenants' movement in Scotland lost four tenant representatives who dedicated much of their lives to improving tenants' rights and making their communities better places to live. They will be sadly missed.



Gordon Lethorn was chair of West Strathclyde Regional Network and joined the Regional Network Committee at the earliest stages of its development. Gordon believed that being part of the networks enabled tenant representatives to influence the Scottish Government's thinking on national policy. Gordon had been part of the local tenants and residents' association in Bridge of Weir for more than 20 years. He had been the chair for over 10 years and under his stewardship it developed into a vibrant, challenging and supportive organisation, which does a great deal to benefit tenants and residents in the community. Gordon received an award from the Renfrewshire Provost, acknowledging him as an outstanding member of the community as a reward for this fantastic work.



Rena Smith MBE was chair of the Tayforth Regional Network and was recognised for her dedication to her community when she was awarded the Citizen of the Year award in Dundee. She joined the Balmoral Tenants and Residents group holding posts of secretary and treasurer. It was through the Balmoral group that she helped to create and publish the award-winning community newsletter *Douglas Live and Kicking*. As a result of her achievements Rena was awarded the MBE in 2011. Rena was committed to empowering tenants, residents, and community groups, ensuring they were at the heart of the consultation process.



John Colquhoun, a valued member of East Dunbartonshire & Lanarkshire Regional Network was a much-loved and respected founder member of the Regional Networks. Early on, John saw the value of creating a Scotland-wide organisation which would have direct contact with the Scottish Government and could articulate the concerns in our communities. He was a man of integrity, vision and compassion, who could express himself with candour at all times. No matter what company he was in, he was in no way intimidated. His knowledge was extensive and his commitment to tenants and residents' organisations gained him the respect of everyone he encountered. People would stop him on the street and ask for his help and it was never refused. He was a man of and for the people and his legacy will be long remembered.



Hugh Wilson Fraser MBE, was chair of South West Scotland Regional Network and was one of the founder members of the Food Train in Dumfries, which began in 1995 following a community survey of older people that found many of them were struggling with their weekly grocery shopping. A partnership of local shops and volunteers came together and the concept of the Food Train was born. He set up a tenants and residents' group in his home village of Locharbriggs and used his position to promote the transfer of the housing stock from the local authority to a community-based housing association with tenants running the organisation. For his dedication and hard work to his community Hugh was awarded the MBE in 2010.

Dates for your diary



TIS Annual Conference 2017 –

Health, Wealth and Housing

Date: 9th – 11th June 2017

Venue: Westerwood Hotel and Resort, Glasgow

Contact: www.tis.org.uk

or contact us on 0141 248 1241

for more information



**TPAS Scotland Annual Conference &
AGM 2017**

Date: 3rd – 5th November 2017

Venue: Fairmont Hotel, St Andrews

Contact:

Elaine.Scouler@tpasscotland.org.uk or

0141 552 3633