

CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF HOUSING

ADDITIONAL WRITTEN EVIDENCE

(Submitted by CIH further to information offered at the Infrastructure and Capital Investment Committee meeting on Wednesday 22 January 2014)

Right to Buy – impact on social housing lets.

This issue is best covered in the SG's 2006 report:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/09/26114727/7>

At section 4.2, the report highlights that the Right to Buy does not have an impact on the number of available social lettings at the time it is exercised, and that the impact is felt when the property is no longer occupied by the original buyers. At this point, it can be assumed that if the property had stayed in the social rented sector it would have become available for re-let.

This reinforces the point we made at the session that the impact of abolition is a long term one in terms of properties being available for let – obviously it is the case that in the short term, abolition has little impact on lets because abolition is not expected, by itself, to increase the normal rate of turnover in the stock. It isn't possible to be specific about the number of vacancies which abolition would create in the long term, but based on the SG's estimate (in its 2012 consultation) that abolition could protect up to 10,000 houses over a five year period, with average turnover in social housing being around 9% per annum, it might be estimated that abolition could create an additional 900 vacancies over a five year period. It might be reasonable to reduce this figure in recognition of the fact that the tenants whose RTB is being ended are probably more likely to be longer term tenants, so our estimate of the vacancies figure would be somewhere between 500-900 over a five year period.

Age restriction on social sector allocations

This was introduced in September 2002 by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, which amended the 1987 Act as follows:

A local authority and a registered social landlord may take into account the age of applicants in the allocation of—

(a) houses which have been designed or substantially adapted for occupation by persons of a particular age group;

(b) houses to persons who are or are to be in receipt of housing support services (within the meaning of section 91 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 (asp 10)) for persons of a particular age group."

As you can see, the 2001 Act allows age to be taken into account only where the housing is specially designed or where the person is to receive specialist housing support for people of a particular age group.

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