

## **MERRYLEE RESIDENTS AND TENANTS ORGANISATION**

### **WRITTEN SUBMISSION**

Our residents' group represents tenants and residents living in the Merrylee area of Glasgow. Our landlord is Govanhill Housing Association and our tenemental owners are factored by either the Housing Association or Your Place. We wish to make the following brief comments as our response to the Housing Bill consultation.

#### **Right to Buy**

Generally we are in agreement with the proposed three year timetable for abolishing the Right to Buy. We understand the desire to avoid a sudden spike in sales. We also appreciate that it can take tenants some time to plan their finances to make it possible for them to buy their property, so three years seems fair.

#### **Allocations**

While we welcome the proposed increase in flexibility for landlords when allocating housing, we believe that properties need to be allocated to households of the appropriate size, especially if people are in receipt of benefits. We accept that housing one young person up a close of senior citizens might not be a recipe for success, but creating balanced communities with a range of ages and family types should be our aim.

#### **Assignment / succession**

Our concern with the change to 12 months notification regarding succession rights mainly relates to the situation of carers. If an individual has given up a tenancy or home to care for an elderly parent, it hardly seems fair that if the parent dies suddenly within those 12 months, the carer could become homeless. Is there any protection that could be offered to people in such a position?

#### **Anti-social behaviour**

We believe that dealing with anti-social behaviour through the introduction of SSSTs does introduce another tool for RSLs to use to try to influence peoples' behaviour. The current cost of an ASBO is prohibitive, and it may still seem like a badge of honour for some folk. Do there still remain issues for how landlords can respond when the anti-social behaviour is exhibited by children within a household?

## **Regulation of letting agents / Enforcement action**

We would be very much in favour of the regulation of private letting agents. Our neighbourhood is seeing more and more private sector lets, in properties bought under RTB, and, especially in tenements, the transient nature of these lets can cause local problems. In our experience however, regulation is only useful if there is effective enforcement.

We would welcome increased powers for the council to improve housing conditions and enforce maintenance in the private sector in our area as this will by default help protect social rented sector tenants in tenements as well. The only issue remaining may still be affordability for some owners.

**Merrylee Residents and Tenants Organisation**

**24.02.14**