

Cross Party Group at the Scottish Parliament on ARMED FORCES VETERANS

Minutes of the meeting held at the Scottish Parliament on 29th February 2012

PRESENT

Alex Fergusson MSP (AF) - Convenor

Willie Rennie MSP (WR)

Stewart Maxwell MSP (SM)

Paul Wheelhouse MSP (PW)

Jackson Carlaw MSP

Annabel Ewing MSP (AE)

Kenneth Gibson MSP (KG)

In Attendance

Colonel Martin Gibson(MG) OBE DL – Veterans Scotland

Lt Colonel Ian Ballantyne (IB) – CEO Scottish Veterans Residencies

Ian McGregor (IM) – CEO Poppyscotland

Francis Brown (FB)– War Veteran

James Trolland (JT)- Community Activist and Veteran

Helen Barclay (HB) - Policy Officer – Scottish Federation of Housing Associations

Sandra McDermott (SM)– Glasgow City Council

David McGrath (GG)– East of Scotland Veterans Advisory and Pensions Committee

Gary Gray (GG)– West of Scotland Veterans Advisory and Pensions Committee

Chris Connaboy (CC)– Centre Director – MRA&RC Napier University

Susie Scott (SS)– Senior Housing Advisor – Glasgow's' Helping Heroes

Moira Bain – Ownership Options in Scotland

Robert McFarlane – Secretary to the Cross Party Group.

APOLOGIES

Richard Simpson MSP

Jackie Bailey MSP

Nanette Milne MSP

Cross Party Group at the Scottish Parliament on ARMED FORCES VETERANS

Minutes of the meeting held at the Scottish Parliament on 29th February 2012

Sir Jamie McGrigor MSP

Denis Robertson MSP

Richard Lyle MSP

The committee noted with regret the failure of COSLA to send a representative to the meeting despite repeated requests and also their failure to send a written response to the papers submitted.

BUSINESS.

1. The minutes of the inaugural meeting of the 30th November 2011 were agreed as a true record
2. There were no matters arising.
3. AF introduced those present and invited SM to open proceedings by briefing the CPG on the Glasgow's' Helping Heroes project;
 - a. GHH started in June 2010 following initiatives by Glasgow City Council(GCC) to assist Veterans with getting LA Housing. GCC quickly recognised the need to provide a service which offered a holistic approach to the problems being experienced by veterans which included housing issues.. GHH now offers a wide variety of services to the veterans community in Glasgow among which is a dedicated housing officer co-located within GHH.
 - b. 60% of the footfall through GHH has housing issues.
 - c. SS has produced a statement of best practise based on her experience as the SHH within GHH and has distributed this within the housing professionals community.
 - d. Experience and evidence have proven that this type of resource situated within a facility such as GHH pays dividends and to date over 100 people registered with the Homeless partnership have found homes and are sustaining their tenancy.
 - e. There are still barriers to be overcome particularly when there are families and children involved.
4. There was a general consensus that projects such as GHH were beneficial to the community and that MSP should actively encourage their constituents to consider such projects where the need can be demonstrated. AE pointed out that Fife Council were looking at a range of opportunities and were at the forefront of developing initiatives in conjunction with the Firm Base.

Cross Party Group at the Scottish Parliament on ARMED FORCES VETERANS

Minutes of the meeting held at the Scottish Parliament on 29th February 2012

5. IB talked to his paper submitted to the CPG in 2008 (at appendix 1)which he had updated for this meeting (at Appendix 2) and in particular to the detrimental effects that the proposed new legislation would have on veterans seeking housing.
 - a. The UK Government is set to make radical changes to the welfare system over the next few years, which will have serious and wide-ranging implications for housing associations, housing co-operatives and their tenants. The welfare reforms announced to date include:
 - Significantly increased Housing Benefit reductions for claimants that have non-dependents living with them; i.e. adult family members of working age on other benefits or on the minimum wage for a 40 hour week will lose £48:50 a week in Housing Benefit.
 - A cap on Housing Benefit based on the under-occupancy of socially rented homes; just under a third of working-age tenants 'under occupy' their tenancies by at least one bedroom. These households will lose an average of £11 a week in Housing Benefit.
 - Tenants will be penalised for under-occupying but in many cases they simply don't have an alternative, due to lack of available smaller properties. Across the housing sector in Scotland tenants, 62% need one bedroom but only 34% have this: this represents chronic under-supply.
 - Under-occupying can serve a purpose in the 'lifecycle' of a home. Included within the 'under-occupying' group will be couples who may plan to have children, parents who have weekend access to children, those with older children who need to visit, those with ageing parents who may have longer-term care needs and those with teenage children who need space to study.
 - Anyone single and under the age of 35 who is on for example 'Job Seekers Allowance' will only be entitled to £68 per week Housing Benefit, which means that they will be unable to rent a single flat and will therefore have to share a house with other people. How the individual will meet the various utility costs and have a quality of life appears to have been ignored.
 - The Department of Works & Pensions (DWP) who will be running the Universal Credit system have stated that Housing Benefit will be paid direct to the applicant and could take up to 8 weeks to be processed initially and possibly even longer as the total credit due is not paid until the last element of the claim is dealt with. From then on it will be paid monthly in arrears. Landlords, who can currently get the Housing Benefit element for the applicant paid direct to them, will no longer have that facility. In effect therefore, a vulnerable veteran could be living in accommodation supplied by an ex-service charity and for 8 weeks, pay no rent, then once he/she gets the backdated Universal Credit, which in some cases will be several hundred pounds (if not thousands depending on the number of benefits entitled too) the likelihood of paying the full rent to a landlord is remote, especially if the recipient has alcohol, drugs or financial issues. One in five tenants receive Housing Benefit so the impact on the

Cross Party Group at the Scottish Parliament on ARMED FORCES VETERANS

Minutes of the meeting held at the Scottish Parliament on 29th February 2012

housing sector could be very hard and SVHA for example who provide a high degree of support in their hostels in Edinburgh and Dundee could be significantly affected by the cuts.

- Even before benefit reform, many of the working-age veterans on housing benefit approaching the ex-service housing charities have stated that they were in 'some financial difficulties' and if they find finances difficult to manage before the cuts, the impact on rent arrears could be significant.

6. AE undertook to ensure that the issues raised were brought before the appropriate Scottish Parliament Committee. ACTION ANNABEL EWING
7. Helen Barclay gave a brief overview of the work of SFHA and in particular pointed out that the newly set up Housing Hubs would be an appropriate resource for Veterans Housing to tap into for information, guidance and support with housing issues. The Hubs were a joint partnership with all stakeholders with a view to taking early intervention with clients thus hopefully reducing homelessness and allow a degree of planning to be undertaken to ease the problems which arise with housing. Details and contacts below.

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Ayrshire and South Hub</p> <p>Lead Authority :North Ayrshire Council</p> <p>Contact Janeine Barrett</p> <p>janinebarrett@north-ayrshire.gov.uk</p> <p>01294 314 702</p> | <p>Hub Members:</p> <p>North Ayrshire Council, Dumfries and Galloway Council, East Ayrshire Council, Inverclyde Council, South Ayrshire Council.</p> |
| <p>Edinburgh, Lothians and Borders Hub</p> <p>Lead Authority: Edinburgh City Council</p> <p>Contact: Michaela Smith</p> <p>michaela.smith@edinburgh.gsx.gov.uk</p> <p>0131 529 7589</p> | <p>Hub Members:</p> <p>City of Edinburgh Council, East Lothian Council, Falkirk Council, Midlothian Council, Scottish Borders Council, West Lothian Council.</p> |
| <p>North and Islands Hub</p> <p>Lead Authority: Highland Council</p> <p>Contact: Janice Wilson</p> <p>janice.wilson@highland.gsx.gov.uk</p> <p>01463 702 052</p> | <p>Hub Members:</p> <p>Highland Council, Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Eilean Siar, Moray Council, Orkney Islands Council, Shetland Islands Council.</p> |
| <p>Tayside, Fife and Central Hub</p> | <p>Hub Members:</p> |

Cross Party Group at the Scottish Parliament on ARMED FORCES VETERANS

Minutes of the meeting held at the Scottish Parliament on 29th February 2012

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Lead Authority: Perth and Kinross Council</p> <p>Contact: Liz Cooper</p> <p>lcooper@pkc.gsx.gov.uk</p> <p>01738 476 071</p> | <p>Perth and Kinross Council, Angus Council, Argyll and Bute Council, Clackmannanshire Council, Dundee City Council, Fife Council.</p> |
| <p>West Hub</p> <p>Lead Authority: East Dunbartonshire Council</p> <p>Lead authority: Grant Mackintosh</p> <p>grant.mackintosh@eastdunbarton.gov.uk</p> <p>0141 578 8064</p> | <p>Hub Members:</p> <p>East Dunbartonshire Council, East Renfrewshire Council, Glasgow City Council, North Lanarkshire Council, Renfrewshire Council, South Lanarkshire Council, Stirling Council, West Dunbartonshire Council, GHA.</p> |

8. Stewart Maxwell made the following points;
 - a. He had a particular concern over the Single Room rule and encouraged his colleagues to alert other MSP to the potential problem.
 - b. He also indicated that while it would be wrong to positively discriminate in favour of a particular grouping within society it was possible to frame housing guidance in such a way to ensure priority groupings were clearly identified and guidance framed around their needs.
 - c. He noted that there were particular difficulties around the Housing of disabled people however every problem has a solution.
 - d. He indicated that the Scottish Government were updating their response to the Command Paper and that this was a good time for Veterans Organisations to influence SG thinking.
9. The CPG discussed the fact that under the new legislation there was no provision being made to pay housing benefit directly to the landlord as is the current practise and that in future the benefit would go directly to the recipient. It was agreed that in cases where there was a degree of vulnerability with the client it was possible that the landlord would be last in line for payment and this could lead to an increase in the homeless population. This was not a good idea.
10. The CPG noted that the client group age profile was coming down and that the 3rd sector was seeing clients from 20 years of age upwards. Veteran's organisations were encouraged to ensure that the UK Government were aware of the changes in age profiles of veterans seeking housing.

Cross Party Group at the Scottish Parliament on ARMED FORCES VETERANS

Minutes of the meeting held at the Scottish Parliament on 29th February 2012

11. There followed a general discussion at which the following observations were made;
 - a. The housing hubs were a good avenue for encouraging other LA to take a look at the GHH model and consider adopting in where appropriate.
 - b. It was noted that veterans were a reluctant cohort when it came to seeking help. All stakeholders needed to be more proactive in communicating what was available.
 - c. The housing hubs should be encouraged to have an Armed Forces Champion in each hub.
 - d. The CPG felt it would be advantageous to have a common allocation policy across Scotland
 - e. The CPG felt it would useful if RSL could release a number of houses within their stock to the veteran's community to administer on their behalf.
 - f. There were inconsistencies in the guidance on veterans seeking housing and there was a need for this to be tightened up and made more formal.
 - g. The RSL sector was huge with 60 RSL in Glasgow alone. Dealing with them all would be difficult. Again the hubs would be an avenue into them.
 - h. It was suggested that the time was right for a push to SG to revisit policy with regard to veterans housing.
 - i. MB pointed out that there was assistance to veterans to buy their house as opposed to rent. The LEAF scheme should be encouraged. OOIS was recruiting a veteran to work within their organisation to assist with veteran's issues.
 - j. The CPG felt that part ownership of housing stock should be encouraged.
12. The CPG discussed whether there was scope within the veterans housing sphere for Preventative Spend initiatives to be explored. PW and KG agreed to look at how this might be achieved.

A.O.C.B.

13. PW tabled a draft of a Parliamentary question on Alcohol use (mis-use) within the Armed Forces and Veterans Community. He asked that comments be forwarded to him soonest.

14. Dates for subsequent meetings are:

- a. 25 April – Veterans Health & Wellbeing - Surgeon General, Veterans Agency and RCGP in attendance
- b. 13th June – Keith Brown SG Minister with responsibility for Veterans.
- c. 26th September – normal business meeting and AGM

Cross Party Group at the Scottish Parliament on ARMED FORCES VETERANS

Minutes of the meeting held at the Scottish Parliament on 29th February 2012

APPENDIX 1

Discussion Paper for Scottish Parliament Cross Party Committee on Veterans Issues dated NOV. 2008

HOUSING ISSUES

INTRODUCTION

1. Good quality housing at an affordable rent in an area of personal choice is a fundamental desire of people generally in the rented housing sector market throughout Scotland. This is particularly pertinent for those members of the Armed Forces at the point of leaving the Services, and even more so for those who have left the Services and for whatever reason find themselves homeless or living in poor-quality accommodation.
2. This paper identifies, with particular reference to Scotland, the housing concerns that face former members of the Armed Forces, and those organisations that provide support to them and proposes courses of actions which could help ameliorate the situation.

AIM

3. The aim of this paper is to set the context and priorities for, the Scottish Parliament Cross Party Group on Veterans' work on veterans' housing issues.

THE CURRENT SITUATION

4. People leaving the Armed Services who do not own or are not able to buy their own house or meet the cost of private rented accommodation, find themselves having to approach local housing providers to seek access to their respective housing lists when their tenure in Services provided housing comes to an end. People are not necessarily discharged from the Armed Forces in the areas in which they would wish to live in and therefore find themselves applying to housing authorities in their area of choice, but their time in the Armed Forces does not give them any additional/exceptional rights to climb up the particular housing list. The end result could eventually mean that the ex-service person(s) could end up 'homeless'.
5. When anyone presents themselves as homeless to a local authority, there is a statutory requirement for that local authority to house the applicant providing the applicant(s) have a 'local connection'. In the case of a former member of the Armed Forces, however, under the 1987 Housing (Scotland) Act the fact that they have served and were based in the particular local area is specifically excluded from being recognised as a 'local connection' and therefore they would not be eligible to apply for 'homeless' housing. Taking this to extremes, if the applicant was born and raised in a military family environment before joining the armed forces, the local connection could quite seriously end up being somewhere in Germany!
6. The ex-service charitable organisations based in Scotland, under the umbrella of Veterans Scotland, have currently some 800 properties available for rent to help meet the ever growing needs and justifiable expectations of the veterans' community in Scotland. These ex-service

Cross Party Group at the Scottish Parliament on ARMED FORCES VETERANS

Minutes of the meeting held at the Scottish Parliament on 29th February 2012

housing charities help address the needs of homeless, those with a disability and those who want a good-quality affordable rented property: the problem is that the turnover of properties is very low and the waiting list gets ever longer. Some years ago, a system was in place, albeit informally, that those leaving the Armed Forces could apply to their local authority/housing provider for housing and receive additional points, to recognise the fact that they were serving in areas not of their choosing, to enable them more quickly to access housing.

7. Each of the main ex-service housing charities has an ambitious development programme (and some of the funds to support it) but the limiting factor is the large cost of such development including availability of land in the areas of greatest need. At present only one ex-service charity in Scotland is a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) and Housing Association with access to government funding through the Housing Association Grant (HAG) mechanism. The majority of funding for any development must therefore be raised by means of seeking donations to the particular charity from the public at large and the ex-service Benevolent Funds/Trusts.
8. Representations have been made to the Scottish Government to amend the legislation which affects the 'Local Connection' issue, (Housing [Scotland] Act 1987) the release of local authority surplus land to ex-service charities (Local Government [Scotland] act 1973). In addition, representations have been made to the MOD to release surplus MOD land for housing.
9. Under the umbrella of Veterans Scotland, all the ex-service housing charities are identifying where joint procurement/building can be addressed and working initiatives developed.
10. Related to the provision of housing for the homeless and needy ex-service men and women is the developing concerns of access to funding from local authorities for the provision of Housing Support designed to help claimants maintain their tenancy. Some local authorities are taking the view that because we, as providers of housing support, are 'exclusively' for the ex-service community we do not therefore meet the 'strategic fit' for that particular local authority; put another way, we are not inclusive for the whole population. To date, current funding remains in place and we await the outcome of local authorities' final policy statements on the matter. The loss of this income to the providers would seriously jeopardise the wellbeing of the needy ex-service men and women, who rely so heavily and respond so successfully to the manner in which the ex-service charities provide the support within the ex-service family community.

THINGS WHICH NEED TO BE DONE

11. Currently the majorities of ex-service housing charities are not RSLs and therefore have no access to statutory funding to help in the provision of affordable rented housing for the ex-service community. This severely limits the procurement and development of much needed affordable rented housing. Experience over many decades has shown that the ex-service applicants are able to cope more ably by being in an ex-service orientated community and do not feel so isolated.
12. There needs to be a greater emphasis on the delivery of much needed housing for the ex-service groups those ex-service charities which provide housing should be given special

Cross Party Group at the Scottish Parliament on ARMED FORCES VETERANS

Minutes of the meeting held at the Scottish Parliament on 29th February 2012

dispensation to be able to bid for Grants as part of, or along the same lines as apply to the HAG structure. In addition, the MOD should be encouraged to release surplus MOD (and, indeed, that of other government departments in Scotland) land and property, on a token or no-charge basis, to ex-service charities to help them provide affordable housing across Scotland. The Cross-Party Group may also wish to support the Veterans' stance on the proposed changes in our response to 'The Consultation Paper on changes to the Local Government Act 1973' currently underway to allow local authorities also to release land to the ex-service housing charities at no or minimum cost.

13. Ex-service charities providing affordable rented housing should have access to some form of Government subsidy along the lines of a Housing Association Grant (HAG).
14. Linked to the preceding paragraphs, as a starting point, Scottish local authorities should be encouraged by the Scottish Government to assume that Service veterans with needs arising out of their former military service should be entitled to 100% grant levels for housing adaptations.
15. There is a need to ensure that existing guidance to Scottish local authorities in respect of the requirement for the latter to mitigate the threat of homelessness facing Service leavers in or coming to Scotland is being implemented. Changes proposed by Veterans Scotland to the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 section 27 to remove all reference to the Armed Forces with regard to 'local connection' restrictions need to be implemented.
16. Local Authorities and housing providers should re-instate the system whereby ex-servicemen and women, on discharge from the Armed Forces were awarded additional points to assist them in gaining access to housing quicker.
17. The special circumstances that former members of the Armed forces find themselves in with regard to Housing Support should be recognised by local authorities and those ex-service charities specialising in the provision of this support should be treated as a special case when funding is being reviewed and every effort should be made to maintain the funding stream.

PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

18. There is only one ex-service housing charity in Scotland which specialises in the provision of supported accommodation for homeless and the needy ex-service men and women in Houses-in-Multiple Occupancy (HMO): the Scottish Veterans Housing Association Limited. They undertake this vital work in 'Whitefoord House' Edinburgh and 'Rosendael' in Broughty Ferry, Dundee. In these homes the age group can be anything from 17 years to 100+ but all are in need of some form

Cross Party Group at the Scottish Parliament on ARMED FORCES VETERANS

Minutes of the meeting held at the Scottish Parliament on 29th February 2012

of support to help them maintain their residency and the come bond of 'having been in the services' is a key factor in them getting their lives back together. The threat of losing funding for this key component in the fight to help our ex-service homeless because of the 'exclusivity' of the service needs to be addressed with some urgency.

19. Land for building affordable housing is essential if the ex-service housing charities are to help meet the ever increasing demand for affordable rented houses. MOD and Local Authority surplus land should be made available to the ex-service housing charities preferably free or at a peppercorn rent. Amendments to the various Legislations to make this possible should be actively pursued.

20. Homelessness legislation with particular reference to the military and 'local connection' should be reviewed and the Acts amended as shown in the preceding paragraphs.

21. Priority points for housing applications form ex-service personnel on discharge from the Armed Forces should be re-introduced.

22. Ex-service charities providing affordable rented housing should have access to a government grant along the lines of a HAG.

23. Ex-service man and women should be entitled to 100% Grant levels for housing adaptations for their needs arising from their former military service.

HOW THE CROSS-PARTY GROUP MIGHT HELP

24. Each of the six major issues listed above places severe constraints on the ex-service housing providers ability to meet their housing remit and in some cases putting the ex-service man or woman in a less favorable position than their civilian counterpart.

25. The CPG should look at the following areas:

- Gain consensus across party lines to make a special case for those ex-service housing charities registered to provide housing support/care at home, to be recognised as being in priority need for this funding from local authorities. This single issue is likely to manifest itself between now and 31 March 2009 when local authorities declare their budgets for the financial year.
- Identify surplus MOD and local authority land that could be used for ex-service housing. Encourage the UK Treasury to rescind the need for Defence Estates to gain maximum value for surplus land if the land can be used for housing for ex-service men and women and support the amendments to the Local Government Act 1973 to allow local authorities to be able to release land to ex-service charities.
- Monitor and support, where necessary, the changes to the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 with reference to the removal of restrictions on armed forces personnel and the 'local connection' with regard to presenting homeless to local authorities.

Cross Party Group at the Scottish Parliament on ARMED FORCES VETERANS

Minutes of the meeting held at the Scottish Parliament on 29th February 2012

- Identify and support a more robust mechanism for assisting those leaving the Armed Forces to be able to gain recognition for their service when applying for housing to local authorities/housing providers.
- Identify and support a mechanism that would allow ex-service charities providing housing to gain access to Government subsidies along the lines of HAG.
- Identify how best to encourage the Scottish Government and through them the local authorities, to assume that Armed forces veterans with needs arising from their military should be entitled 100% grant levels for housing adaptations.

CONCLUSION

26. Good quality, affordable rental housing in an area of personal choice is a fundamental requirement to those less fortunate members of the Armed Forces on leaving the military or in time of any subsequent need. There are insufficient houses available today and the prognosis for the immediate future is not good with demand far outstripping supply.
27. The ex-service charities can help fill this gap but need the support, both fiscal and physical, from the Scottish and UK Governments, the Ministry of Defence and Local Authorities if this is to be achieved.

Cross Party Group at the Scottish Parliament on ARMED FORCES VETERANS

Minutes of the meeting held at the Scottish Parliament on 29th February 2012

APPENDIX 2

VETERANS SCOTLAND HOUSING PILLAR UPDATE to 2008 paper

Achievements to date:

- Establishment of Housing Group All ex-service housing providers meet regularly and discuss any issues affecting housing.
- Common Housing Register - All ex-service housing providers in Scotland have their properties on IT database run from New Haig House by SVGCA. Shows areas, type of housing and availability.
- Common Application Form - Any ex-service man or woman need only fill in one housing application form and this will be disseminated to the appropriate providers by SVGCA.
- Common Waiting List - Maintained by SVGCA and software identifies all on waiting list every 6 months and letters are sent out to check if still valid.
- Convergence of ex-service Housing Charities in Scotland - Ultimate aim being to have all housing providers work under one umbrella possibly 'Veterans Scotland Housing'. So far all charities now share experiences, proposed developments and will look at shared development of housing/land if practicable.

Areas Currently Being Addressed:

- Local Connection Changes - Removal of all reference to the Armed Forces with regards to 'Local Connection' from housing primary legislation. At present in the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 members of the Armed Forces cannot claim a 'Local Connection' when presenting themselves to a Local Authority as Homeless thus jeopardizing any chance of being housed in their preferred area.

Cross Party Group at the Scottish Parliament on ARMED FORCES VETERANS

Minutes of the meeting held at the Scottish Parliament on 29th February 2012

Discussions held with VPU in MOD and Scottish Government officials. Currently helping to draw up a legislative change for presenting to both governments north and south of the border.

- Acquisition of Land

- The need for land to develop and meet the housing needs of ex-service personnel is critical. Need for appropriate MOD Land to be made available to ex-service housing charities at below market value or preferably free would be one way forward.

Local authorities should also be able to offer the same to ex-service housing charities. Discussions ongoing with MOD, Scottish Government and Cross Party Working Group.

- Funding priority for Veterans Housing Support Needs -

Some local authorities are withdrawing Housing Support Funding from some of the ex-service charities on the basis that they are exclusive (i.e. only deal with veterans). This will have serious implications for the veterans who need it. The alternative is that the ex-service housing support providers will have to seek funding from the ex-service benevolent funds – this is morally and fundamentally wrong.

Discussions with MOD, Scottish Government and Cross Party Working Group ongoing.

- Access to Statutory Funding for house building for those Veterans housing charities which are not RSLs

- Currently only registered Housing Associations can apply for government funding for housing. This is known as a Housing Association Grant (HAG). My organisation SVHA is the only veteran's housing association and we do get HAGs. A special, exception should be made for those ex-service charities that provide housing.

Cross Party Group at the Scottish Parliament on ARMED FORCES VETERANS

Minutes of the meeting held at the Scottish Parliament on 29th February 2012

Discussions on going with MOD, Cross Party Working Group and Scottish Government.

- Current Building Programme

Both SVHA and SVGCA are building houses/flats for our respective client groups.

SVHA – 9 Flats under construction in Edinburgh and are due to be ready for occupation in March/April 2009.

Currently seeking land in Glasgow/Greater Glasgow to build more affordable housing.

SVGCA – 4 houses under construction in Motherwell, due for completion Xmas 2008.

10 houses in Scone due for completion August/September 2009.

4 houses in Penicuik due for completion November 2009.

Erskine – 6 cottages are proposed but subject to planning and final approval by the Erskine Board – no dates at present.