

**Housing to 2040 – a joint meeting between the
Cross Party Group on Housing & Cross Party Group on Architecture and the Built Environment**

19 February 2020

Scottish Parliament, Holyrood

Minutes

Housing CPG members present	In attendance	Guest speakers
<p>Andy Wightman - MSP (chair) Graham Simpson - MSP Lisa Borthwick – Shelter Scotland Tony Cain – ALACHO Alistair Cameron – Rural Housing Scotland Ashley Campbell – CIH Scotland (secretariat) Grant Carson – GCIL Jil Dyson - Housing Options Scotland Claire Frew – Homeless Network Scotland Jenny Galbraith – CIH Scotland (secretariat) Ann Gibson – NHS Health Scotland Paul Hilton – ESPC Jacq Kelly – Registers of Scotland Jennifer Kennedy – Homes for Scotland Andrew McCall – The Salvation Army David Petrie – Homes for Scotland Katrina Reid – NHS Health Scotland</p>	<p>Graham Acheson – Smith Scott Mullan David Bookbinder – GWSF Hugh Crawford – Sir Frank Mears Associates Jocelyn Cunliffe – Gray, Marshall & Associates Andrea Finkel-Gates – Scotland’s Housing Network Malcolm Fraser – Fraser Livingstone Architects Thomas Hamilton – Hoskins Architects Kate Houghton – RTPI Scotland Kirsty Knott – Rankin Fraser Akiko Kobayashi – Akiko Kobayashi Architect Euan Leitch – BEFS Jim MacDonald – A&DS Colette McDiarmid – MND Scotland Suzanne McIntosh – Sir Frank Mears Associates/Suzanne McIntosh Planning Ltd Sophie Mifsud – Ministry of Defence Steven Robb – Historic Government Scotland</p>	<p>Tony Cain – ALACHO Caroline Rooks – Age Scotland</p>

Andy Richardson – Registers of Scotland Caroline Rooks – Age Scotland Emma Steel – Scottish Land and Estates David Stewart – Scottish Land and Estates Alice Tooms-Moore – Shelter Scotland	Rowena Statt – Anderson Bell and Christie Architect Craig Sanderson – Individual Alistair Scott – Smith Scott Mullan Architects Karen Stevenson – RIAS David Sutton – Individual Robin Webster – RIAS	
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1.	Welcome and apologies	<p>Convenor Andy Wightman MSP welcomed everyone to the meeting, including guests from the Cross Party Group on Architecture and Built Environment.</p> <p>Apologies were received from from:</p> <p>Caroline Elgar – Scottish Association of Landlords Cllr Peter Barrett – Perth and Kinross Council Sam Foster – Sam Foster Architects Marcelina Hamilton – Scottish Land and Estates Gordon Nelson – Federation of Master Builders Michael Tornow – NHS Health Scotland Steven Tolson – RICS</p>
2.	Minutes of the previous meeting	<p>Minutes were circulated for information but as the previous meeting was not quorate, they will not be published on the Scottish Parliament’s website.</p>
3.	Applications for membership	<p>Application from Homeless Network Scotland was approved.</p>
4.	Housing to 2040 – subgroup report	<p>Housing to 2040 – subgroup report update and discussion</p> <p>Tony Cain explained how the sub group was established and gave an overview of the report (circulated to members ahead of the meeting). The main points included:</p>

<p>update and discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need a longer-term vision for housing to create a consistency of approach and financial certainty for social landlords. • Recent changes in the housing sector including the abolition of the Right to Buy and increased targets for the delivery of affordable homes mean that for the first time in a generation we are developing more social and affordable homes than are being lost through sales, planned disposals and demolitions. This raises questions about how many homes we need to build, what type of homes and where. • The 50,000 affordable homes target has led to significant scaling up of delivery in a relatively short timescale. • The balance of cost for delivering homes at this scale has also shifted to existing social housing tenants. Around 60% of the cost of each new home being delivered is being paid for by tenants through their rents. • The report is bringing together very disparate sectors of the housing industry. All of these groups that contributed have created a very broad consensus on what they feel should be the future of housing policy. • Key points from the report that Tony Cain highlighted included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We need to plan housing so that it is next to people’s places of work to reduce emissions caused by commuting. The report is very focused on climate change and place and space and the planning perspective. ○ Land and taxation has to get looked at properly, with radical reform considered, not just tinkering with existing tax systems. ○ The report does not use the language of crisis and hyperbole, but it is clear there are housing needs in Scotland that need to be addressed and shortfalls in current system and Scotland is wealthy enough to address it. ○ A critique of the Housing to 2040 vision paper is that it starts by discussing how housing can help other policy agendas and housing is secondary. We must start from the position that housing is a human right, not a means to fix other policy areas. • Overall, the report is a powerful synthesis of potentially conflicting views. The sector has produced a large and technical consensus around the direction of travel. We need our politicians to do the same going forward – to develop housing policy that has clear objectives and cross-party consensus. <p>Questions and comments:</p> <p>Andy Wightman MSP notes that there is no difficulty in getting cross-party consensus on certain issues, e.g. the need for more affordable housing and to reduce homelessness. But issues such as finance, delivery, taxation and human rights are much more complex and therefore difficult to reach consensus on. An attempt to achieve cross party consensus is right, but will not be easy.</p> <p>David Sutton says that the poor quality of private new housing building is striking. Local authorities have developed local standards, and he notes there should be a Scottish national housing standard which could be delivered through the new National Planning</p>
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	<p>Framework 4. Local communities are often supportive of new social housing as it is a much higher standard than some private developments.</p> <p>He also notes that there are issues with new housing developments not being adopted (meaning that responsibility for infrastructure such as roads and drainage is not taken on by the local authority and must be managed by residents or an appointed factor). His research through Freedom of Information requests suggest that significant numbers of new homes are in this position.</p> <p>Tony Cain says the issue of common standards for new build homes has been captured in the report, but not in huge detail. He also notes that discussion around common standards has been ongoing for a number of years with the Scottish Government but actions are not yet being taken forward.</p> <p>Jennifer Kennedy notes that Homes for Scotland would support a national Scottish standard as it would be much easier for developers to deal with than 32 different standards across different local authorities. She also noted that Homes for Scotland felt that they could not sign up to the report drafted by the CPG sub group as it did not reflect all of the views of her organisation but that Homes for Scotland would be submitting their own response to the consultation.</p> <p>The secretariat offered to circulate Homes for Scotland’s response to the group.</p> <p>Hugh Crawford raised the issue of land availability and supply. With the Planning Act a greater role has been given to the National Planning Framework which will help to define where new homes are built. It is a complex issue and difficult to talk about housing in isolation without talking about land supply and infrastructure as well. Would like to make sure we make a sufficient contribution to the Planning Act.</p> <p>Kate Horton notes that RTPi welcomes the focus on place in the report and the acknowledgement of the role of planners. While we have the right systems and policies in place, there are still many barriers to delivery. The biggest are infrastructure and land. She welcomed the note in the report that we should not simply build on land that is convenient, we should be building on land that best meets housing need.</p> <p>Tony Cain says it could be part of a human rights approach, but we also need better data on how many people are living in homes that do not suit their needs. In terms of standards for new homes, requirements should be revised to ensure that all homes are more accessible from the start and can be adapted if required.</p>
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	<p>Grant Carson made reference to research which shows a 17,000 shortfall in wheelchair accessible homes. This figure increases significantly when factoring in the ageing population. We need to update housing for varying needs. Our new homes don't just need to be climate friendly, they need to be fully accessible.</p> <p>David Stewart spoke about the need to focus on land for housing and supply. He thinks an important point in the response is about delivering the right homes in the right places. With climate change and demographic change, we need to think about how we make the best use of land. He highlights the Scottish Land Commission's work on public investment led development and the use of vacant and derelict land – we need to reuse brownfield sites that are close to amenities and existing infrastructure.</p> <p>Malcolm Fraser feels the point about CPG support is well made but we also need to note that there has been support in the past for some quite radical ideas e.g. land value capture and that we should not forget about issues like that. We also need to consider compulsory sales orders, structural issues and putting town centre regeneration first. The Scottish National Investment Bank could play a positive role in housing delivery. We must also abolish the 20% VAT charge for repairs and maintenance to encourage investment in existing homes.</p> <p>Rowena Statt notes in many housing projects, planning departments are clear and articulate what they want in terms of quality, but that they have a problem getting into bureaucratic tangle on the way with too many public sector agencies involved. Architects can end up playing a wide range of roles from designers to arbitrators between different organisations involved in the project.</p> <p>David Bookbinder thinks the report does a great job in bringing together the issues of existing homes and new build supply. David highlighted that there is funding for social landlords to acquire homes from the market and that this can be particularly useful in mixed tenure blocks. The acquisition of homes from the market should be much more common and could help to contribute towards increasing affordable housing supply.</p> <p>Alastair Scott notes that evaluation of the regeneration of Craigmillar has been carried out over the last 20 or so years and suggests that successes and failures during this time can be traced to the type of organisation that was delivering regeneration at the time. There has been turn-over in those organisations involved and the inconsistency is leading to problems. We have over-arching policy, e.g. place principle, but unless we get place-based local delivery vehicles that can be there for a long time and be responsible for high quality delivery we will not achieve the best results.</p> <p>Tony Cain asks if we need a national housing agency? Alastair Scott responds perhaps.</p>
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		<p>Andy Wightman MSP asks if Graham Simpson MSP has any comments on the report. Graham Simpson MSP notes that the report is very comprehensive. Although not everyone has signed up there are a good number of people and he is happy something has been produced by the CPG. He states the reason we held a joint meeting was to get more MSPs along but this has not transpired and requires further consideration.</p> <p>Ashley Campbell gives updates on next steps of the report. Every single member of the housing CPG was invited to become a part of this group if they wanted. We got quite a good proportion of different sectors and at the end of the report in an appendix there is a list of groups who took part. The intention is to publish the report and submit it as part of the Housing to 2040 consultation.</p> <p>Action: CPG members can send their own responses to the Housing to 2040 consultation to Jenny Galbraith/Ashley Campbell to be circulated to the rest of the CPG.</p>
5.	Age Scotland Survey update	<p>Age Scotland Survey update</p> <p>At the Housing CPG meeting on 18 December, Caroline Rooks informed the group that Age Scotland was conducting a survey of how well older people (aged 55+) are living in their homes. While results are still being analysed, Age Scotland agreed to give a short update to the group and highlight any emerging findings.</p> <p>Caroline Rooks notes the following regarding the survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The survey was targeted at people in Scotland aged 55 or over and how they felt about their housing and their future in their current home. It was also asked how they felt about energy efficiency and sense of community and loneliness. • There were 1,231 responses - 471 on paper and 760 online – an increase in digital participation in comparison to previous surveys. • Half of the online responses were from 55-65 age group and half of paper responses were from those over the age of 75. • Found almost half respondents considered themselves to have a long-term health problem and a smaller proportion had a disability. • Majority of respondents were generally satisfied with heating. Yet some people with disabilities or with health problems were dissatisfied. • The majority of respondents considered their home to be fairly suitable or suitable for current needs. But a proportion of those with a disability and/or long-term health problem felt their home was not suitable.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of those who said their home was suitable, under half said it would be suitable for future. Although a significant proportion said they did not know. Age Scotland would like to do some further work to try and establish why people are unsure about their future needs or housing. • When asked about loneliness, the majority of respondents said they never felt lonely and some said they sometimes felt lonely. • When asked about participation in local community, the majority of respondents said they did feel like part of the community. There was also a difference between large urban areas and rural areas and age and disability were also a factor in responses. • The majority of people living alone felt they were part of their community. • Age Scotland aims to publish the report mid-March and will circulate to CPG. The survey results will also be submitted to the Housing to 2040 discussion. <p>Andy Wightman MSP asks how representative the sample is?</p> <p>Caroline Rooks responds saying they think it is very representative and they received responses from all local authority areas. They had a good response level across all age group. Had two thirds female respondents but notes this is typical within their research in general.</p> <p>Action: Jenny Galbraith to circulate statistical infographic to group.</p>
6.	AOCB	None
7.	Next meeting	The next meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday 20 May 2020. (Postponed until 18 June due to Coronavirus restrictions)