

Appendix 2

Contents of comments on sessions from staff who attended the CIH 2010

Objectives

Ministerial Address – Mr Alex Neil MSP

Keynote session - Recession & Recovery - Fiona Early – Economist

Getting in on the Act - Housing (Scotland) Bill 2010 - Natalie Sutherland

Making Support Work – Sustaining tenancies

Progress to 2010 – Graeme Brown - Director of Shelter

Access and choice in Housing – John Mills and Debbie Burns (SHBVN)

Building Zero Carbon Homes - Euan Barr Tenant First

Housing Options – Helen Turley – Head of Housing Perth and Kinross

Investing in Regeneration and affordable homes – John Quinn

**Engaging hard to reach youth – Twilight Bey Youth Engagement
Manager**

**Shaping Tenant Involvement in the Scottish Social Housing Charter – Ilene
Campbell Tenant Information Service (TIS)**

New Models for Delivery – Frank Koser – Director ICS –Advies

Summary from Aileen and Karen

Objectives:

- **Networking with Fellow Professionals**
- **Keeping up to speed with new developments in Housing**
- **Opportunities to advance knowledge by attending workshops sessions**
- **Learn about any new initiatives/Products**
- **Sharing and learning about best Practice**
- **To hear our new head of service John Quinn give a presentation on the Regeneration of the Craigmillar in Edinburgh**

Ministerial Address

It is always helpful to understand where Government policy is heading, what constraints or assistance may exist to help Councils achieve policy goals and to get a sense about whether the speech is simply rhetoric or said with conviction. I got the impression that housing is high on this Government's agenda and, at last, there is a recognition that appropriate housing does not only meet the basic need for shelter, but can also contribute to the wider agenda, e.g. balance of care, health, fuel poverty etc.

The keynote session on the Recession and Recovery was excellent, putting the reasons behind the recession and the prospects for recovery into easily understood language. The session was relevant to the conference as speakers used many examples to show what the impact of public spending cuts, market forces and fiscal policy could have on the housing system and public services in general. I would recommend all Managers should hear what was being said to help them understand the impact that economic factors will have on Council services over the next few years. This gave a reflection of the current economic situation – Doom and Gloom for the next 4/5 years – hard work ahead for the construction industry

Good session on the **Housing Bill (Scotland) 2010** proposals, particularly about the new regulatory regime and the right to buy proposals. The speaker indicated the proposals are still open to influence through the consultation process.

Session on Making **Housing Support work was also relevant given our redesign and focus on sustaining tenancies**. The need to ensure "Supporting People" funding was protected despite the removal of ring fencing was emphasised. Loreburn Housing Association gave an interesting presentation about how they were maximising the opportunities to make funding go further whilst the speaker for the Care Commission was generally complimentary about housing support services across Scotland.

The session on “**Progress towards 2012**” gave an overview of where Councils were in relation to the 2012 target and what the challenges were. There was a lot of emphasis on the role of the private rented sector which seems to be an acknowledgement that the target may be unattainable by some Councils based on the stock and turnover of social rented sector housing in their areas. (Colin)

Access and Choice in Housing – John Mills and Debbie Burns

Good session where we did group work. We split into groups and tackled about 8 topics. We discussed and debated. The outcome was that there is a lot to be done to address access and choice in Housing. There were very few solutions or practical applications, more declarations of targets that we have all known about for a few years now – things have got to progress quicker if we are to achieve these targets (2016 – 2020)

A session on Access and Choice was a bit disappointing; being mainly about CHR’s but not really telling me anything new.

Building Zero Carbon Homes – Very Informative and an excellent presentation. With regards to specification for Code for sustainable homes 1 – 6. Code 5- 6 for example is not an “affordable solution” in economic terms which is a major consideration for LA in the current economic climate. Code 3-4 is more realistic in terms of being classed as being “affordable” and this aim needs to be clear from the outset. Still lots of government work to be done with regards to classifications and what can be achieved within the realms of affordable housing. More than likely that Code 3 – 4 is achievable in order to render a solution “affordable”

I attended sessions on **Housing Options** where I learned about an interesting approach being developed by Perth and Kinross that may be useful in shaping our future allocation service redesign.

It was evident that each Council’s approach / procedure differ. Is there any mileage in sharing information across Councils? Some Councils highlighted that they have limited stock availability for example

Investing in Regeneration and affordable Homes – John Quinn and George Norval – Interesting to hear approaches which were achieved in Craigmillar. However 3 people walked out of the session at the beginning of the video. Overall it was a reasonably weak presentation

This presentation was perhaps perceived as being weak due to the simplistic, uncomplicated style in the way it was projected. The adopted approach taken in this case was sensible, considered and done with the people who would be living there in mind.

Engaging hard to reach youth – Presented by **Twilight Bey** Youth Engagement Manager Kensington Housing Trust. A very cool individual from LA talking about his experiences as a young man living (and only just) in down town LA. He is working for Lambeth Council now engaging with youths, trying to find out what they want, what would fit and what can be achieved. Once on board special bespoke projects are set up and monitored to ensure commitment is demonstrated by both sides. This was a very upbeat, thought provoking presentation – I'm unsure of it's success north of the border – however it would be worth a visit to see it in operation. Perhaps Community Education/Youth Workers would be interested.

Shaping Tenant Involvement in the Scottish Social Housing Charter (TIS)

This session covered the Social Housing Charter – the why? What/ and How? It will be approved by the Scottish Parliament following consultation. There will be a framework for regulation and it will be legally binding on all Social landlords. The charter will be effective from 2012. Initial stakeholder discussion will be Autumn 2010)

Key Issues for tenants:

- Include tenants in preparing the Charter
- More information needed on how the Regulators new powers will work in practice
- National and Local outcomes will be different – how will they be regulated
- Tenant Participation needs to be a national outcome
- Support and funding for tenants to participate

We (ACC) need to be thinking about this when we are redesigning our service. The views of tenants on service delivery should be recognised and valued as this can only enhance the social rented sector.
Caroline

New Models for Delivery – Frank Koser – Director ICS –Advies

This was about the housing market in the Netherlands and how they are coping with it. They have a “supply model” which helps the customer in his or her search for accommodation. Within the supply model they offer:

- Lottery model
- Showcase mode
- Housing on offer
- Urgent Searchers model
- Immediately for rent
- Combi models.

This model has been developed to cover all the markets in order to better match supply and demand.

The threat of waiting lists of millions of people seeking housing and the wishes of the customer, as an individual consumer, is the reason that the focus is not being placed on the individual customer. This comes second place to “ the major task” of having to house everyone who is in need.

Someone raised the Homeless Issue and the reply came loud and clear – Why have you become homeless – that was a stupid thing to do!!!

I have papers relating to this presentation and they can be made available if necessary.

Summary from Architects

The conference was not really geared towards Architects but it was interesting to get a different perspective / angle on the housing industry / profession. It is clear that there is a need for Housing Representatives to be working a lot more closely with Architects and other professionals in order to gain an appreciation of each others involvement in the whole process and it is essential that there is good team work.

Missing from the conference – practical applications of how to implement change / progression to achieve government targets. Without this it is an unrealistic exercise.