

Community Controlled Housing -
the way ahead



On the Front Foot

GWSF 5th Annual Conference

Conference Report 2009

Friday 30 October 2009

Conference Programme

10.00am - 3.15pm including buffet lunch

at the
Radisson Hotel, Argyle Street, Glasgow

GWSF 5th Annual Conference - “On the Front Foot”

Conference Report

Contents

1. Opening Plenary Session: “On the Front Foot”
2. Workshops
3. Keynote Address by the Minister for Housing and Communities

Appendix 1: Programme for GWSF 5th Annual Conference

Appendix 3: List of attendees

1. Opening Plenary Session: “On the Front Foot”

The conference was opened by Lyn Ewing, GWSF’s Chair. After welcoming delegates, Lyn invited Fraser Stewart of New Gorbals HA to address the conference.

Fraser’s presentation was aimed at raising the understanding of committees and staff of achievements to date by CCHAs across Glasgow and the West of Scotland - and some of the challenges ahead. Fraser set the context of “Big changes ahead” for GWSF members, based on the difficult economic climate and changes facing the whole housing sector. He suggested that there are two big priorities for CCHAs:

“Keep calm and carry on”

- Making sure we continue to provide good housing and services
- Staying focused on building strong communities
- Keeping local people in control of our organisations

“On the front foot” to shape and respond to change

- Being clear about our values as CCHAs
- Articulating clearly what CCHAs do, and the difference we make
- Maintaining constructive relationships with Government and others
- Showing we have positive ideas to contribute to the policy debate
- Providing practical mutual support that will help CCHAs achieve change in ways that are right for us.

Looking back over our history, Fraser showed that CCHAs have been at the forefront of changing housing and regeneration policy, at a community level and nationally.

Looking to the future, Fraser suggested that the big areas CCHAs need to focus on include the following:

- Thinking about and strengthening our collective “brand” as CCHAs
- Showing why we should be partners of choice for central and local government, not just on housing but in relation to community regeneration and community empowerment as well
- Pressing the case for community ownership and a sustainable funding system for new house building
- Building the capacity of CCHAs to work collaboratively to achieve efficiencies, as a positive alternative to mergers and re-structuring for the sake of it
- Bringing new ideas to the table about the part CCHAs can play in neighbourhood management and community regeneration, in our most disadvantaged communities

Fraser recognised that many CCHAs are already addressing these kinds of issues individually or with their neighbouring CCHAs – but maybe we need to get better at making sure people outside the movement recognise this. And we also need to look at how the CCHA movement as a whole can be strengthened, to provide collective resources and support for the challenging times that lie ahead. Fraser suggested this raised questions for GWSF’s Board and members to think about for the future – how can the Forum help members deal with these challenges?

He felt we need to build on the Forum’s recent work in influencing Ministers on a wide range of issues and that the Forum needs to make stronger connections with like-minded organisations in both the housing association and other sectors.

Committee members have a key role to play in all of this. Ultimately, they are CCHAs’ greatest asset because of the respect they command within their local communities and because they are the people the politicians are most influenced by.

Fraser was then joined for a panel discussion of issues raised, along with Anne Lear of Govanhill HA and Ian McLean of Bridgewater HA.

2. Workshops

Workshop 1 – National Accommodation Strategy for Sex Offenders (NASSO) Concerns in 2009

This workshop considered the NASSO and RSL’s legal Duty to Co-operate in the housing of Sex Offenders which it introduced in April 2007. It was chaired by Anne Marie Arthur (Acting Director, Dunbritton Housing Association). Speakers were Sandi Kerr (Manager, Glasgow MAPPA & Service Manager, South West Glasgow Criminal Justice Social Work) and Michael Carberry (Director, Blochairn Housing Co-op).

Sandi's presentation included comment on:

- roles and responsibilities of Criminal Justice Social Work
- working with sex offenders
- Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements
- National Accommodation Strategy for Sex Offenders
- Sex Offender Liaison Officers
- Involvement of Housing Providers
- Issues specific to Glasgow

Michael's presentation included comment on:

- the development of NASSO
- RSL's ongoing concerns
- legislation and independent reports
- lack of understanding of governance and role of community owned housing associations by Police and Social Services
- lack of public consultation on NASSO
- inadequate consultation on Glasgow's Duty to Co-operate Protocol
- GWSF challenging government policy, particularly highlighting the effect on poorest communities
- government statements about research and expert assessment are inaccurate and misleading
- Freedom of Information legal challenge by RSL's
- Lack of any Public Information (public information leaflet never issued to the public!!)
- Potential scale of the problem in Scotland
- Building a coalition of partner agencies to protect children
- Will things improve? There is no evidence to suggest it will
- Why is there not Zero Tolerance of sexual abuse?

Workshop 2 - Local Housing Strategy Workshop at the Glasgow Forum Conference

The initial presentations were by Lynsey Milne and Alex Robertson from the Scottish Government Housing Investment Division.

Lynsey Milne began by setting the policy context relating to housing supply and integration between housing and planning systems and the Government's commitment to directing resources based on transparent evidence. She then set out the relationship between the Local Housing Strategy, the SHIP and individual RSL SDFP's on the one hand, with the overall housing needs and demand assessment and the strategic development plan and local development plans relating to housing land supply on the other.

The issue of the local housing strategy, its relationship to the strategic housing investment plans were outlined along with their subsequent link to SDFP's from RSL's.

Lynsey then spoke about the experience from previous rounds of the SHIP starting from November 2007, with the third now due at the end of November 2009. It had been a positive and useful exercise and had demonstrated the broad capacity to deliver outcomes which were closely aligned to the local housing strategy. There was an emphasis on joint working between housing and planning. While most were realistic some were 'overly aspirational'. There is a need for more consistency in assessing risk and for clearer prioritisation.

Alex Robertson spoke briefly about issues around strategic land assembly which it was acknowledged by Government was a positive idea but in the current economic context not necessarily the most appropriate use of resources. Alex noted that the Government was investigating the issue of an infrastructure loan fund.

Lynsey and Alex were followed by Steve McGowan from GCC DRS on Glasgow's Local Housing Strategy and Strategic Housing Investment Plan

Steve set out the context for the preparation of the current LHS which included the concordat/single outcome agreement between Glasgow and the Scottish Government, the most recent consultation papers on investment and the LHS Guidance of June 2008. This was followed by comments on what the new LHS should cover including:

- Housing Need and Demand
- Local Authority Strategic vision for the future across all tenures
- Housing Standards
- Clarity on Strategic direction for Housing Investment
- Outcomes to achieve the Local Authority Vision
- Identification of specific commitments made by the local authority and key partners to enable the delivery of the outcomes

There was then a presentation on the key issues that contribute to the LHS and details of the key stages in the process for the current document. This was followed by comment on the linkage between the LHS and the Strategic Housing Investment Plan and finally the SDFPs of RSL's.

There then followed commentary on the purpose of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan and the key priorities for Glasgow including:

- Commonwealth Games Village
- Transformational Regeneration Areas
- GHA's Improvement Programme
- Completion of 10,000 CBHA new houses by 2014
- Progress on Sustainability of new building
- Delivery of permanent accommodation for homeless people
- Meeting targets for wheelchair and larger housing

Steve finished with some comments on the timescales involved in the preparation of the SHIP.

Questions and comments from the floor concentrated on the issue of actual resources. All speakers emphasised that the LHS was about the overall housing

context within a local authority area. While the SHIP talked about resources this did not necessarily mean that the resource assumptions would be met by Government. The importance of the SHIP in showing where resources would be prioritised in the immediate future, both by area and by category of investment, was the key element.

Discussion focused on issues around land assembly, land quality and infrastructure, Concerns raised were private finance and its current higher cost compared to recent years, the current HAG 'calculation' and the impact on investment programmes.

Workshop 3 - "Shaping up for Improvement"

A recent report from the Scottish Housing Regulator

The main messages from the key presenter, Michael Cameron, Acting Chief Executive for the Scottish Housing Regulator, were:

- Housing associations will be working in a very different and much tougher financial climate in future
- Individual associations need to be proactive in thinking about how they adapt to this
- The proposed Scottish Social Housing Charter will have a major impact on the future work of both housing associations and the Regulator
- The Regulator has posed broad questions about mergers and future structures, but it does not intend as a matter of general policy to put pressure on smaller, locally-based housing associations to change their structures
- Similarly, the Regulator does not intend as a matter of general policy to insist that tenant membership of management committees should be reduced
- The Regulator would welcome further dialogue with GWSF and CCHAs on issues of shared interest, for example as the Regulator develops its thinking on issues like self evaluation requirements and information collection.

The GWSF Board will consider how this dialogue could be established, and what it should focus on.

3. Keynote Address by the Minister for Housing and Communities

In his keynote address, Alex Neil, MSP, covered a number of issues:-

- The publication of updated poverty/deprivation statistics which showed that, of the worst 15% deprived areas, there were less in Glasgow than in previous years
- The motivation of all Governments should be to continue to create a fairer society, bringing more children and young people out of poverty
- Links of people in poverty to poor quality housing has been well-established

The Scottish Government are committed to more local control of housing. In supporting the transfer of GHA stock, they are determined not to allow another monolithic landlord to develop in the City of Glasgow.

The management of the GHA has been overhauled. He had met with the new GHA Board on an informal basis. He is satisfied that SST is now on the agenda and will be delivered wherever CCHAs can gain Yes votes at ballot. A strategic plan for SST will be in place by the end of 2009. Where there are willing purchasers - "Let's transfer!"

On investment and transformation of GHA stock, the Minister expected faster progress in the 8 transformational regeneration areas. He will be announcing new techniques and methods of delivering programmes once the review of the present Scottish Government grant to GHA has been completed.

To secure greater efficiency in the procurement and management of housing, he expected consortia of CCHAs at local level to work together and undertake development and where practicable, share services. Ownership must remain with locally based CCHAs.

While the Scottish Government will continue to produce a focus on the number of new homes to be built annually, they do not intend to reduce the quality of new housing association affordable rented homes.

In terms of overall resources, public expenditure will be constrained over the next few years. Alex Neil is seeking new solutions and new resources, perhaps involving the European Investment Bank. The Minister concluded by stating that he hoped the Government and Local Authorities and CCHAs would move forward together over the next few years to address the real housing issues which still arise in Scotland.

Questions to the Minister focused on reductions in HAG rates and the availability of private finance/CCHA own resources to fund new-build projects over the next few years. The Minister reassured CCHAs in Glasgow that he was listening to the points put forward. He did not see these problems as insurmountable.

The Minister indicated that the proposed Housing (Scotland) Bill would be introduced to Parliament next year. He was aware of the concerns that GWSF had expressed about the draft version of the Bill. The Minister anticipated that the Local Government and Communities Committee would play a major part in scrutinising the Bill, since it would be necessary to build consensus across the Parliament to assist the passage of the Bill. He hoped that GWSF would continue to play an active part in future discussions about the Bill.

The Minister agreed to meet with a delegation from GWSF to discuss the National Accommodation Strategy for Sex Offenders.

4. Feedback evaluations.

Approximately 50 feedback questionnaires were completed and returned to the Registration Desk. The overwhelming response was positive, both on event administration and the helpful nature of both plenary sessions and workshops. The delegates pack included a copy of the GWSF Annual Report for 2009.

5. Attendee list

Overall attendance was 150 - including guests, participants, advisers, conference administrators and delegates.

Programme

9.30 **Registration and coffee**
10.00 **Welcome - Lyn Ewing, Chair GWSF.**

10.10 **On the Front Foot**

A plenary session on the past, present and future challenges for CCHAs, involving Fraser Stewart of New Gorbals HA, followed by a panel discussion, involving Anne Lear, Director Govanhill HA and GWSF Board member, and Ian McLean, Director of Bridgewater HA.

11.15 **Tea and coffee**

11.45 **Workshops**

1. NASSO. Update of concerns in 2009.

This workshop looks at the National Accommodation Strategy for Sex Offenders (NASSO) and RSL's legal duty to cooperate in the housing of Sex Offenders. The workshop will be chaired by Anne Marie Arthur (Depute Director, Dunbritton Housing Association).

Speakers will be Sandi Kerr (Manager of the Glasgow Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) & Service Manager, South West Glasgow Criminal Justice Social Work) and Michael Carberry (Director of Blochairn Housing Cooperative). Sandi will outline the current position in Glasgow. This will be useful for all delegates as the Glasgow Duty to Co-operate Protocol was held to be an example of Best Practice by the Scottish Government. Michael will highlight the ongoing concerns of RSL's and the action being taken by the Glasgow & West of Scotland Forum.

2. Local Housing Strategies. Clarifying Investment Priorities.

Glasgow City Council is responsible for both the development of the local strategy and the direct funding of associations to deliver it. In other areas of the west of Scotland funding remains with the Government which agrees investment priorities with local authorities.

Steve McGowan from Glasgow City Council and Alex Robertson and Lynsey Milne from the Housing Regeneration Directorate in the Scottish Government will look at Local Housing Strategies and investment issues to highlight the key issues in the development of local strategies, Strategic Housing Investment Plans, balancing competing priorities and dealing with the challenges of delivering procurement efficiencies in the current economic climate.

3. "Shaping up for Improvement"- A recent report from the Scottish Housing Regulator.

"Shaping up for improvement" was published by the Scottish Housing Regulator in July this year. The report reviews the overall performance of Scottish social landlords in the last 5 years. And it sets out some challenging views about where landlords need to make improvements to their services, and about how housing associations may need to review their governance, finances and overall structures.

The workshop speakers will be Michael Cameron, Acting Chief Executive Scottish Housing Regulator, and Jim Harvey, Independent Consultant. Michael will talk about the next steps, for both the Regulator and housing associations. Jim will look at some of the implications the report raises for CBHAs. We'll then open things up for questions and debate.

12.45 Lunch

14.00 - 14.05 **Introduction - Lyn Ewing, Chair, GWSF**

14.05 - 14.35 **Keynote address by the Minister for Housing and Communities, Alex Neil MSP**

14.35 (approx) **Questions**

15.05 **Close**

List of Attendees
Delegates, guests, participants and administrators

Delegates			
	Forename	Surname	Organisation
1	Carol	Mitchell	Ardenglen Housing Association
2	Maureen	Cope	Ardenglen Housing Association
3	Brian	Connelly	Barrhead Housing Association
4	Shirley	Robison	Barrhead Housing Association
5	Irene	Black	Blairtummock Housing Association
6	Margaret	Pirrie	Blairtummock Housing Association
7	Susan	Crookston	Blairtummock Housing Association
8	Michael	Carberry	Blochairn Housing Co-operative
9	Ian	McLean	Bridgewater Housing Association
10	Michael	Dawson	Calvay Housing Association
11	Peter	Howden	Calvay Housing Association
12	Tam	Kay	Calvay Housing Association
13	Anna	Stuart	Cassiltoun Housing Association Ltd
14	Christine	Miller	Cassiltoun Housing Association Ltd
15	Evelyn	Ferguson	Cassiltoun Housing Association Ltd
16	Ian	Lochrie	Cassiltoun Housing Association Ltd
17	Jean	White	Cassiltoun Housing Association Ltd
18	Annette	Brown	Cathcart & District Housing Association
19	Christine	Leitch	Cathcart & District Housing Association
20	John	Forrest	Cathcart & District Housing Association
21	Lorraine	Glasgow	Cathcart & District Housing Association
22	Marion	McMilan	Cathcart & District Housing Association
23	Frank	McEntee	Cloch Housing Association
24	Joan	Sutherland	Craigdale Housing Association
25	Liz	McGinnis	Craigdale Housing Association
26	Lorraine	Quinn	Craigdale Housing Association
27	Patsy	Beaton	Craigdale Housing Association
28	Willie	Croft	Cube Housing Association
29	Linda	Hall	Dunbritton Housing Association
30	Sonja	Aitken	Dunbritton Housing Association
31	Charlotte	Skewis	Easthall Park Housing Association
32	John	McMorrow	Easthall Park Housing Association
33	Eddie	Warde	Glasgow City Council
34	Jackie	Mcintosh	Glasgow City Council
35	Alasdair	McKee	Glen Oaks Housing Association
36	Iain	McLellan	Glen Oaks Housing Association
37	Neil	Elliot	Glen Oaks Housing Association
38	Alice	Connelly	Govan Housing Association
39	Maureen	Porter	Govan Housing Association
40	Anne	Lear	Govanhill Housing Association
41	Lyn	Ewing	Govanhill Housing Association
42	Cathie	McCready	Govanhill Housing Association
43	Henry	Rooney	Govanhill Housing Association
44	John	McLardie	Govanhill Housing Association
45	Margarita	Morrison	Home in Scotland

Delegates

46	Stuart	Dixon	Home in Scotland
47	Paul	McNeil	Housing Regeneration Consultants Ltd
48	Robin	Downie	Mazars
49	Adele	Fraser	Linstone Housing Association
50	Ian	Johnstone	Linstone Housing Association
51	Jane	Johnstone	Linstone Housing Association
52	Josephine	Donachy	Milnbank Housing Association
53	Linda	Sichi	Milnbank Housing Association
54	Fraser	Stewart	New Gorbals HA
55	Bill	Sharkey	New Gorbals Housing Association
56	Fraser	Stewart	New Gorbals Housing Association
57	Edward	Bradley	New Gorbals Housing Association
58	Linda	Malone	New Gorbals Housing Association
59	Norman	Fitzpatrick	New Gorbals Housing Association
60	Sandra	Cameron	New Gorbals Housing Association
61	Simon	Metcalfe	New Gorbals Housing Association
62	Thomas	Smart	New Gorbals Housing Association
63	Blanche	Tinney	New Gorbals LHO
64	William	Findlay	New Gorbals LHO
65	Frank	Miller	North Glasgow Housing Association
66	Linda	Anderson	North Glasgow Housing Association
67	Pat	Kenna	North Glasgow Housing Association
68	Anne	Culley	Oak Tree Housing Association
69	Peter	Galbraith	Oak Tree Housing Association
70	Jim	Wylie	Provanhall Housing Association
71	Patricia	Gallagher	Provanhall Housing Association
72	Audrey	Munro	Queen's Cross Housing Association
73	Eric	Jacobs	Queen's Cross Housing Association
74	Frank	McCabe	Queen's Cross Housing Association
75	Kevin	Nixon	Queen's Cross Housing Association
76	Michael	Clarke	Rosehill Housing Association
77	Bill	Nicol	Ruchazie Housing Association
78	Chris	Cunningham	Shettleston Housing Association
79	Annie	McAllister	Shettleston Housing Association
80	James	Dick	Shettleston Housing Association
81	John	Hastie	Shettleston Housing Association
82	Margaret	Paton	Shettleston Housing Association
83	Mary	Hain	Shettleston Housing Association
84	Morag	Allan	Shettleston Housing Association
85	Nan	Sangster	Shettleston Housing Association
86	Andrew	Samson	Spireview Housing Association
87	Charlie	Lunn	Spireview Housing Association
88	Stephen	MacGregor	T.C. Young & Son
89	Ann	Gavin	Thistle Housing Association
90	Ann	Knape	Thistle Housing Association

Delegates

91	Grace	McColgan	Thistle Housing Association
92	Sadie	Boyce	Thistle Housing Association
93	Isabel	McEwing	Tollcross Housing Association
94	Anne	Evans	Tollcross Housing Association
95	Alison	Leabody	Trafalgar Housing Association
96	John	Munro	Trafalgar Housing Association
97	Paul	McShane	Trafalgar Housing Association
98	Betty	Lavery	Wellhouse Housing Association
99	Claire	Monteith	Wellhouse Housing Association
100	Joe	Williamson	Wellhouse Housing Association
101	John	McLaren	Wellhouse Housing Association
102	Katie	Cameron	Wellhouse Housing Association
103	Linda	Granger	Wellhouse Housing Association
104	William	Mulligan	Wellhouse Housing Association
105	Yvonne	Hague	Wellhouse Housing Association
106	Archie	Cameron	Whiteinch & Scotstoun Housing Association
107	Dave	Marks	Whiteinch & Scotstoun Housing Association
108	Ian	Morrison	Whiteinch & Scotstoun Housing Association
109	Mary	McGregor	Whiteinch & Scotstoun Housing Association
110	Neil	Robertson	Whiteinch & Scotstoun Housing Association
111	Sadie	Latta	Whiteinch & Scotstoun Housing Association
112	Gill	Walch	Williamsburgh Housing Association
113	Lesley	Ferrie	Williamsburgh Housing Association
114	Margaret	Symons	Williamsburgh Housing Association
115	Billy	Docherty	Yorkhill Housing Association (1988) Ltd
116	Colin	Shaw	Yorkhill Housing Association (1988) Ltd
117	Helene	Fitzgerald	Yorkhill Housing Association (1988) Ltd
118	Henry	Fulton	Yorkhill Housing Association (1988) Ltd
119	John	Gordon	Yorkhill Housing Association (1988) Ltd
120	Marion	Menabney	Yorkhill Housing Association (1988) Ltd
121	Tommy	Dunne	Yorkhill Housing Association (1988) Ltd
122	Tommy	McGuigan	Yorkhill Housing Association (1988) Ltd

Guests and participants (28)

Participants

	Forename	Surname	Organisation
1	Alex	Neil	MSP, Minister for Housing and Communities
2	Michael	Cameron	Scottish Housing Regulator
3	Jim	Harvey	Jim Harvey Consulting
4	Steve	McGowan	Glasgow City Council
5	Lynsey	Milne	Scottish Government
6	Anne Marie	Arthur	Dunbritton Housing Association

Guests

	Forename	Surname	Organisation
7	Cllr Sadie	Docherty	Glasgow City Council
8	Cllr Elaine	McDougall	Glasgow City Council
9	Cllr Grant	Thoms	Glasgow City Council
10	Gerry	Gormal	Glasgow City Council
11	Isabelle	Cameron	Glasgow City Council
12	Sandi	Kerr	Glasgow City Council
13	Liz	Rea	Glasgow City Council
14	Jennifer	Shedden	Glasgow City Council
15	Lori	Cassidy	Scottish Government
16	Kevin	McGowan	Scottish Government
17	Margaret	Moore	Scottish Government
18	Frances	Murphy	Scottish Government
19	Alex	Robertson	Scottish Government
20	Andy	Ashcroft	Glasgow Housing Association
21	Mags	Lightbody	Glasgow Housing Association
22	Angus	Hardie	Local People Leading
23	Clare	Newton	EVH
24	David	Kerr	Scottish National Party

Administrators

	Forename	Surname	Organisation
25	Jim	Hastie	GWSF Adviser
26	Caroline	Graham-Brown	GWSF Adviser
27	Stewart	Gibson	SHARE
28	Olwyn	Gaffney	SHARE