

B563

92

# **BALMORAL RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION**

*All correspondence to secretary: Rena Smith  
38 Balunie Crescent  
DUNDEE DD4 8PU  
Tel No 01382 504151*

*24<sup>th</sup> January 2008*

*Housing & Regeneration Directorate  
Social Housing Division  
1H(S)  
Victoria Quay  
EDINBURGH  
EH6 6QQ*

*Dear Sirs,*

*Enclosed please find response to questionnaire. As we don't meet in January we found it difficult to keep to 25<sup>th</sup> January date line. We think it should have been extended to cover the holiday period over Christmas and the New Year. We hope you will still accept response.*

*Yours sincerely*



*Secretary*

Housing and Regeneration Directorate  
Social Housing Division  
1H(S)  
Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ  
www.scotland.gov.uk

**The Scottish  
Government**

T: 0131-244 7753 F: 0131-244 5596  
E: housingconsultation2007@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

## RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM

### FIRM FOUNDATIONS: THE FUTURE OF HOUSING IN SCOTLAND

Please complete the details below and return it with your response to the above address. This will help ensure we handle your response appropriately. Thank you for your help.

Name: **Balmoral Tenants & Residents Association**  
**c/o Rena Smith, Secretary**

Postal Address: **38 Balunie Crescent**

**DUNDEE**

**DD4 8PU**

1. Are you responding: (please tick one box)

(a) as an individual  go to Q2a/b and then Q4

(b) on behalf of a group/organisation  go to Q3 and then Q4

### INDIVIDUALS

2a. Do you agree to your response being made available to the public (in Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government website)?

Yes  (go to 2b below)      No, not at  all      We will treat your response as confidential

2b. **Where confidentiality is not requested**, we will make your response available to the public on the following basis (**please tick one** of the following boxes)

Yes, make my response, name and address all available

Yes, make my response available, but not my name or address

Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address

**ON BEHALF OF GROUPS OR ORGANISATIONS:**

3. The name and address of your organisation will be made available to the public (in the Scottish Government library and/or on the Government website). Are you also content for your response to be made available?

Yes  No  We will treat your response as confidential

**SHARING RESPONSES/FUTURE ENGAGEMENT**

4. We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for the Scottish Government to contact you again in the future in relation to this consultation response?

Yes  No

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**FIRM FOUNDATIONS: THE FUTURE OF HOUSING IN SCOTLAND**

Should you have any comments on any other aspects of this consultation document, or require additional space for your responses, please return this to us on a separate piece of paper with your name and organisation at the top.

Questions	Your responses
<p><b>Question 1:</b> Do you agree that aiming to increase the rate of new housing supply in Scotland to at least 35,000 a year by the middle of the next decade is a sensible and realistic ambition, and that this will help set a necessary political context for acceleration in housing supply?</p>	<p>No! First of all employment needs to be brought to our area where there are homes. It would be financially beneficial to bring current housing stock up to a higher standard rather than pay for demolition &amp; rebuild. Local authorities know what houses are needed according to need.</p>
<p><b>Question 2:</b> Do you agree that, to give practical effect to the ambition, local authorities should co-operate regionally in setting realistic housing targets for housing market areas, and in enabling the delivery of these targets? If so, what arrangements should be put in place to support and provide incentives for such co-operation between relevant local authorities?</p>	<p>Yes! Co-operation with t incentives need to be in place. There is no guarantee that builders, planners etc. will be willing or able to provide targets. Also the quality of houses needs to be paramount Financial arrangements should be made and councils should be subsidised.</p>
<p><b>Question 3:</b> Is there a role for a specialist national function to provide expert support for local authorities in strategic planning for housing? What expertise do you think this function would require?</p>	<p>No! Dundee has a local housing strategy and uses best practice guidance and caters to local needs. Local government should deliver local strategy in local areas.</p>
<p><b>Question 4:</b> Even when land has planning permission there are still blockages that prevent new housing being built. What additional arrangements would, or could, accelerate development on land with planning permissions to help ensure that future housing supply targets are met?</p>	<p>Problems should be identified where possible before seeking planning permission. There should be a timescale and planning permission should only be given if they have to reapply after the five year period.</p>
<p><b>Question 5:</b> We have proposed that much expanded or new, stand-alone settlements may be a valid solution. How should we best encourage the development of new, sustainable communities that are sympathetic to Scotland's landscape and environment?</p>	<p>No! New towns are not always the solution. Effort should be made to put local needs first and possibly develop Brownfield sites.</p>
<p><b>Question 6:</b> How should different types of assistance within the LIFT be targeted?</p>	<p>More social housing should be built,</p>

Questions	Your responses
<p><b>Question 7:</b> How could the Government stimulate more innovative mortgage and related products and services to assist people in purchasing their first home?</p>	<p>Advice and financial options should be available but it must be ensured that house prices do not rise through this.</p>
<p><b>Question 8:</b> Should the Government provide direct cash grants to first-time buyers?</p>	<p>No! If someone can afford to buy they will buy without assistance. Direct cash payments could encourage mortgages where payments are not really affordable</p>
<p><b>Question 9:</b> How can the private house-building sector play a bigger role in providing, without public subsidy, increased provision of affordable starter homes?</p>	<p>Builders build for a market and only build what they can sell for a profit. They would either have to be subsidised or lower the purchasing cost which we feel would affect the quality of a house. How can people who buy houses to rent for profit be controlled</p>
<p><b>Question 10:</b> What issues do you consider should be taken into account when considering the increased use of private sector lets to house low-income and homeless households?</p>	<p>Private landlords purpose is to make a profit. Tenants in these houses have no security of tenure Most will be on assured short tenancies and tenancy can be ended at any time.</p>
<p><b>Question 11:</b> How should we ensure an appropriate balance between safeguarding tenants' rights and encouraging the private rented sector to achieve its full potential in Scotland's overall housing market?</p>	<p>Landlords should be made more accountable. They should give tenants adequate security of tenure and right to a well maintained home with repairs done as soon as possible.</p>
<p><b>Question 12:</b> Do you think there is sufficient engagement between the public sector and private landlords? If not, what else should national and local government be doing?</p>	<p>No! Local authorities should engage with private sector landlords and support and encourage them to comply with legislation.</p>
<p><b>Question 13:</b> What other options should we consider for increasing the supply of private rented housing for low income and homeless households?</p>	<p>Refer to Question 12</p>
<p><b>Question 14:</b> How could more private landlords be encouraged to let to tenants on benefits and homeless households?</p>	<p>In our area there are a lot of Landlords who let to people on benefit. Rent is sometimes paid direct to Landlord</p>
<p><b>Question 15:</b> What other schemes or incentives might help us to recycle empty properties more effectively?</p>	<p>Some properties are not suitable. Particular properties in particular areas may never be recycled. Sometimes its better to demolish and rebuild.</p>

Questions	
<p><b>Question 16:</b> Do you agree that we should exempt new build social housing from the Right to Buy?</p>	<p>Yes!</p>
<p><b>Question 17:</b> Do you agree that we should subsidise local authorities in areas of need to use their prudential borrowing capacity to build new council houses?</p>	<p>Yes! It's time Local Authorities have subsidies. This should be as well to any current funding provision.</p>
<p><b>Question 18:</b> Do you agree that we should introduce large scale competitions for subsidy?</p>	<p>No! Any subsidy should be based on need.</p>
<p><b>Question 19:</b> If not, how would you ensure that public subsidy is used to build as many good quality RSL houses as possible?</p>	<p>Local government already a part in this and should be supported. They are accountable to the voters.</p>
<p><b>Question 20:</b> Do you agree that we should subsidise the development of houses for mid-market rent?</p>	<p>No! Subsidy should be to build more, good quality social housing, The M/M concept could lead to poorer people being priced out of the most popular housing and create social divides.</p>
<p><b>Question 21:</b> If so, should the subsidy be awarded as part of the competitive regime for awarding HAG that we are proposing?</p>	<p>Any subsidy should be based on need.</p>
<p><b>Question 22:</b> If not, how would you increase variety in social housing?</p>	<p>A variety of size, quality, tenure, type, location and availability.</p>
<p><b>Question 23:</b> Do you agree that we should encourage landlords to look at means of adjusting the mix of their stock in the interests of achieving more sustainable mixed communities?</p>	<p>Yes although this could be done through regeneration based on locally identified needs.</p>
<p><b>Question 24:</b> Do you think that subsidies for development should be provided to bodies other than registered social landlords?</p>	<p>Subsidies should be available for anyone willing to build. Safeguards need to be built in for private developers. Councils should determine where subsidies go through strategic planning.</p>

Questions	Your responses
<p><b>Question 25:</b> What sorts of protections should be offered to tenants in these circumstances?</p>	<p>Scottish Secure Tenancy and other safeguards such as those received by tenants of social landlords.</p>
<p><b>Question 26:</b> Do you think that the Scottish Government should vary Right to Buy discounts by (a) locality and/or (b) type of property?</p>	<p>Perhaps it's time to phase out Right to Buy.</p>
<p><b>Question 27:</b> Do you agree that ALMOs can provide a satisfactory alternative to stock transfers?</p>	<p>No! In England &amp; Wales ALMOs appear to have been very costly. If they don't work could be first step to stock transfer</p>
<p><b>Question 28:</b> Do you think that additional help from Government to enable landlords to meet the SHQS should be linked to improvements in a landlord's performance?</p>	<p>No! Investment needs to be where needed. Tenants should not suffer because of landlords failings.</p>
<p><b>Question 29:</b> If so, what measures do you think would be beneficial? If not, why not?</p>	<p>Refer to Question 28.</p>
<p><b>Question 30:</b> Do you agree that we need to find new ways of focussing on the quality of place/open space and greenspace within deprived neighbourhoods?</p>	<p>Yes! Local views should be considered, sought . Also the implications of long term maintenance. . Alternative energy sources should be linked to projects if possible.</p>
<p><b>Question 31:</b> Do you have suggestions for approaches that are not resource intensive and that include stakeholders?</p>	<p>Local people should be consulted and given access to expert advice from any potential stakeholder/stakeholders.</p>
<p><b>Question 32:</b> Do you agree that the lead role (and recipient of any resources) to undertake this work should be open to a range of stakeholders?</p>	<p>Yes! The lead role must be by those with expertise on the project identified. Any planning should involve the local community.</p>
<p><b>Question 33:</b> Do you agree with the features and principles we have set out here for a modernised regulation framework?</p>	<p>Yes, if it means better performance and does not overburden the landlord. This could reflect upon services for tenants.</p>

<b>Questions</b>	
<b>Question 34:</b> How would you like social housing regulation to be organised? (For example, should it be a separate organisation or part of a group of other regulators?)	Regulator for social housing should be separate dedicated to Housing.