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Firm Foundations: the future of housing in Scotland

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Consultation Questions
 Firm Foundations: the future of housing in Scotland

<p><i>Question 1: 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</i></p>	<p>YES</p>
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<i>housing supply?</i>	
Question 2: 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?	YES Local Authority long term housing strategies should be based on local research based housing needs surveys encompassing not only the social housing requirements but also the local private housing market
<i>Question 3: 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?</i>	I am sure there must be a need for some national control of the local authority strategies . I am not sure of the expertise required but it should embrace all aspects of social housing funding and not "blinkered" as Communities Scotland. Some form of public/private partnership.
Question 4: 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?	Co-operation between all the statutory authorities to ensure that prior to the issue of Planning that the various services are available to meet the needs of the particular site and funding should be available to meet these requirements for water-drainage and other services before approval is granted. Longer term strategies between all participants are needed to ensure the housing requirements can be met within a reasonable time scale
<i>Question 5: 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?</i>	Early discussion between all parties to ensure everyone is aware of the needs of the particular area.Cut out the "nimbyism" This applies to bodies like SNH - Historic Scotland etc as well as the local nimbys. Good design can be achieved and the environment proptected if everyone co-operated and omitted stance taking.
Question 6:How should different types of assistance within LIFT be targeted??	Any form of low cost home ownership should be channeled through either an RSL or the Local Authority to ensure the correct client group is being targetted IE those on a housing Waiting List - those in Social Housing wishing to own their own home and LOCAL first time buyers . There should also be an income assessment to ensure that recipients cannot obtain a normal mortgage within their current income.
<i>Question 7: How could the Government</i>	If the local Authorities introduced a 25% affordable housing policy as part of any planning approval [ie currently operated in the Highland Region] and the developers had to provide the affordable housing [ie actual

<p><i>stimulate more innovative mortgage and related products and services to assist people in purchasing their first home?</i></p>	<p>houses not cash lump sums which disappear into black holes]then the amount of affordable housing both for rental and affordable for sale could be dramatically increased.The provision of these units should be channeled through the Local Authoities and not the RSL`S as at present as they siphon off app.£10,000/unit as administrative costs which are unnecessary.</p>
<p>Question 8: Should the Government provide direct cash grants to first-time buyers?</p>	<p>YES but the grants should be channeled through RSL`S/Local Authorities to ensure the correct client group are targetted and the housing remains in the affordable category in perpetuity and not sold on at a profit. Houses for this category could be made available under the 25% affordable policy noted above with EVERY private development in the country contributing.</p>
<p>Question 9: How can the private house-building sector play a bigger role in providing, without public subsidy, increased provision of affordable starter homes?</p>	<p>The 25% affordable housing policy for every housing development in the country would increase the amount of affordable housing both for sale and for rental.If the developer was to produce these units at the benchmark figures set by Communities Scotland and the unnecessary administration costs charged by RSL`S was omitted this would provide an increased supply of affordable housing at a cost per unit considerably less than the current figures.</p>
<p>Question 10: 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>NO comment</p>
<p>Question 11: 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>No comment</p>
<p>Question 12: 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 comment</p>
<p>Question 13: What other options should we consider for increasing the supply of private rented housing for low income and homeless households?</p>	<p>If the Government was to consider a 60% grant to the private sector for the provision of rented property similar to the SRPBA proposals with the subsequent housing being managed by an RSL or the Local Authority this would increase the number of rented properties available as the current grant level forRSL`sappears to be in the region of 70-80%</p>

Question 14: How could more private landlords be encouraged to let to tenants on benefits and homeless households	See above I do not think the client group is relevant if the grant is sufficient to make the project viable
Question 15: What other schemes or incentives might help us to recycle empty properties more effectively?	No comment
Question 16: Do you agree that we should exempt new build social housing from the Right to Buy?	YES
Question 17: Do you agree that we should subsidise local authorities in areas of need to use their prudential borrowing capacity to build new council houses?	YES Back to the 25% affordable requirement this could be channeled through local authorities to provide housing for sale and rental at a cost considerably less than the current figures
Question 18: Do you agree that we should introduce large-scale competitions for subsidy?	Yes and it should include the private Sector. Private Sector Developers could produce high quality housing for rental or sale at costs below the current amounts being paid to the Housing Associations . On completion these units could be managed by an RSL or Local Authority in the normal way. If these units are part of the 25% affordable housing it would also meant the proper integration of Private -Social and Low cost housing for sale. It could laso include some market rented property giving a well balanced development.
Question 19: If not, how would you ensure that public subsidy is used to build as many good quality RSL houses as possible?	See above
Question 20: Do you agree that we should subsidise the development of houses for mid-market rent?	YES as wide as possilble spectrum for housing for sale and rental should be provided.
Question 21: If so, should the subsidy be awarded as part of the competitive regime for awarding HAG that we are proposing?	Possibly but it should also be available to the private sector
Question 22: If not, how would you increase variety in social housing?	See comments in Question 18
Question 23: 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?	See comments in Question 18
Question 24: Do you think that subsidies for	YES . RSL`s [Housing Associationa] are not cost effective in Development Terms for the provision of new housing RSL`s provide an excellent service fot the management and

development should be provided to bodies other than registered social landlords?	maintenance of housing and tenants welfare but the actual provision of housing units could be provided more cost effectively and efficiently by the private sector as part of an overall development plan.
Question 25: What sorts of protections should be offered to tenants in these circumstances?	No comment
Question 26: Do you think that the Scottish Government should vary Right to Buy discounts by (a) locality and/ or (b) type of property?	YES
Question 27: Do you agree that ALMOs can provide a satisfactory alternative to stock transfers?	No comment
Question 28: 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?	No comment
Question 29: If so, what measures do you think would be beneficial? If not, why not?	No comment
Question 30: Do you agree that we need to find new ways of focussing on the quality of place/open space and greenspace within deprived neighbourhoods?	YES
Question 31: Do you have suggestions for approaches that are not resource intensive and that include stakeholders?	No comment
Question 32: Do you agree that the lead role (and recipient of any resources) to undertaken this work should be open to a range of stakeholders?	No comment
Question 33: Do you agree with the features and principles we have set out here for a modernised regulation framework?	YES
Question 34: 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?)	Social Housing would be best regulated by the Scottish Government in conjunction with Local Authorities back at least to some form of democratic control. There are plenty of organisations both private and public which could be energised to provide assistance and advice on Affordable Social Housing for sale and rental

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