

Independent living guide for young people scoops UK Housing Award

My Space My Place – SCSH's innovative guide for young tenants – won a prestigious UK Housing Award for **Outstanding achievement in social housing in Scotland** earlier this month. The awards were organised by the Chartered Institute of Housing and sponsored by *inside housing*.

My Space My Place was created by SCSH's Youth Unit with the help of young tenants to help other young people who leave home at an early age. With as many as one in three tenancies failing in the first year, *My Space My Place* is designed to prevent homelessness and housing crisis by giving young people the information they need to make a success of their tenancy.

"For young people a traditional tenants' handbook doesn't really work," said Matt Elton, Head of Youth Unit at SCSH. "*My Space My Place* talks to them in a language they can understand. It includes lots of stories of the pitfalls that can face the young tenant and it offers lots of encouragement. The young people also liked the idea of cartoon strips, agony pages and manga style illustrations. So we put all that in too."

Last year more than 4,300 young people between 16 and 17 went for help to their local council because they had nowhere safe and secure to stay. And once you add in the 18 to 24 year olds that figure rises to over 19,000, or 35% of all homelessness applications across Scotland. Many of the young people who experience housing crisis lack the kind of family support that many of us take for granted when setting up in a new home. SCSH worked with Castle Rock Edinvar Housing Association, Argyll & Bute Council and North Lanarkshire Council, all providers of tenancies to young people, to create the resource. Together they believe this resource will help these young people and the workers who support them during a challenging period of transition.

"An eviction from a failed tenancy can cost us more than £22,000 per person," says Julie Hunter, Senior Strategy Officer, North Lanarkshire Council. "When you compare this with the cost of the *My Space My Place* guide at £12.50 each, you're looking at outstanding value for money. We've had a phenomenally positive response to the resource from our staff."



Matt Elton, adds: "Tackling housing crisis and homelessness does require a good supply of decent housing. But there's more to it than that. People need to know about the realities of leaving home so that they can plan effectively. And if they do have to move on at a young age, they need all the support they can get. Really good quality information can help young people avoid housing crisis in the first place and, where it does occur, can help them get back on track."

The *My Space My Place* guide, and the *Workers Toolkit* version, can be previewed and ordered on the SCSH website.

**SCSH National
Homelessness
Conference
2006**

This year's Annual Conference took place in Edinburgh on 9 & 10 November. Attended by over 220 delegates from across Scotland, speakers included Malcolm Chisholm MSP [Minister for Communities], Anne McGuire MP [Minister for Disabled People, DWP] and Andy Gale [DC&LG]. A range of workshops allowed delegates to explore current issues of both policy and practice. Full details of the programme, including the Ministerial address and workshop presentations, are available to read and download from the SCSH website at www.scsch.org.uk - just follow the links.



SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

Allocation of land for affordable housing through the planning system

The Executive has published research undertaken on its behalf by Tribal Consulting into the effectiveness of the current arrangements to allocate land for affordable housing through the planning system.

The report looked at current affordable housing policies in Scottish local authorities, use of Planning Gain Supplements, factors influencing land supply and the role of land owners.

It also looked at the potential value of introducing other mechanisms, for example a separate planning use class, to assist the provision of affordable housing.

The report makes a series of detailed recommendations which the authors feel would increase the availability of land for development and, therefore, increase the supply of affordable housing.

The full report is available from www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications.



Local Housing Need and Affordability Model for Scotland

Communities Scotland has published research, commissioned jointly with the Executive, on affordable housing need.

The report provides a further update of the model first produced in 2003 and previously updated in 2004. It used national datasets and surveys to generate snapshot estimates of affordable need across the country. The new version does this for local authority area, housing market area and former district council area.

The model is broadly consistent with central government advice on local housing needs assessments. Part of its purpose is to enable those responsible for local and sub-regional housing strategies and assessments to compare and benchmark their own estimates with those derived from a common method across Scotland.

The summary and full report can be downloaded from the Communities Scotland web site or from the links page at www.scsd.org.uk/News/newsletter.htm



JOSEPH ROWNTREE
FOUNDATION

Local affordability issues for working households buying their first home

This study provides a range of analyses of the difficulties working households, aged 20 to 39, faced in buying a first home in every local authority area of Great Britain in 2005. It follows on from earlier studies conducted for the JRF in each year since 2002. It includes an assessment of the scope for 'intermediate housing market' products, to help working households which cannot afford to buy in the open market, and shows the impact of mobility in London as a means of coping with affordability problems.

The report shows that house-price-to-household-income ratios for all working households are at record levels. While the impact of higher house prices was softened by low interest rates in 2005, mortgage-cost-to-income ratios reached the same peak levels as those experienced in 1990.

The full report includes an analysis of house-price-to-income ratios, and mortgage-cost-to-income ratios over time, and a local analysis of house-price-to-income ratios in every local authority area in Great Britain (except the Isles of Scilly) in 2005 (covered by the first two bullet points of this *Findings*).

However, most of this *Findings* focuses on the analysis of intermediate housing markets, and the potential for housing mobility to ease affordability constraints, especially in large conurbations.

Full report at www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/housing - or through links at www.scsd.org.uk/newsletter.htm



SCSH Annual Report 2005/06

The report is now published and can be read, or downloaded, from the SCSH website www.scsd.org.uk

Web links to all documents referred to in this issue of inhouse can be found at www.scsd.org.uk

A bleak future for social rented housing in Scotland?

A new report published by the Chartered Institute of Housing in Scotland (CIH) in November suggests that the level of social rented housing in Scotland may house only 8% of households in Scotland by 2020. This would be a drop of nearly 70% from the current level of just over 26%.

The Future for Social Renting in Scotland, also suggests that the people living in social rented housing will be more likely to be young single adult households and people with some form of support need. This will represent a major shift from the days when the household types found in the social rented sector mirrored the mix of households in general in Scotland.

John Mills, Chair of the CIH in Scotland said:

“The report sounds a number of warnings, some of which are bleak, and highlights a number of challenges for the future. Today’s report is intended as a wake up call to get the housing sector and the Scottish Executive working together to plan out the best future for the sector that can meet peoples’ housing needs and aspirations and assist in delivering sustainable, successful and well housed communities across Scotland.

“Social rented housing is becoming largely perceived to be only for people in the greatest housing need. The report challenges the sector and the Executive to rethink how we do social housing in Scotland if it is not to dwindle and become a sector that offers little choice and opportunity, and ultimately fails our communities.”

www.cih.org.uk

Health & Homelessness

Conference - advance notice

SCSH, together with NHS Health Scotland, is planning to host a one-day conference on health and homelessness for practitioners, managers and others working in the sector. The event will be particularly focused on the needs of those responsible for the design or delivery of health services for homeless people and will be designed in collaboration with staff from organisations in the NHS.

It is hoped to combine the event with a half-day symposium for senior NHS staff with responsibility for health and homelessness strategies, with presentations from the Scottish Executive Health Department.

Full details will be announced early in 2007 on the SCSH web site.

Support from Rayne Foundation

A grant making organisation with annual expenditure of £2 million, the Rayne Foundation is seeking applications from organisations working on projects that address the health needs of homeless people. It is particularly keen to support projects which seek to increase the active participation of homeless people in managing their own health.

Ideally, applicants will be able to demonstrate how they will evaluate the outcomes of their work, and how they will share the findings with others working in the field.

Full details of the Foundation’s grant making criteria and how to apply can be found by visiting the web site at www.raynefoundation.org.uk.



Update

Parliamentary launch

SCSH formally launched homesmart on 1 November with a Parliamentary reception hosted by Linda Fabiani MSP. Following a very successful evening, attended by representatives from all the major parties, Linda lodged a motion in Parliament ‘welcoming the homesmart campaign and its aim of ensuring that school leavers understand the issues surrounding homelessness and how to avoid it’. The full text of the motion and a list of signatories can be found on the SCSH website.

Young persons quiz

The homesmart website has been revised and now includes an interactive quiz designed to introduce young people to the basic facts about homelessness. It also includes details on sources of information and advice for those who are preparing to move out of home.

Test your own knowledge at www.leavinghome.info/homesmart and see how much you really know!

Advance notice

The Scottish Executive are planning a seminar to look at the prevention of homelessness. This will take place on Tuesday 6 February 2007. Further details will be posted on our web site - www.scsch.org.uk - as they become available.

Diary 2007

Practical Steps - the 2007 tour

Edinburgh - Thursday 22 February 2007
Glasgow - Wednesday 28 February 2007

Delivered by the SCSH Youth Unit, this training is designed to help you equip young people with the practical skills they need to sustain their tenancies and avoid homelessness. It is based around the successful publications *Streets Ahead* and *My Space My Place*. Full details are available from Wendy - 0131 226 4382 / wendy@scsh.org.uk - or from our web site - www.scsh.org.uk

Working with young drug users

Glasgow - Thursday 18 January 2007

Delivered by Scottish Youth Housing Network, this course looks at the issues facing workers who support young people involved in drug use. It is designed for workers with little or no direct experience of working with drug users, and those who wish to revisit some of the issues. Details from www.syhn.org.uk or call 0131 226 4382.

Young people and mental health

Edinburgh - Thursday 1 February 2007

Delivered by Scottish Youth Housing Network, this introductory level course looks at the impact of mental health illness and trauma on the lives of young people. It covers risk factors, symptoms and signs, support working, self-harming behaviour and depression. Details from www.syhn.org.uk or call 0131 226 4382.

for the full 2007 training programme visit www.syhn.org.uk

SYHN aims to improve housing provision for young people by creating and supporting links between individuals and agencies. Full details of membership - including discounts on training - are available from 0131 226 4382 or www.syhn.org.uk

Chartered Institute of Housing in Scotland

The 2007 CIH in Scotland Annual Conference & Exhibition will take place in Aberdeen at the Exhibition & Conference Centre from Monday 12 - Thursday 15 March. Details of the programme, accommodation options and how to book delegate and exhibition spaces can be found at www.cih.org.uk/scotland. SCSH will be exhibiting again this year and we look forward to welcoming you to our stand at the event.

SCSH has a centrally located meeting room available for hire at its offices in Edinburgh. Charges range from £12 (£10 for members) per hour to £90 (£60 for members) for a full day. For full details please contact 0131 226 4382.

SCOTTISH COUNCIL FOR SINGLE HOMELESS

SCSH is the membership body for organisations and individuals working to tackle homelessness in Scotland.

Full membership details are available from 0131 226 4382 or on our web site.

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