

## Now the Voting's Over...

May's elections both to the Scottish Parliament and local authorities have brought about a massive change across the country. So far it is unclear how this will affect policies towards homeless people.

At national level the SNP manifesto offers encouragement that Scotland will stay on track for the 2012 target to guarantee every unintentionally homeless person the right to a home.

The manifesto says: "The Scottish Parliament has passed a raft of legislation to tackle homelessness and improve the quality of Scottish housing. Now it's time to deliver." It further states that the SNP will assist the community rented sector to identify need for additional housing and "ensure that the house building and improvement programme is appropriate to local needs."

SCSH, together with the other main Scottish housing and homelessness organisations (Shelter, SFHA, Scottish Churches Housing Action and CIH in Scotland) has written to the Minister stressing the importance of the 2012 target and the need for 30,000 affordable rented homes to be built in the next three years to help meet that target.

SCSH Director Robert Aldridge said: "This year's Comprehensive Spending Review will be crucial to whether Scotland can deliver on the 2012 target. The settlement will need to enable an increased supply of affordable housing together with a realistic budget for housing

support to prevent homelessness and help sustain people in their homes."

He added: "Scotland's homelessness policies are widely regarded as the most progressive in Europe. Other countries across Europe are looking to emulate Scotland. We all have a real responsibility to make it work."

At local government level the majority of councils have seen a significant change. Robert Aldridge said: "Local authorities are the key to the new homelessness framework. It is important that new and returning Councillors recognise their important role and the benefits of the new homelessness policies."

*SCSH has developed a training module specifically for councillors. For further details contact [robert@scsh.org.uk](mailto:robert@scsh.org.uk).*



*Picture of Holyrood Debating Chamber  
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## **We Still Need 30,000 New Homes!**

As the new First Minister Alex Salmond settles into his post, senior figures from across the housing sector said the SNP's election policy of offering a £2,000 grant to first-time buyers will not in itself address the shortfall.

In the joint statement, Robert Aldridge (Director, Scottish Council for Single Homeless), Brian Gegan (Chair, Scottish Federation of Housing Associations), Alan Ferguson (Director, Chartered Institute of Housing), Archie Stoddart (Director, Shelter Scotland) and Alastair Cameron (Chief Executive, Scottish Churches Housing Action), said:

"For the vast majority of first time buyers, the £2,000 grant will not be the critical factor in making purchase affordable. This raises serious concerns about its value for money for the public purse.

"While we recognise the potential positive contribution of the SNP's shared equity scheme, we would urge the new Executive to consider it carefully before deciding on implementation.

"In the meantime we continue to commend the case for 30,000 new rented homes to be built over the next three years as a more effective way of meeting Scotland's housing needs and one which provides long lasting benefits."

# What's New?



Positive Action in Housing has unveiled a new project for Scotland's new communities.

The New Migrants Action Project is working with communities and service providers across Scotland to promote equality of rights, opportunities and access to support for new migrant communities.

The project will:

- ◆ empower people from new migrant communities to take action for themselves to exercise their rights;
- ◆ help build links between new migrant communities and the statutory, voluntary and community sectors;
- ◆ help service providers to target quality, rights-based advice, information and support services;
- ◆ deliver information events including housing, welfare and employment rights; education and training, community safety issues;
- ◆ develop a web-based resource for advice, information and support workers, with local and national information on migrant rights;
- ◆ work with the PAiH Training Team to deliver tailored training packages to organisations working with migrant communities.

For more information on the New Migrants Action team, contact Michael Collins, Manager, or Seonad Forbes, Outreach Worker on 0141 353 2220.

Email: [migrantaction@paih.org](mailto:migrantaction@paih.org)  
Website: [www.paih.org](http://www.paih.org)

## SCSH Parents Guide

With the support from three local authority partners – Argyll & Bute, North Lanarkshire and the City of Edinburgh – development work is resuming on *SCSH Parents Guide* after a series of unavoidable delays. The guide will be aimed at parents and other significant adults in young people's lives – grandparents, elder siblings, aunts and uncles etc. – and give an overview of the challenges of leaving home for young people.

Research shows that young people often turn first to their family for advice and yet we also know that parents and wider family often lack up to date information about the realities of leaving home, housing and homelessness. They also often lack knowledge of a whole range of services, such as mediation, that can help families stay together.

A Parents & Professionals consultation will be taking place on Friday June 22nd, at SCSH. This and other consultations will help shape the content and format of the guide, which is due for publication before the end of the year.

If you'd like to know more or get involved in the consultations contact Ingrid Fitzsimons ([ingrid@scsh.org.uk](mailto:ingrid@scsh.org.uk) or 0131 226 4832).



## Rewards for Learning

Earlier this year SCSH's Youth Unit carried out a survey of the ways in which Scottish housing support projects encourage and celebrate young people's learning. They also did some research into both formal and informal methods of rewarding learning, ranging from internally produced certificates to formal qualifications. The results of this work have now been published as the *Rewards for Learning* report.

Check the *SCSH website* for more details and to download an order form.



## Churches Housing Launches Affordable Housing Guide

Scottish Churches Housing Action has launched a new handbook for using church land and property for much-needed affordable housing.

*Make It Happen* offers a step-by-step guide to those responsible for church land and buildings, and urges them to secure opportunities for affordable housing from redundant or under-used church assets.

The handbook's author, Catherine Killin, said: "The guide was written specifically for people in churches to help them actively consider this option and is already proving useful."

The book provides information and practical examples as it explains why it believes re-using church property for housing should happen and offers advice for churches considering this option.

More details at: [www.churches-housing.org](http://www.churches-housing.org)

# Policy Update

## EU2 and EU8 Migrant Workers Update

As outlined in the April newsletter, SCSH had asked Mark Lazarowicz MP to table written parliamentary questions on EU2 (Bulgarian and Romanian) migrants' eligibility for social assistance in Scotland. The questions sought to clarify EU2 migrants' homelessness entitlement and rights to other forms of assistance, such as benefit entitlement through local authority social services.

SCSH received answers to the questions from Liam Byrne MP (Minister of State for Nationality, Citizenship and Immigration) on May 3rd. The answers contained little in the way of new information on EU2 migrants' entitlements to social assistance and instead concentrated on older guidance material, such as the Scottish Executive Code of Guidance on Homelessness.

The answers suggested that there was little evidence of homeless EU2 migrants being a significant issue. SCSH is therefore seeking feedback from local authorities on the answers already received. SCSH is also keen to hear from any other housing organisations and voluntary groups who may have had contact with EU2 migrants in terms of providing advice and/or assistance to this group.

*To discuss these or any other policy issues in more detail please contact Daniel Coote, Policy Officer, on 0131 226 4382 or [daniel@scsh.org.uk](mailto:daniel@scsh.org.uk)*

### Web Links

Links to all documents referred to in this issue of *inhouse*, and to back copies, can be found at [www.scsh.org.uk](http://www.scsh.org.uk)

## New Rights for Private Renters

The fifth Commencement Order of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 was made on the 27 March 2007. The order brings the following provisions of the Act into force later on in the year:

- ♦ Repairing Standard
- ♦ Private Rented Housing Panel (PRHP)
- ♦ New protections for occupiers of mobile homes, as outlined in last month's *inhouse*.

In order to improve conditions in the private rented sector, the Act replaces and expands on the existing landlord's repairing obligation for private rented housing, contained in Schedule 10 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987. The standard will apply to almost all private sector tenancies and those public sector tenancies which are not Scottish secure tenancies or short Scottish secure tenancies. Occupancy arrangements which are not leases are not covered.

The Act also creates a new mechanism for enforcing the landlord's repairing duty through the Private Rented Housing Panel. Currently, a tenant has to take court action to enforce the landlord's repairing obligation. This is expensive, off-putting and seldom used. The PRHP is designed to be a quicker and easier route to allow tenants to enforce landlord's obligations.

The Scottish Executive has issued draft non-statutory guidance on the Repairing Standard and PRHP provisions and is taking comments until 4th June. SCSH will submit comments on the guidance and is keen to hear from members if they wish to raise particular issues.

## National Conference on Leaving Home and Housing Education

31st August 2007, Radisson Hotel, Edinburgh

The second National Conference on Leaving Home and Housing Education will take place on 31st August 2007 at the Radisson SAS Hotel in Edinburgh. This year's event will feature a range of workshops, presentations and stalls highlighting new developments and projects.

The conference is for anyone interested in or working in the area of leaving home and housing education and offers delegates the opportunity to network, discuss challenges, and discover new initiatives and ways of working together. Workshop sessions will include:

- ♦ Youth homelessness crash course for teachers
- ♦ Family mediation, young people & homelessness
- ♦ Accreditation schemes for peer educators
- ♦ How local services can work with schools to deliver LHHE

*For further information or to book a place on the conference please contact SCSH. Email [enquiries@scsh.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@scsh.org.uk) or call us on 0131 226 4382.*

## Locating Learning

learnirect scotland are committed to being a useful resource for the voluntary sector. But to be more useful they need to know more about learning resources you use.

*Help them improve their service by filling in a quick survey either on paper (included with the newsletter) or via the web: [www.scsh.org.uk/learnirect](http://www.scsh.org.uk/learnirect)*

Contact learnirect on 0808 100 9000 or via: [www.learnirectscotland.com](http://www.learnirectscotland.com)

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## Mediation and Homelessness

**Friday 15th June, Edinburgh**

Details and a booking form at [www.scsch.org.uk](http://www.scsch.org.uk)



Frontline agencies in partnership

## Homeless Link National Conference

**11-12 July, Birmingham**

See [www.homeless.org.uk](http://www.homeless.org.uk) for details.



## CIH Attitudes Towards Homelessness

**Tuesday 21st August**

Details at: [www.cih.org/scotland/training/](http://www.cih.org/scotland/training/)

**SCOTTISH COUNCIL FOR  
SINGLE HOMELESS**

## Leaving Home and Housing Education Conference

**Friday 31st August**

Second national conference on leaving home and housing education. More details coming soon at: [www.scsch.org.uk](http://www.scsch.org.uk)



## Scottish Youth Housing Network Consultation

**Tuesday 25th September, Dundee**

SYHN talk to young parents about their housing issues. Details to follow or check in at [www.syhn.org.uk](http://www.syhn.org.uk)

**SCOTTISH COUNCIL FOR  
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## SCSH Health and Homelessness

**Wednesday 26th September, Apex, Edinburgh**

More details in the box below.



## Scottish Housing & Support Conference

**Thursday 4th & Friday 5th October, Dunblane Hydro Hotel**

[www.joa.co.uk/shasc.html](http://www.joa.co.uk/shasc.html) or [mailshasc-conf@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:mailshasc-conf@yahoo.co.uk)

**SCOTTISH COUNCIL FOR  
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## SCSH National Homelessness Conference

**Thursday 8th & Friday 9th November, Apex, Edinburgh**

Get the dates in your diary.

## Health and Homelessness

**Wednesday 25th September, Apex, Edinburgh**

The postponed Health and Homelessness Conference held jointly by SCSH and Health Scotland will now take place on September 26th at the Apex Hotel in Edinburgh. This fourth national health and homelessness conference will focus around the Health and Homelessness Standards which came into force last year. It will be a unique event bringing together practitioners and policy makers from the health, homelessness and addiction sectors. The new Health and Wellbeing Minister, who has overall responsibility for health, housing and homelessness has been invited to make a keynote speech.

Further details from Chris Campbell or Robert Aldridge at SCSH.



SCSH has a centrally located meeting room available for hire at its offices in Edinburgh. Charges range from £15 (£12 for members) per hour to £110 (£80 for members) for a full day. Contact us for details.

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

Full membership details are available on 0131 226 4382 or on our web site: [www.scsch.org.uk](http://www.scsch.org.uk)

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