

National Conference on Leaving Home and Housing Education a resounding success!

SCSH's second National Conference on Leaving Home and Housing Education took place on 31 August 2007 in Edinburgh.

The conference highlighted a range of approaches to delivering leaving home and housing education across Scotland and the UK as well as the real need for young people to receive help and support before housing crisis hits.

Smart Move, run by Link Living in Falkirk's, premiered their new DVD 'I wish I knew then what I know now'. The resource features volunteer peer educators discussing their own personal experiences of homelessness and will be shown in schools and youth groups throughout the Falkirk area. Actor and playwright Naomi Breeze gave a moving performance of her new 'H is 4', a drama about one young woman's route in to and out of homelessness. One delegate enthused: "H is 4' was brilliant! It got the message across about different circumstances of homelessness."

Other presentations examined how leaving home education fits in to the new Curriculum for Excellence and highlighted good practice in schools, such as North Ayrshire's CHAP service and East Lothian's Housing Education Partnership.

“The day was really thought provoking. The logic of leaving home education is obvious but it is really interesting to hear different perspectives.”

Conference Delegate.

Workshops provided delegates with the opportunity to explore the impact of family homelessness on young people's education with the Edinburgh's Shelter Families Project, to take a crash course on homelessness with SCSH, and see how they could work with schools and local services in homelessness prevention by looking at the examples provided by the HELP Project and the Smart Move Group from Link Living. Also covered was the use of mediation, with contributions from Edinburgh's Amber project and Alone in London.

A full write up of the event is available on the new look SCSH website: www.scsch.org.uk Just click on 'Events' for information of both upcoming and previous events.

Household Survey

The eighth annual and technical reports of the Scottish Household Survey (SHS) has just been released. The report outlines the main findings from interviews carried out with 31,013 households throughout Scotland in 2005 and 2006, providing detailed information about people living in Scotland today. Overall it shows a continuing decline in the social rented sector, while the proportions in all other sectors continue to rise.

Owner occupation accounts for 66% of households in Scotland (up from 62% in 99/00), 25% rent from a social landlord (31% in 99/00) and 7% rent privately (5% in 99/00). In 2006, 30% of all households owned their properties outright (23% in 1999).

Figures on household composition show that a third of households (32%) contain only one adult and a third (33%) contain two adults. Indeed, only 5% of households contain five or more people. Encouragingly, adults' assessments of their neighbourhoods are overall positive, with 93% saying their local area is either a 'very good' or 'fairly good' place to live.

The survey also reveals that at some point in their lives, 4% of adults now living in private households had experienced homelessness.

See: www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/16002 for more information or contact Daniel Coote, Policy Officer, on 0131 2264382 or daniel@scsch.org.uk



What's New?

Housing Supply on the Agenda

The new Housing Supply Task Force has held its first meeting. One of its initial tasks will be to examine how land can be freed up for housing. It will also be undertaking a series of regional/geographical investigations. SCSH Director Robert Aldridge said 'I welcome the work of the taskforce. There is an urgent need to find means of providing the 30,000 new affordable homes required in the next three years to ensure we can meet our homelessness target in 2012.'

Scotland Wins Homeless World Cup

Scotland became champions of the Homeless World Cup in Denmark, this July. Two members of the winning team got involved through the HELP project in Argyll and Bute which provides housing supporting to young homeless people. HELP has used football as a vehicle to work effectively with young men, a number of whom have attained their SFA coaching qualification or used football to achieve their Duke of Edinburgh Award. The highlight for many has been their involvement in the Homeless World Cup. When the event was held in Edinburgh HELP had six young men in the Scotland Squad. One young man went to South Africa in 06 and two young men went to Denmark in July 2007 to become the Homeless World Cup Champions.



For further information on the homeless world cup contact Janet K MacKellar on 01369 707600 or janet@helppltd.org.uk

Preparing for Local Housing Allowance rollout

A recent report by the DWP shows local authorities are in different stages of readiness for next year's roll out of Local Housing Allowance. Currently across the UK the new private sector housing benefit system is being tested by 18 authorities (two of which are in Scotland).

Around half the authorities who were surveyed felt they were unprepared for the change (though half were fairly or very well prepared). A large majority of councils said they needed funding, guidance and a training package in order to introduce the new system.

Scottish authorities were more likely than English authorities to say they are planning to introduce Automated Credit Transfer for housing benefit payments.

SCSH is aware of concerns around the detailed implementation of LHA and is planning an event in January to address the outstanding issues. Further details coming soon.

Consultation: Better Health, Better Care

The Scottish Executive has issued a new consultation document on the future of healthcare in Scotland. *Better Health, Better Care* looks to the future shape of health and wellbeing services.

Underpinning much of the discussion is a welcome commitment to addressing health inequalities and specific mention of the need to meet the needs of homeless people, as well as various other groups with complex and challenging needs.

The paper recognises the useful work of the voluntary sector. It specifically suggests that 'ideas and initiatives from the voluntary sector are mainstreamed effectively' where they are valued and effective.

The document also mentions the creation of a Ministerial Task Force on health inequalities which is being chaired by the Minister for Public Health, Shona Robison, and will report to cabinet by May 2008.

SCSH Director Robert Aldridge said: 'I very much welcome this discussion document, and in particular the fact that it specifically mentions the needs of homeless people. I would urge people to respond so that we can truly embed health and homelessness activity into the mainstream work of health and related services.'

Copies of the document are available from www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/Action-Plan

The closing date for consultation responses is 12 November 2007.



New national scheme to reward responsible landlords

A new National Landlord Accreditation Scheme which will reward good practice in the private rented housing sector, helping both tenants and landlords has been announced by Stewart Maxwell.

The scheme is designed to raise standards by encouraging private landlords to seek voluntary accreditation as a way of rewarding them for maintaining their properties to certain standards. It will also allow people looking for a property to find out which landlords are meeting the requirements.

The establishment of the scheme follows a number of successful pilots in local authorities. It is expected to be developed by working closely with both private landlords and local authorities.

The scheme is intended to provide best practice guidance to landlords, as well as a range of other membership benefits, advice and training.

Local accreditation schemes have already been piloted in four local authorities - Edinburgh, South Ayrshire, Dumfries and Galloway and Dundee - with funding from Communities Scotland. Some of the existing schemes will be expected to merge with the national scheme.

It is hoped that close links will be developed between local authorities who want to continue their own local schemes and the new national scheme.

The national accreditation framework will be based on the National Core Standards for Private Landlords developed by Communities Scotland. The scheme is expected to be driven by private landlords and letting agents themselves, working closely with local authorities.

Protection of vulnerable groups Vetting and barring scheme - Scotland

The Scottish Government is taking forward a comprehensive implementation programme to deliver the provisions outlined in the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) (Scotland) Act 2007.

The PVG Act will deliver a robust vetting and barring scheme that will safeguard children and protected adults by keeping people who would harm them out of caring positions. It will also deliver a fair and consistent system that will be easier for people to understand and use.

A new electronic system will be introduced. This will make it easier to identify people who are (or who become) unsuitable to work with vulnerable groups and deliver an additional tool to help employers make safe recruitment decisions. The scheme will also help to reduce bureaucracy as it will no longer be necessary to undergo a long and complicated disclosure process when a person changes posts.

The detail of the new vetting and barring scheme will be developed through secondary legislation during the course of 2007/08. Consultation on the secondary legislation is expected to begin later in 2007. More details about the consultation and associated activities will be available shortly.

Web Links

Links to all documents referred to in this issue of *inhouse*, and to back copies, can be found at www.scsch.org.uk

SCSH Stakeholder Survey Results

SCSH received an excellent response to its stakeholder survey with over 100 completed questionnaires being returned by the closing date of the 6 August. SCSH very much welcomed your views and we are feeding the responses into the development of our medium term strategic review.

29% of returned surveys were from local authorities, 22% from voluntary organisations (of numerous sizes) and 14% of surveys were from Housing Association respondents.

91% of respondents believed SCSH's concerns with homelessness were 'very important' while 70% believed SCSH's ability to provide regular information and updates were 'very important'. All respondents believed SCSH's work function of providing information on new policies was either 'very' or 'fairly important' while 70% believed SCSH's work providing information on good practice was 'very important'.

Just over two thirds of all respondents believed that SCSH should be more of a pressure group while approximately 91% believed SCSH should continue to work with health, employment, education as well as housing. Almost 60% believed SCSH should not focus simply on being a voice for the voluntary sector while approximately 52% also believed SCSH should not focus more on people experiencing the crisis of homelessness, because they believed we should continue to focus on prevention and sustainability as well.

Finally, no respondents believed SCSH's services were 'poor' with the vast majority believing SCSH's services were either 'excellent' (42%) or good (52%).

For more information please contact Daniel Coote, Policy Officer, on 0131 2264382 or daniel@scsch.org.uk



**SCOTTISH COUNCIL FOR
SINGLE HOMELESS**

**SCSH Health and Homelessness
SCSH with Health Scotland**
Wednesday 26th September, Apex, Edinburgh
Details and a booking form at www.scsch.org.uk



Scottish Housing & Support Conference
Thursday 4th & Friday 5th October, Dunblane Hydro Hotel
www.joa.co.uk/shasc.html or mailshasc-conf@yahoo.co.uk



SACRO Annual Lecture
5.30pm, Thursday 11th Oct Edinburgh
Community Justice Reforming Civil Society
Details at www.sacro.org.uk

**SCOTTISH COUNCIL FOR
SINGLE HOMELESS**

SCSH Practical Steps Training
**Thursday 11th Oct Inverness, Tuesday 16th Oct Glasgow
and Friday 19th Oct Edinburgh**
Details and a booking form at www.scsch.org.uk



**CIH Getting Attitudes Right - Joining Up Services
for Homeless People**
Thursday 18th October, Edinburgh
Details at: www.cih.org/scotland/training/

**SCOTTISH COUNCIL FOR
SINGLE HOMELESS**

SCSH National Homelessness Conference
Thursday 8th & Friday 9th November, Apex, Edinburgh
Details and a booking form at www.scsch.org.uk

New SCSH Website. www.scsch.org.uk

SCSH has recently launched a new and improved website. Have a look at www.scsch.org.uk and let us know what you think.

To provide feedback contact Wendy Devall, Information and Development Officer on 0131 226 4382 or wendy@scsch.org.uk

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

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Health and Homelessness Conference 26th September 2007, Edinburgh

A unique opportunity for all those with an interest in the health of people affected by homelessness to exchange ideas, make new contacts and, most importantly, drive forward better services. [Click](#) for more details.

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Practical Steps Training Tour

Bookings are now open for the preventing homelessness and sustaining tenancies training sessions taking place on 11th Oct Inverness, 16th Oct Glasgow and 19th Oct Edinburgh. This training is suitable for a wide range of housing and homelessness staff as well as teachers and youth workers.

[More details.](#)



Our Sister Sites



The Scottish
Homelessness and
Employability Network