

Your Details

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- Please tick if you want us to keep your response confidential:

Section 1 Anchor

Section 1: Our assessment of the importance of housing for wellbeing in Scotland

- Q.1. Has our assessment of housing and wellbeing missed any important benefits and, if so, which benefits and what is the evidence for this?:
- Q.2. Has our assessment exaggerated any of the benefits of housing for wellbeing and, if so, in what respects and what are your reasons for saying this?:

Section 2 Anchor

Section 2: Does Scotland invest enough in housing?

- Q.3. Do you agree with our assessment of the current position on investment in housing?: Yes.
- Q.4. Do you agree with our brief assessment of current policy on investment in housing?: Broadly, yes.

- Q.5. Do you agree with our suggestions for further action in the area of investment in housing?:

We completely agree that investment in new housing needs to be based on a comprehensive assessment of housing need, but that there are totally different methods of assessment between providers, and there desperately needs to be an agreed National Standard of need assessment. Interestingly, again you have failed to include accessible housing: in 2.5 you focus on "affordable" housing without including accessible - we believe they can be both. Initial research undertaken by SDEF has highlighted one local authority that has a standardised method of need assessment that will result in 1000 new accessible, affordable houses being built by 2017: we believe others can and should follow this lead. You have not mentioned exploring incentive for developers that would encourage them to include a quota of accessible housing in new developments; say 10%. Until we introduce more accessible housing into the housing stock as a matter of course, choices as to where disabled people can live will continue to be limited. The onus will then continue to be on making expensive alterations to existing non accessible housing, rather than lesser works to already accessible homes.
- Q.6. Do you have any other suggestions that we have not mentioned in relation to investment in housing?:

Section 3 Anchor

Section 3: Getting a better fit between housing and the economy

- Q.7. Do you agree with our assessment of the current position regarding housing and the economy? What more would you add?:
- Q.8. Do you agree with our assessment of the current situation of UK Government policy with regards to the housing market and the economy?:
- Q.9. What are your views about the five areas of policy reforms suggested here?: In conjunction with Q6. above, we would add that Government has a role to play in policy incentives, such as the removal of stamp duty on the sale of accessible homes.

Section 4 Anchor

Section 4: Getting a better fit between housing and welfare policy

- Q.10. Do you agree with our assessment of the current position regarding housing and welfare benefits? What more would you add?: Not completely. You state that HB is paid directly to landlords, and we would question whether this is actually the case. We know of many issues caused by money being passed directly to the individual to control, rather than pass directly to the landlord. If the tenant is not capable of managing their finances they can rapidly incur rent arrears, leaving a landlord with little option but to evict.
- Q.11. Do you agree with our assessment of the current situation of government policy at UK levels and the possible outcomes post-referendum? What more would you add?: Given the outcome of yesterday's Smith Commission announcements these medium term options will need to be revisited.
- Q.12. What are your views about the medium term policy options presented here? What other ideas and issues strike you over this time frame?:
- Q.13. Do you agree that we have a unique opportunity to consider longer term policy options over the next key period in Scotland's history? How do you respond to the options proposed here? Are there other options that should be considered?: Landlords should be given the flexibility to come up with bespoke arrangements with tenants who either have money management issues or capacity issues that cause them to fall into rent arrears.

Section 5 Anchor

Section 5: Getting a better fit between housing and the environment

- Q.14. Do you agree with our assessment of the importance of housing to the environment?:
- Q.15. Do you agree with our brief assessment of current policy on housing in relation to the environment?:
- Q.16. Do you agree with our suggestions for further action in the

area of housing and the environment?:

- Q.17. Do you have other suggestions that we have not mentioned in relation to housing and the environment?: That any incentives or grant schemes apply equally to providing accessible housing.

Section 6 Anchor

Section 6: Housing and Health and Education

- Q.18. Do you agree with our on our assessment of the importance of housing to health and education?: Almost. Apart from a brief mention of aids and adaptations there is no mention of accessible housing and the role this plays in health and wellbeing.
- Q.19. Do you agree with our brief assessment of current policy on housing and health and education?:
- Q.20. Do you agree with our suggestions for further action in the area of housing and health and education?: We believe you should include a fourth category: Accessible Housing.
- Q.21. Do you have other suggestions which we have not mentioned in relation to housing and health and education?: At SDEF we are investigating the wider links between the lack of accessible housing and the effects this has on wider health and social care provision. We believe more research needs to be done in this area. We believe studies will show a direct efficiency saving between more accessible, affordable housing and care provision.

Section 7 Anchor

Section 7: Housing and Community Regeneration

- Q.22. Do you agree with our on our assessment of the importance of community regeneration?: Yes, although interestingly in 7.2 you left out the second half of the outcome: "where we are able to access the amenities and services we need."
- Q.23. Do you agree with our brief assessment of current policy on community regeneration?:
- Q.24. Do you agree with our suggestions for further action in the area of community regeneration?: Yes, though we would countenance the involvement of local Access Panels as part of any community regeneration as a must. Disabled people must be given the chance to play their part in regenerating their communities.
- Q.25. Do you have other suggestions which we have not mentioned in relation to community regeneration?:

Section 8 Anchor

Section 8: Do we need a more robust private rented sector?

- Q.26. Do you agree with our views on the need for a more effective private rented sector which can make a greater contribution to meeting housing needs?:
- Q.27. Do you agree with our brief assessment of current policy on the private rented sector?:
- Q.28. Do you agree with our

suggestions for further action in the private rented sector?:

- Q.29. Do you have other suggestions which we have not mentioned in relation to the private rented sector?:
- Do you have any further comments in relation to the Commission on Housing and Wellbeing's consultation paper?:

Form Information

Site Name	Shelter Scotland
Site Id	11434
Page Custom Form Name	Commission consultation
Page Custom Form Id	960681
Url	http://scotland.shelter.org.uk/commission_consultation
Submission Id	1028630
Time of Submission	28 Nov 2014 11:32 am
Submission IP Address	81.149.88.121