



SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

Scottish Centre for Research on
SOCIAL JUSTICE



UNIVERSITY
of
GLASGOW

Conference: Housing and Social Justice
Teacher Building, Scottish Engineering Centre, St Enoch Square, Glasgow

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**Plenary Session 2: Michael Lennon, Glasgow Housing
Association Ltd**

**Challenges and Opportunities for Housing Organisations:
Equality, Diversity and Sustainability**

Glasgow Context

- Inequality in Glasgow is sharply polarised: while some residents have comfortable lives, others suffer multiple deprivation
- 20% of people of working age do not participate in the labour market
- Qualifications - 24% of working age people have NO qualifications compared with City of Edinburgh at 8.3%
- Glasgow has the lowest life expectancy in the UK

GHA Tenant Profile



- Many disadvantaged tenants live in GHA stock
- Recent GHA Tenant Satisfaction Survey shows that:
 - 37% of GHA tenants are aged 65 or over.
 - Over half (54%) of households have at least one person who has a long standing illness, disability or infirmity
 - 5% of households contain someone who uses a wheel chair
 - 3% of tenants are from black and ethnic minority backgrounds
- New tenants are primarily single parents, single people, ethnic minorities

GHA Context



- Much of the GHA housing stock is in poor physical condition
- Quality of neighbourhoods has also declined – with fear of crime and insecurity increasing
 - Only 61% of GHA tenants satisfied with the neighbourhoods in which they live.
- Expectations and building requirements have risen dramatically since most of the stock was built

GHA Role



- Role - GHA is a transitional vehicle whose aim is to support the development of a network of modern and effective affordable housing institutions throughout the city
- Aim - Decent homes, strong communities, effective housing choice
- Goal - Sustainable housing system for low income households

Priorities



- Dramatically improve the quality of the social housing stock
- Dramatically improve the quality of neighbourhoods
- Working to create strong communities
- Working in partnership to address disadvantage

Improving Housing Standards



- £1.4 billion investment programme over 10 years
- 80,000 properties transferred
- Housing Futures assessment exercise
 - 50,000 confirmed as ‘core’ stock
 - 24,000 still in assessment process
 - Initial 6,000 demolitions identified
 - 3,000 new build ‘reprovisioning’ programme
- Partnership with GCC in Demand Review – likely that demolitions will rise if review confirms that demand for social rented housing is falling

Better neighbourhoods



- Developing a strategic approach to anti-social behaviour in partnership council and police
- Providing a home security package to elderly and vulnerable tenants
- Giving tenants power and choice - but also duties and responsibilities
- Expecting high standards from tenants – arrears, property care, neighbourly behaviour
- Ensuring that vulnerable households receive the support they require
- Improving the environment

Stronger Communities



- Tenant-led organisations – promotion of community empowerment
- Participation in policy-making, planning, delivery of services, investment and regeneration
- Development of policies and services for ‘disadvantaged’ groups and increased participation levels.
- Focus on ethnic minorities, people with a disability, women, elderly people and young tenants
- Improving links with agencies working with traditionally excluded groups

Addressing inequality

- The way in which social landlords let property can play a key role in reducing or increasing inequality
- Current system creates polarised areas – and concentrates disadvantage
- Aim is to create a Allocation Framework and Common Housing Register, in which LHO allocation policies will ‘nest’
- Will explore choice-based letting systems as part of the review and assess whether they increase or decrease opportunities for disadvantaged groups
- Need also to ensure that GHA and LHOs continue to fulfil duties to house homeless

Addressing inequality

- **Rent** - make rents affordable
- **Income maximisation** through support for welfare benefits advisors, money advice and credit unions
- **Jobs and Training** - new approach to labour clauses within procurement process to maximise jobs and training gains.
- **Disadvantaged groups** - working with partners to provide employment and training packages for people with a disability and ethnic minorities
- **Health** - exploring specific interventions that we can design into the investment process to support health improvements

What would success look like?



- People feeling in control of their lives and taking responsibility
- Glasgow ditching its 'deprived' status
- Partners pulling together in new ways – investment, housing, health, transport, childcare
- A restructured housing sector delivering this ambition

Key questions: Facing up to failing neighbourhoods



- What makes a successful neighbourhood?
- Can all places be regenerated - should we give up hope on some places?
- How do we make these kinds of decisions?
- How do we encourage respect for public/community investment?
- How should we deal with noise, harassment, racial prejudice and sectarianism?