

the **GRID**

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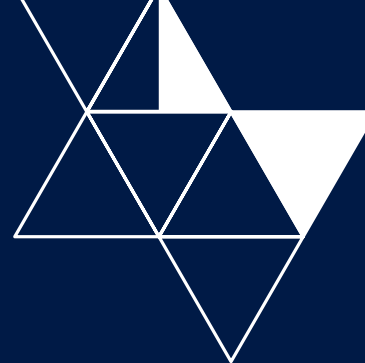
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Chair's Welcome

Baroness Hayter



Welcome to the inaugural issue of The Grid, TPI Scotland's new monthly journal. The publication follows hot on the heels of the merger of Property Managers Association Scotland (PMAS) and The Property Institute (TPI) after 97% majority in favour of the move.

The journal is being put together in order to share news and information with TPI Scotland members and covers all aspects of property management, as well as the wider housing sector and topics relevant to running any business in Scotland.

The Grid is a new membership benefit for Scottish members and has been enabled by tapping into TPI's wider infrastructure. That infrastructure will also lead to further benefits, not least new training and qualifications opportunities.

However, I am profoundly aware that it isn't a one way street when it comes to skills knowledge. TPI's members in England and Wales are keen to learn from the Scottish experience, not least at a time when the UK Government is in the midst of dismantling the leasehold system.

It also has to be said that while the property management regimes differ, the vast majority of the day-to-day work is essentially the same. The majority of TPI's existing CPD Library

is just as relevant in Scotland as it is in England – and is now available for free to TPI Scotland members.

The merger will also allow TPI to have a stronger voice in its dealings with legislators, whether they are based in Westminster or Holyrood. TPI has worked hard over the last few years to build its public affairs team and that strength will be brought to bear in Scotland. PMAS already had strong relationships with the Scottish Government, but that strength will be enhanced.

There will be further news to come, not least regarding TPI Scotland's conference in October. The Grid will be taking a break in July and August, but we will be back, refreshed and reinvigorated, in September. I hope you all have a wonderful summer.

Baroness Hayter is the Chair of The Property Institute

Letter from the Executive Director



It is just a few short weeks since I took on the role of executive director at TPI Scotland, doing my best to provide a seamless transition following Alison McDiarmid's retirement. It's safe to say that I haven't had a dull moment.

I have worked in property in Scotland for decades, but there are still connections that need to be made. As a result, I've been running around the country getting to know board members and setting up meetings with MSPs and government officials alike.

I've also been busy shaping the content and booking speakers for TPI Scotland Connect, the new name for what was PMAS's annual conference, which will take place in Glasgow in October. You can expect to hear a great deal more about the event in the coming months and I look forward to welcoming you on the day.

What is already clear to me is that news of the benefits of the merger of PMAS and TPI is getting out. I've had to concentrate a lot of time so far on the nuts and bolts of managing the organisation and haven't yet had time for marketing. And yet, I have already been approached by two companies that are keen to join.

I fully expect that momentum will continue, not least due to the fact that we will be launching new initiatives over the coming months that I think will provide a compelling offer both for existing members and potential new recruits.

So, it's early days, but TPI Scotland is already delivering for members by building on PMAS' undoubted strengths and making use of TPI's broader infrastructure. I will use this column to keep you updated - and expect to have a lot to say in the months ahead.

Graeme Hartley is the Executive Director of TPI Scotland

TPI Scotland News



TPI Scotland Update – and Introducing Graeme Hartley

Earlier this year, members of Property Managers Association Scotland (PMAS) voted to join and merge with The Property Institute.

Since then, the team has been busy behind the scenes and we are now delighted to make the following announcements:

- We are working towards TPI Scotland Conference in October, which takes over from the PMAS Conference
- The TPI Scotland Dinner and Awards will return next March
- TPI Scotland logo is available to company members
- The first edition of the new Scotland Journal will be out soon
- A new Scotland section on the TPI website has now gone live
- Scottish company members have been added to member directory – please send us your logo and 100 words of company profile

We are also delighted to welcome Graeme Hartley as the Executive Director for Scotland. Graeme has had a long and successful career in property in Scotland.

Between 2012 and 2017, Graeme served as director of UK regions at the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), a role that included providing strategic leadership on several senior RICS boards, including is UK&I World Regional Board and UK Education Standards Board.

He led a team of 45 people, who worked from a range of UK-based offices, and managed a budget of approximately £3m. Regional activity generated more than £0.5m to UK commercial income.

Previously, Graeme was director of RICS Scotland, a role that he held between 2004 and 2011, prior to which he served as deputy director between 1990 and 2004.

Over the years, he has also worked with numerous charities and continues to volunteer as a coach for St Andrews Links Junior Golf Association, among other activities.

“I’m really looking forward to working with the new TPI Scotland Board and members to deliver an ambitious programme,” Graeme said. “It’s all about supporting our members.

“This includes delivering Scotland specific training and qualifications that support individual career development leading to increased professionalism in the sector as well as continuing to collaborate with stakeholders and making sure our voice is heard in the places that matter.

“There is a great team at TPI to support all members in Scotland.”

2025 Wellbeing Report – Key Takeaways

TPI's 2025 Wellbeing Report will be published in the next few weeks, but we've able to crunch enough of the data to provide a sneak preview.

Wellbeing in the sector is improving

Staff in the sector are feeling better – and the gap with the general public is closing. Life satisfaction is up to 6.12 (from 5.8 in 2024) – that's a 5.5% increase. The general public score is 6.9 (up just 1.5%), so the gap is now 11.3%, down from a high of 19% in 2021.

Sense of life being worthwhile is up to 6.63 (from 6.19 in 2024) – a 7.1% rise. The general public scored 7.3 (up 1.4%), bringing the gap to 9.2%, the lowest ever recorded in this survey.

Flexible working is the game changer

Flexible working has the biggest impact on wellbeing – and retention. Respondents with flexible working scored 4% higher across all wellbeing measures, and had 6% lower anxiety than average.

They're also 24% more likely to say they'll still be in the sector in 3 years. 60% of flexible workers say they'll stay, compared to 56% overall, and just 48% where flexible working isn't offered. Those on a four-day week reported even higher wellbeing and 13% lower anxiety.

Hybrid workers are happier

Hybrid working beats both fully remote and fully office-based setups. Hybrid workers score 8% higher on life satisfaction than fully home-based workers and 7% higher than office-based.

Hybrid workers also feel life is more worthwhile – 5% higher than home-based, and 6% higher than office-based. That said, 100% home-based workers report the highest happiness score (6.27), just ahead of hybrid (6.25), with office-based workers trailing at 5.68.

Pride in the job is high

Most people are proud of their work and of the sector – even under pressure. Pride in role came in at 3.86 out of 5, while pride in sector was 3.72 out of 5. 88% scored 3 or above for both role and sector and 28% gave top marks (5/5) for pride in their role. Even those with lower happiness or no wellbeing support only dropped about 10% from the average pride scores.

Abuse is still an issue – but reports are down

While abuse remains unacceptable, reported incidents have decreased.

Introducing Callum Seale, TPI Scotland's Junior Committee Member

What does TPI mean to you?

TPI gives structure to a complex and demanding sector. It offers knowledge, training and shared standards that help us stay current and confident in our roles. It also brings a sense of community. Whether it's at the annual conference or a local event, there's real value in connecting with others who understand the pressures and rewards of property management. For me, TPI is about raising the bar for ourselves and the wider profession.

Why did you join the TPI Junior Committee? What sparked your initial interest?

I joined to give back. I've been fortunate to learn from others and I want to support newcomers in the same way. I'm also driven by the chance to shape the future of the sector by developing my leadership skills and helping the committee address shared challenges.

Being elected Chair earlier this year deepened that commitment. I now have the opportunity to support my vice-chair, build confidence within the committee and encourage more voices around the table.

The merger of PMAS and TPI highlighted key differences between the Scottish and English systems. I felt it was important to bring a Scottish voice into those conversations, especially around regulation and everyday practice.



What keeps you passionate about this industry?

No two days are the same. After fifteen years, that still matters. Every call, email or site visit is a chance to solve problems and make something better. I like the pace, the variety and the challenge of keeping things moving. But the real reward is seeing results - when a project improves a building, or when residents notice a genuine difference in how their home is managed. That's what keeps me motivated.

Introducing Lynsey Hutchinson – this Year’s Winner of the Factoring Award

TPI Scotland is all about nurturing and promoting talent in property management. It is with great pleasure, therefore, that we can announce that this year’s Factoring Award has been given to Lynsey Hutchinson, team manager at Hacking and Paterson Management Services, for her outstanding paper in her Professional Diploma in Factoring Exam. *The Grid* caught up with Lynsey to find out more about her career.

What was your paper about?

It was quite topical. It was to do with cladding, which has obviously been quite a focal point due to the Grenfell tragedy. The rules and regulations and such like are different between Scotland and England. So, if the same question was asked of someone down south, you would probably get quite a different response. The essay question was basically asking how you would deal with a situation whereby a lot of cladding needed to be remediated and replaced.

How did you come to start a career in factoring?

I left school actually wanting to do law at university. I had my place but when push came to shove I had this tremendous worry about how I was going to fund student life and expecting too much from my parents. So, I thought I’d take a year and just work and save, and then at least I’d know I could pay for my accommodation up front.



I started working at a letting agency and I found I quite liked that. And when I got to about 21, I approached a factor because I was ready for something different. Now, it’s 11 years later and I’m doing the same thing.

What are your ambitions for the future?

It would be nice to continue to progress and move up within Hacking and Paterson. We have strong leadership at the moment, whereby a lot of people have worked their way up within the company. There’s an appeal there, knowing that there is progression because other people have done it. And I think, ideally, I would like to get the next level of qualification and continue to learn. You need to be open to learning in this industry no matter how high up you progress.

CPD: Internal Customer Service



CPD REMINDER

Go to CPD Record at www.tpi.org.uk to log your hours

Good and effective teamwork is an important part of a successful business. Being part of a team that works towards achieving a shared goal in a cooperative and respectful way makes our daily grind so much more enjoyable.

But what happens if things don't work that way and work environment isn't as pleasant and cooperative as it should be, with departments protecting their own silos and a blame culture taking hold?

Be the change you want to see and start with our collection of short courses on internal customer service:

- 1. What is internal customer service?**
- 2. Meeting internal customer needs**
- 3. Internal communication**
- 4. Internal customer service – personal support and conflict**
- 5. Providing good internal customer service**

Carry on learning in our **CPD Library** where you can find hundreds of free online courses and videos. Remember you have to log 15 hours of CPD for every calendar year: it is a condition of your individual membership.

This can easily be accomplished through the CPD courses, updates, news, articles and videos available on the TPI website and provided free as part of your membership.

Wellbeing



What Does Wellbeing Mean to You?

This is something my friend asked me recently during a particularly overwhelming week. Deadlines piling up. My phone lighting up nonstop. Mum duties, client needs, home chaos. I felt like I was spinning in every direction, yet going nowhere.

When I reflected on that question, things like happiness, looking after myself, taking time out, making time for others, sleep and sunshine came to mind.

Wellbeing, for me, isn't green juices or morning yoga. It's remaining grounded even on the days I feel pulled in every direction. It's getting enough rest, being outside, and truly being present with my daughter. It's space. And often, that space feels non-existent.

I'm a single mum who works three days a week – but I end up working most days. I love what I do, and I care deeply about my clients, but the juggle is real. When I'm stressed, I get snappy.

When I'm overwhelmed, constant notifications and people needing me feels exhausting. Sound familiar?

Recently, I learned something that helped me massively. My friend Bianca introduced me to her Middle Pillar Theory.

Your wellbeing isn't linear – it's an infinite loop

The Middle Pillar Theory suggests our state of wellbeing exists in an infinity loop. At the centre is your Middle Pillar: the place where you feel most like you. Grounded. Energised. Calm. Clear. It's not a destination, but your state of alignment.

On the left is your mind; on the right, your body. Some days your mind pulls you out of alignment – overthinking, anxiety, self-doubt. Other days, it's your body – fatigue, tension, poor sleep.

This theory helped me pause and actually check in with myself. Where am I on the loop today? Am I coming into or out of alignment? What am I feeling in my mind and body?

I encourage you to try this for yourself:

1. Close your eyes
2. Tune into your mind – how do you feel mentally?
3. Tune into your body – what sensations are present?
4. Ask – what do I need right now to come back to my centre?

For me, it's music and a walk. Sometimes it's boundaries, saying no and turning notifications off.

A gentle reminder

We've spent years chasing work-life balance, but that's not always realistic. What we can balance is what's inside, and that's where everything shifts.

It's about having self-awareness in the chaos and the journey back to your centre. It's knowing what you need in the moment and how to nurture your wellbeing.

If this, I encourage you to try the Middle Pillar Check-In inside the Higher Self Journal by Bianca Caplan. It might help you too.

Know, that even on the hardest days, you're not lost. You may just be out of alignment and that's okay. Your centre is always there – waiting to welcome you home.

Juliette Stone is a Consultant at Full Power Utilities



MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING INFORMATION & SUPPORT

If you have urgent mental health needs, find your local 24/7 mental health crisis line: www.bit.ly/3XFcq1Z

If you need help urgently for your mental health, but it's not an emergency, get help from **NHS 111 online**: www.111.nhs.uk or call 111. People with hearing problems can use the NHS 111 British Sign Language (BSL) service: www.signvideo.co.uk/nhs111/

Your mental health is as important as your physical health. You will not be wasting anyone's time.



0300 123 3393
www.mind.org.uk

Fighting for mental health – for support, for respect, for you. Find your local Mind near you:
www.bit.ly/localMinds



0300 304 7000
www.sane.org.uk

SANeline is open between 4pm to 10pm, 365 days a year.



Freephone 116 123
www.samaritans.org

When life is tough, Samaritans are here to listen at any time of the day or night. You can talk to them about anything that's troubling you, no matter how difficult.

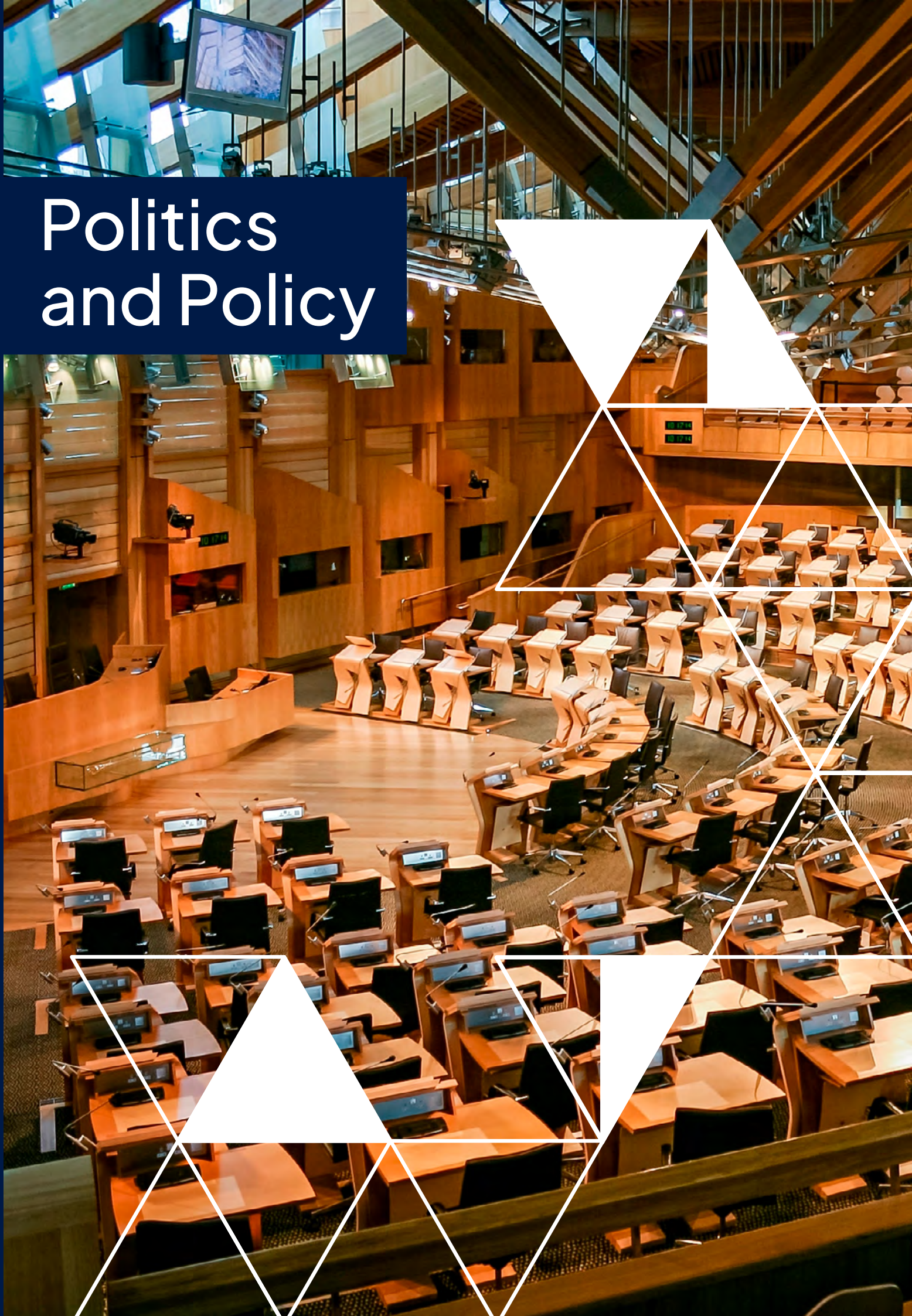


Text SHOUT to 85258
www.giveusashout.org

24/7 crisis text service. If you are struggling to cope and need to talk, our trained Shout Volunteers are here for you, day or night.

Further resources / information / signposting: www.bit.ly/mhwell

Politics and Policy



McAllan Appointed Housing Secretary

Màiri McAllan has been appointed as Cabinet Secretary for Housing upon her return to government from maternity leave and has responsibility for all aspects of housing policy, including heat in buildings.

The Scottish Government said the appointment will “ensure government action is focused on tackling the housing emergency and providing energy efficient homes for the future, helping stimulate economic growth, deliver Net Zero commitments and tackle child poverty”.

Gillian Martin, meanwhile, has been appointed as Cabinet Secretary for Climate Action and Energy, having held the portfolio during Ms McAllan's maternity leave.

Excluding the Law Officers, the overall size of government reduces to 23, down from 27 in May 2024.

First Minister John Swinney said: “Scotland’s strengths lie in our people, our communities and our resolve to leave a better future, and better country for the next generation. As First Minister, I am firmly focused on leading a government that unlocks the potential for every person in Scotland to thrive.

“I have made changes to the Cabinet which will further enable us to realise that potential. Màiri McAllan has been tasked with tackling the housing emergency, including ensuring we have energy efficient homes to help bring down bills and tackle the climate emergency.

“These are two of the biggest challenges facing people across the country and I want them to know they have a government firmly on their side and focused on delivering real change.”

Scottish Government Backs Plans to Secure More Investment for Housing

Proposals for how to build investor confidence in the housing market were published by an independent group of experts earlier this month and backed by the Scottish Government.

The Housing Investment Taskforce report makes a number of recommendations to increase investment across the social, affordable and private housing sectors including:

- Attracting other funds, in addition to public money, for affordable housing
- Creating conditions to support more shared home ownership
- Supporting a more entrepreneurial approach from public bodies

Welcoming the taskforce report, then Housing Minister Paul McLennan said: “It is my ambition, shared by the members of the Housing Investment Taskforce, to make Scotland the best place for housing investment. The report has identified a range of actions to support more investment across all tenures of the housing system to meet Scotland’s growth potential.

“We’re taking forward these recommendations in the Programme for Government and will work in partnership with taskforce members and other organisations to grow investor confidence to support the delivery of more homes across Scotland.”

Moda Group Planning Director James Blakey added: “Addressing the housing emergency needs bold, imaginative and concrete actions, and we are proud to have collaborated with the Housing Minister and the taskforce over the last year to shape these. Working in partnership to create market certainty and viability is key to attracting crucial investment into Scotland so we can build the new homes people want and need.”

Karen Campbell, Communications Director at Springfield, said: “The taskforce’s report is clear on the value in building confidence, supporting new partnerships and creating the economic opportunity to unlock new and existing investment in Scotland. Working together we can now take those actions forward to deliver more homes across all tenures.”

Committee Finishes Stage 2 Scrutiny of Housing (Scotland) Bill

Legislation aimed at improving tenants' rights and introducing homelessness prevention measures has completed Stage 2 scrutiny by a cross-party committee of MSPs.

The Scottish Government introduced the Housing (Scotland) Bill to the Scottish Parliament last year to help tackle poverty by improving the experience of renters and introducing a range of new duties to prevent homelessness.

The Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee approved a number of Scottish Government amendments to the Bill at Stage 2, including powers to implement Awaab's Law that would give social tenants greater protection against damp and mould, and measures to set out how rents could be capped in rent control areas.

Social Justice Secretary Shirley-Anne Somerville said: "The Housing Bill will play an important role in our efforts to tackle poverty by keeping rent affordable and ensuring people can stay in their homes by securing tenancies.

"Our amendments on rent control not only provide certainty for tenants but also provide more clarity to the housing sector on what our rent control proposals will look like, giving investors confidence to continue to support housebuilding in Scotland.

"We have also introduced plans to implement Awaab's Law which will mean everyone can have the right to live in a warm, safe and secure home free from disrepair.

"Scotland has led the way in protecting tenants and providing rights for people threatened with homelessness. The Housing Bill will provide even greater protection, so I am pleased the Committee has completed its Stage 2 scrutiny and I look forward to working with Members across the chamber as the legislation goes through the final Stage 3 process."

Block Management



Tackling Fuel Poverty in Privately Rented Homes

Private rented homes could be subject to a Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) from 2028 to support efforts to tackle fuel poverty and reduce emissions that contribute to climate change.

Under proposals published earlier this month, regulations would be brought forward under existing powers requiring privately rented properties “as far as possible” to reach the reformed EPC Heat Retention Rating (HRR) band C from 2028 for new tenancies and by 2033 for all privately rented homes.

In 2022 there were 300,000 privately rented properties in Scotland. The regulations would prohibit the letting of properties which fall below the minimum standard of energy efficiency, until the landlord has made any relevant energy efficiency improvements.

The current system of Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) is due to be revised and updated from 2026 with a new set of ratings to give clearer information on the fabric energy efficiency of a property; the emissions, efficiency and running costs of its heating system; and the cost of energy to run the home.

Alasdair Allan, at the time Acting Minister for Climate Action, said: “It is vital that we find the right balance to both reach net zero by 2045 and reduce fuel poverty. Improving energy efficiency is one of the levers available to the Scottish Government that enables this dual progress.

“The lowest rates of fuel poverty are associated with higher energy efficiency standards. A majority of privately rented properties are already at a good standard of energy efficiency, based on the current EPC regime, but others still need improvement to bring them closer to reaching a good level.

“These proposals will improve those homes, reduce energy costs for tenants and support the transition to clean heating – which we will be further strengthening through the Heat in Buildings Bill that we have committed to bring forward later this year. Installing better insulation and other energy efficiency measures will also benefit people’s health, by reducing the risk of cold and dampness-related conditions.

“The Scottish Government continues to offer a wide range of support to people and organisations looking to move to clean heating or improve energy efficiency, including to private landlords.”

Exemptions are proposed to provide protection to landlords in situations where they are prevented from obtaining third party consent or permissions to carry out work, as well as where undertaking work could have a negative impact on the fabric or structure of the property.

Previous proposals to regulate energy efficiency for the private rented sector were put forward in 2020 but withdrawn as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Hi-Tech Housing Solutions Proposed to Help Ease Pressures on Health and Social Care

The budget for a programme that uses technology in housing to help older people remain independent for longer will more than double this year from £8.2 million to £20.9 million, the Scottish Government has announced.

The move means more housing association tenants will benefit from the Registered Social Landlord Adaptations Programme, a preventative model that also reduces hospital admissions and long-term care costs.

On a visit to Bield Housing Association's Tech Hub in Linlithgow, the Social Justice Secretary Shirley-Anne Somerville said: "Scotland faces significant challenges as our population ages and it is preventative, people-focused approaches like this that will help us deliver better outcomes for older people while making the best use of public resources.

"That is why we announced in our Programme for Government that we would more than double the budget this year for the Registered Social Landlord's Adaptations Programme from £8.2 million to £20.9 million to allow housing associations to plan and deliver more adaptations for their tenants.

"This financial year we are also investing £768 million in affordable housing, the majority of which will be for social rent. This reflects our long-standing commitment to ensure everyone in Scotland has a safe and affordable home to live in."

Chief Executive of Bield Debbie Collins added: "Investing in the right housing and technology supports older people to manage their health, stay connected and live independently - reducing reliance on formal care and helping to avoid preventable hospital stays.

"We believe housing must be seen as part of the health and care infrastructure and that continued investment in digital solutions and accessible homes not only improve people's lives but delivers public value by saving money in the long-term."

PRS and BTR



The Housing (Scotland) Bill: Where Are We At?

Robin Blacklock operates under Dowbrae Real Estate Consultancy, specialising in Build to Rent development and investment. Here, he provides a commentary on the status of the Housing (Scotland) Bill and its implications.

The Housing (Scotland) Bill has become one of the most significant and disruptive pieces of legislation to hit the Scottish rental market in over a decade – and this is a high bar, considering the emergency rent freeze and tenancy reform encountered over the same period.

We're now beginning to see the bones of what the future might look like. But while clarity around rent control measures has been very helpful, the detail is far from fully formed.

Where we've been

When the Bill was introduced in 2024, the direction of travel was clear: long-term rent control, enhanced local authority powers and new legal duties aimed at early homelessness prevention. Much of this was expected. But the detail has been long awaited and without it the potential 'unintended consequences' have been the focus of attention... stifling investment and constraining supply.

The original proposals landed hard. No exemptions. No recognition of tenure variation. A blanket framework designed more for political optics than

operational nuance. It took months of steady engagement to push the conversation forward – and the result has been tangible.

CPI+1% rent caps (up to 6%) now form the basis for designated rent control areas, with a current consultation opening the door for justified uplifts to reflect improvement works or under-rented baselines.

Build to Rent – including Multi-Family (city centre apartment blocks), Single-Family (sub-urban family houses) and Mid-Market Rent (MMR) – is now subject to consultation on formal exemption from rent controls.

It's a recognition that not all rental housing is created equal and that large-scale, institutionally invested, professionally managed rental assets require a regulatory framework that supports investment and stewardship.

Where we're at

The evolving position is cautiously workable. The proposed CPI-linked framework is administratively clear and predictable – essential qualities for any regulated environment. But the devil is in the detail.

What is the process for certifying an exemption? Can this be done at the planning stage or does the building need to be operational? What constitutes a justifiable uplift? Who certifies what qualifies as

improvement? These are questions that have direct consequences for investment decisions, income forecasting and maintenance and upgrade expenditure – and will need answers early in the new regime.

The draft legislation also opens the door to localised designations and reporting requirements that could introduce complexity and inconsistency across portfolios. If not handled carefully, this risks diverting resource from front-line service delivery into bureaucratic compliance.

Meanwhile, the temporary drama surrounding Purpose-Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) serves as a cautionary tale. A surprise amendment pulled PBSA into the Bill, triggering investor panic and forcing government into public clarification and damage control. While the sector is now expected to be excluded again at Stage 3, a regulation-making power has been introduced allowing for 28-day notice periods in “specific circumstances.”

The implications for tenancy administration, particularly in lease cycles built around academic years, remain clouded. The lesson? Political posturing taking precedence over pragmatic policy can have wide-ranging and damaging effects on investor confidence and operational stability when the mechanics aren't properly thought through.

What comes next?

Stage 3 of the Bill won't happen before the summer recess, but there's a cross-party desire to see it in front of the chamber in September. Secondary legislation is expected to follow in the autumn.

In the meantime we retain the opportunity to influence the output through the consultation – this is about defining exemption criteria that are fit for purpose, setting reporting standards that are achievable, and ensuring that the mechanisms reflect the practicalities of management as much as the politics of the consumer.

Final thoughts

If there's a single takeaway it's this: stay close to the detail. This legislation will define not just rent control policy, but how we support investment, how we upgrade and improve properties, and how we report to regulators for years to come.

We've come a long way from the early drafts. But the risk of unintended administrative burden or poorly drafted regulation remains. Getting this right isn't just about lobbying the headline figures. It's about making sure that when the political dust settles, the operational framework is one we can actually work with – because in the end, good management needs good legislation.



Affordable Housing

SFHA Urges Scottish Government to ‘Seize Opportunity’ from Spending Review Housing Boost

The Scottish Government has been urged to “seize the opportunity” from the Spending Review and announce a long-term funding plan for Scotland’s housing associations.

Responding to the Chancellor’s announcement of a £39billion settlement for housing in England, which is to be delivered over 10 years, SFHA said additional money Scotland receives from the announcement must be invested in the country’s social and affordable homes programme.

The Chancellor’s announcement on housing came a day after the First Minister addressed Scottish Federation of Housing Associations’ (SFHA) Annual Conference.

In a wide-ranging speech on the Scottish Government’s vision for housing, the First Minister, John Swinney, told delegates he was confident of introducing multi-year funding for housing associations, providing similar measures to those announced for England in the Spending Review.

“We’ve not had the opportunity to provide that longer term certainty but I am confident with what we will receive in financial information from the UK Government tomorrow in their spending review, that we will be able to replicate that and provide longer term certainty as a consequence,” he said.

“Because what I want to make sure and what the Finance Secretary is committed to doing is creating mechanisms to improve the level of certainty on medium term funding for key sectors where that medium term certainty has a beneficial impact on forward planning.

“We do all of this because we recognise how important warm, safe and affordable housing will be to achieving the Government’s central vision of eradicating child poverty.”

Following the Chancellor’s announcement of a 10-year funding settlement for England, SFHA now expects the Scottish Government to end the uncertainty of yearly budgets, something it says has hampered the housing sector’s confidence to build.

SFHA Chief Executive Sally Thomas said: “The Spending Review represents a considerable boost for housing in England and enables the Scottish Government to back the country’s housing associations on a long-term basis.

“We expect the Scottish Government to seize this opportunity and chart a course out of the housing emergency by introducing a multi-year funding package for housing associations. This was something the First Minister told SFHA’s Annual Conference he was confident of pending the Chancellor’s Spending Review, which now gives him the opportunity to deliver on.

“It’s time to end the uncertainty of budgets which change one year from the next and empower our housing associations to build a better future for everyone who needs a safe, warm and affordable home.”

Council to Dispose of Sites Across Glasgow to Facilitate New Social Homes

A number of homes, properties and pieces of land on sites across Glasgow are to be disposed of by Glasgow City Council to allow the creation of social, mid-market rent and private housing after a council committee approved the decisions earlier this month.

The first decision was the disposal of four properties to two housing association for the development of social homes.

A former library and children's home will be sold to Wheatley Homes, while another site will be sold to KEY Housing Association subject to the successful conclusion of negotiations.

The second was the disposal of three areas of land to allow the entire site to be sold to developer Belsyde Property, which will build 12 mid-market houses there.

Another land disposal is for five plots of land – 30.15 hectares in total – to Carmyle Developments which will form part a residential development of 400 homes for sale. The council will receive £1.45million for the sale.

Councillor Ruairi Kelly, Convener for Housing, Development and Land Use at Glasgow City Council, said: "The number of disposals being agreed and taken forward shows the ongoing development of sites across Glasgow, with homes, jobs and community spaces being created through new uses for buildings and land."

Building Safety



Perth Block to be Demolished Following Fatal Fire

Dozens of people will need to be rehoused following a fatal fire in a block in Perth earlier this month, with engineers concluding the building will have to be demolished.

Eric Drysdale, Deputy Leader of Perth and Kinross Council, said 50 families of varying sizes were affected and significant disruption in the area would last for months.

A man died and two people - an eight-year-old girl and a 27-year-old man - were taken to hospital following the fire.

“Our thoughts remain with the family and friends of the person who tragically lost their life in this terrible incident, and with all the other people affected,” Drysdale said. “Since the fire, Scottish Fire and Rescue, Police Scotland and Council staff have been on site to ensure the safety of the wider public.”

He added: “On Saturday 14 June a structural engineering contractor was brought in to assess the damage caused to the building at 41 Scott Street. Their report outlined devastating damage to the whole building. The structure has been made unsafe and no part of it is salvageable. As things stand, the building is a serious risk to health and safety.

“Unfortunately, this means that the whole building will require complete demolition. This will be an extremely complex process, and specialist demolition contractor Reigart has been appointed to carry out the task. Preliminary work has already begun on site.”

However, Drysdale warned that the work would take some time. “The building will require careful demolition from the top, down to ground level and this will take some time to complete,” he said. “It is estimated that the work could take around 24 weeks, but it is possible that it could be concluded earlier if there are no complications.

“To allow the work to be carried out safely, pedestrian and traffic access to sections of Scott Street and South Street around the site will remain closed. We appreciate that this will cause continued significant disruption in Perth City Centre, but unfortunately this is unavoidable given the situation we face.”

The closure means that some households who live in blocks very near the site have been asked to move out of their homes while demolition work is carried out to ensure their safety. The council said that the households will be provided with alternative suitable housing, “as well as any other support they need at this difficult time”.

It added: “To assist with the rehousing effort, the Council is asking any local landlords or AirBnB owners to get in touch with us if they have accommodation that is currently available. They can contact our housing team by emailing privatesectoraccess@pkc.gov.uk”

Legal Update



Housing (Scotland) Bill: Stage 2 and Next Steps

After the completion of Stage 2 of the Housing (Scotland) Bill, law firm CMS provides a commentary on its progress and the implications for the sector.

Stage 2 of the Housing (Scotland) Bill has now completed. As the Bill moves into Stage 3 there is scope for further discussion and amendments before the Bill becomes law. This means that several of the proposed amendments that were not progressed at Stage 2 may be revisited at Stage 3, and the amendments agreed at Stage 2 may be discussed further. It is expected that Stage 3 will happen after the summer recess in September.

Student accommodation

One of the most significant amendments agreed at Stage 2 is the expansion of the “relevant tenancy” definition to include PBSAs and student accommodation. The effect of that amendment is the inclusion of student residential tenancies and PBSAs in rent control provisions.

The Bill permits local authorities to designate rent control areas within which rent increases are capped at a “permitted rate”, which limits rent increases to CPI plus 1%, with a maximum increase capped at 6%. To increase the rent above the standard cap specific circumstances must be met, e.g. significant improvement to the property may be justification for a rent increase above the cap. Stage 3 will seek views on how the exemptions to the cap should be applied.

The Scottish Association of Landlords backed this amendment on the basis that it will provide certainty to landlords and investors that rents will not be frozen or fall in real terms.

From a PBSA perspective, however, the Scottish Government has expressed concerns around the inclusion of PBSAs in the rent control amendments and have shared their intention to bring forward amendments at Stage 3 to ensure that the PBSA sector remains outside of the scope of rent controls.

We expect to see further changes in this area, however. As the Scottish Government does not have a majority in the Scottish Parliament, non-governmental support will be needed.

28 day notice period

The Bill includes provisions for ending a tenancy, with a standard 28-day notice period for tenants to leave a property.

The Scottish Government has published correspondence confirming that it will legislate to introduce an amendment at Stage 3 for a 28-day notice period, to clarify the specific circumstances under which a 28-day notice period would be allowed for student tenancies.

The Scottish Property Federation (SPF) has stated that its expectation is that the 28-day notice is to be for specific circumstances and based on industry best practice. Based on an exchange between the SPF and the Cabinet Secretary, the indications are that the amendment will provide for a Regulation making power, but the intention is to base the notice duty on specified grounds of illness, bereavement or where a student is moving to another university.

Homelessness prevention

As a reflection of one of the primary aims of the Bill being to prevent homelessness, Stage 2 effectively removed the intentionality test in homelessness assessments whilst retaining a discretionary power to assess intentionality.

Organisations like Crisis and Shelter Scotland have advocated for the removal of the intentionality test, arguing that it often penalises individuals facing challenging situations. However there remain concerns that removing the intentionality test could lead to the system being exploited and the move to discretionary assessments resulting in inconsistent practices between different local authorities.

The Bill also includes provisions to strengthen homelessness prevention through "ask and act" duties, whereby public bodies are required to make inquiries about individuals' housing situations and take appropriate action. There was an unsuccessful bid to include a winter eviction ban in the Bill.

Enhanced tenant rights

Stage 2 of the Bill introduced several provisions aimed at enhancing tenant rights. Tenants will have the right to request permission to keep a pet, and landlords must not unreasonably refuse permission. In considering the tenant's request, landlords can impose conditions (e.g. requiring a higher deposit) but the tenant has the right to appeal to the First-tier Tribunal if they consider the landlord's refusal or conditions to be unreasonable.

Tenants can make minor alterations without seeking landlord consent but for more significant changes a tenant must obtain landlord approval, which cannot be unreasonably withheld. Landlords may require a higher deposit to cover potential reinstatement costs.

Next steps

It is expected that Stage 3 of the parliamentary process will take place after the summer recess in September, where MSPs will have the opportunity to propose further amendments, which will be debated and decided.

'By Lina Ivanova, Trainee Solicitor, Amy Norton, Partner, and Jenna Tassell, Senior Associate, at CMS

What's New in HR



CIPD Highlights Power of Good Line Management in Supporting Scottish workers' Wellbeing

The CIPD's annual Working Lives Scotland report highlights an urgent need for organisations to prioritise good people management and employee wellbeing

The report highlights an urgent need for organisations to prioritise good people management and employee wellbeing, with over a quarter (26%) of respondents reporting that work negatively affects their mental health.

High workloads, stress and exhaustion were among the causes reported, with:

- Over half of respondents saying they're always, or sometimes, under excessive pressure at work
- Close to two-thirds reporting feeling exhausted at work, either all or some of the time
- Nearly half of those with excessive workloads also finding it hard to relax in their personal time because of their work

The report also highlights the connection between mental health and job satisfaction. Just 34% of those who felt work had a negative impact on their mental health reported being satisfied with their job, compared to 95% of those who felt it had a positive impact.

More than a third of those negatively impacted also said they were likely to quit their job in the next 12 months and were less likely to recommend their employer or go above and beyond at work, highlighting wellbeing as an organisational priority.

The research also highlights that workers with supportive managers are much more likely to feel that work has a positive impact on both their mental and physical health.

"Much of the day-to-day responsibility for supporting employees' health and wellbeing falls on line managers," it says. "This includes spotting signs of stress, making supportive adjustments at work and nurturing positive relationships. Managers have a crucial role to play, and we're urging employers to invest in line manager training to ensure teams are effectively supported."

Marek Zemanik, Senior Public Policy Advisor at CIPD, said: "Employers need to equip managers with training, time and resources to be able to identify issues early and support staff effectively. Work should always be a force for good, and good people management is essential."