

αβχδεφγηι

αβχ

3 July 2013

Dear colleague

I have announced today that the Scottish Government intends to include a proposal to end all right to buy entitlements for social housing tenants in Scotland in the forthcoming Housing Bill. Entitlements will end three years from the date the Bill receives Royal Assent. This notice period strikes a balance between protecting housing stock while giving tenants with an existing right to buy a reasonable opportunity to exercise it if they choose to do so.

The decision to end right to buy follows the consultation, *'The Future of Right to Buy in Scotland'* which took place last year, and reflects the views of the majority of respondents. A full analysis of responses is available at this link :

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/11/6666>

A final consultation report will be published shortly and issued to all respondents. This will explain the consultation process, the policy options we considered and the reasons why we have decided to end right to buy. In summary, among the issues we considered were:

- **Helping people in need of social housing:** we estimate that ending right to buy could prevent the sale of up to 15,500 houses over 10 years
- **Fairness:** ending right to buy puts all tenants of social housing in the same position
- **Helping social tenants:** right to buy sales can cause financial stress for landlords putting pressure on them to increase rent levels for tenants. Sales of social housing stock can also make it more difficult for existing tenants who want to move to a home more suited to their needs as there are less properties available.

- **Helping social landlords:** the discount available with the right to buy means that landlords often sell homes for less than it will cost them to build a replacement. Ending right to buy will allow landlords to plan for the future and better manage their assets so that they can provide a good service for tenants.
- **Helping communities:** By keeping social housing available for rent, it will play a vital part in building sustainable communities with different housing tenures.

We are committed to supporting home ownership in a balanced and sustainable way and our Low Cost Initiatives for First Time Buyers (LIFT) provide a number of schemes for people on low to moderate incomes to become home owners. These are cost effective ways to support home ownership and do not have a detrimental effect on the social rented sector.

Tenants who continue to rent will go on benefitting from secure tenancies in well maintained and regulated homes.

We value our stakeholders' views and my officials will be in touch with you separately to discuss how the Scottish Government can best engage with you. In the meantime, if you have any queries, please contact the right to buy mailbox, [rtb@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:rtb@scotland.gsi.gov.uk), or telephone 0141 305 4086.

Yours sincerely



**NICOLA STURGEON**

