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9 June 2011.

Dear Ms Macpherson,

Response to the Regeneration Discussion Paper: Building a Sustainable Future:

The Built Environment Forum Scotland (BEFS) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Scottish Government's discussion paper on the review of regeneration policy in Scotland.

BEFS is an intermediary body for Scotland's built and historic environment sector. Through its members, BEFS connects with over 325,000 individuals through 540 organisations.

The detailed responses to the Regeneration document are detailed in the attached response and BEFS key responses can be summarised as follows:

- the scope of regeneration needs to be widened to ensure the promotion of sustainable place-making across all communities – applying equally to regeneration to existing communities and new build projects that are the focus of the Scottish Sustainable Communities Initiative;
- BEFS supports a continuation in policy terms of the presumed benefits of devolving power downwards, and empowering citizens to take more responsibility for their own life outcomes whilst striking a balance with those decisions that are made to reflect the interests of communities at a regional and national level;
- continue to encourage the RSL sector to (re-) engage in Regeneration and to distinguish their unique contribution to the wider RSL sector by establishing a

statutory designation of '*community-based housing association*' in the register of social landlords;

- the Scottish Government should provide strategic leadership which ensures regeneration is fully integrated into the National Performance Framework and delivered consistently with local communities through Community Planning Single Outcome Agreements;
- the Built Environment Directorate and Housing Investment Division should be given the remit to establish a (virtual) integrated team to lead regeneration on a stronger planning basis;
- BEFS would encourage the Scottish Government to argue for more direct control over those mainstream resources that impact on marginalised communities; for example, to enable governments to help kick start the economy and raise the standard of living for millions on March 10th 2009, the Ecofin Council gave EU Member States the right to permanently reduce the rate of VAT to 5 per cent for building repair and maintenance work. The Scottish Government should put pressure on the UK government to reduce VAT, as current levels are handicapping redevelopment and sustainability;
- the Scottish Government and its agencies can best support regeneration activity by improving an integrated approach to national outcomes, continuing to engage and maximise local authorities and local communities' involvement (and delivery) in major national and international cultural and sporting events, and
- as part of a wider strategy to modernisation public services and enhance democratic participation and accountability, to encourage community planning partnerships to establish a Community Services budget "pot" such as the French Contrat de Ville which has evolved from a multilevel contract for urban regeneration and consider the viability of asset ownership by local communities.

BEFS' members would be interested in working with the Scottish Government and its partners to engage in wider debate and to take forward some of the place making actions that will arise from the delivery of a new Regeneration Strategy.

Yours Sincerely



Craig Stirrat, Director, On Behalf of BEFS Members.

This response is supported by the following Members of the Built Environment Forum Scotland

Members

Archaeology Scotland (AS)
Institute of Field Archaeologists – Scottish Group (SGIFA)
Institute of Historic Building Conservation – Scottish Branch (IHBC)
National Trust for Scotland (NTS)
Royal Chartered Institute of Surveyors (RICS)
Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)
Scottish Civic Trust (SCT)

**Regeneration Discussion Paper: Building a Sustainable Future:
Contextual Comment**

Scotland is a very diverse country. This diversity is produced by major environmental (both natural and man-made) contrasts, uneven distribution of natural resources and regional differences in the history of human development.

To balance the consequences of Scotland's natural diversity, the Built Environment Forum Scotland (BEFS) is committed to supporting organisations in pursuing excellence in place-making and to tackle the spatial variations in sustainable development. Therefore, BEFS welcomes the Government's recognition (National Planning Framework 2 (NPF2) para 183) that the spatial context for sustainable economic growth cuts across city-region and local authority boundaries – thus requiring collaborative and integrated responses to achieving lasting improvements to Scotland's communities and places.

Inequalities between places are produced over a long period of time, as complex social, economic and political factors operate within a physical environment, characterised by diversity and uneven distribution of resources and variations in cultural values. Investment is required in both physical and human capital on a long term sustainable basis. Solutions cannot therefore be considered in the short-term only.

A concentration of population and economic activity (resources) not only creates congestion in the built environment – but also adversely affects less favoured places by disproportionately attracting more investment and labour.

This should not be confused with the fact that successful regeneration initiatives should create sustainable communities Scotland which requires well planned compact communities that are resilient to the global economic changes and the affects of climate change. Regeneration strategies therefore need to address diversity with duly tailored strategies for urban and rural; central and remote or prosperous and marginalised dichotomies, which is typology specific – that work on their spatial, social and functional relationships e.g. developing in areas of strength should nevertheless be based on maximising support which this can bring to other area of need – this is the essence of the development strategy for the Glasgow & Clyde Valley Structure Plan.

For instance, the Greater Glasgow Urban area (GG UA) has 23% of Scotland's population but covers only 0.5% of Scotland's land mass. The GG UA has historically attracted a disproportionate level of housing investment (compared to the East of Scotland) despite the fact that there is a greater projected (2008 – 2033) increase in households in the North East and Edinburgh City region.

“There is a need to accommodate a substantial growth in the number of households in the Edinburgh city region and the Upper Forth area over the next 25 years”.....requiring an adequate “supply of development land”....and ... “investment in transport and environmental infrastructure.” (NPF2 Para 189)

Traditionally economic development took place in a region like the Greater Glasgow Area because of the natural advantages it offered in terms of the presence of power and raw materials.

However, developments in technology and transport have made specific locations and natural advantages less of a motivator, resulting in the decline of economic activity within areas of congestion and a rise in poverty.

A key driver for inward investment is now the quality of life which a place offers – BEFS, therefore, welcomes the Scottish Government's recognition of the *importance of place* (See NPF2 para 13) in tackling inequalities – “The environmental quality, built heritage and cultural life of Scotland's cities and towns are, therefore, strong economic assets and planning policies must place emphasis on supporting and enhancing them.”

When looking for solutions, invariably we have looked recently at the American solutions to lifting marginal communities; however, equal attention should also be given to the lessons learnt from Europe.

For example, in France in the late 1980's when centralised planning powers were devolved to local Mayors, programmes to combine local and national efforts, such as the *Developpement Social Urbain* (DSU) aimed to reintegrate deprived areas into mainstream society through a formal contract uniting national and local authorities with a predominantly economic focus. A key lesson¹ from this programme was that the designation of an area actually reinforced the stigma that the marginalised communities were "needy" and dependent and what was required was more powerful and positive language of CHANGE – that demonstrated that the fortunes of the places and those who live there are about to change.

Here in Scotland, BEFS acknowledges that the NPF2 has ensured that there is national and regional support for major infrastructure investment which is required to support the local development and regeneration needs e.g. the infrastructure legacy of the commonwealth games for the regeneration of the East End of Glasgow.

A good example from France is the REGIES DE QUARTIERS (RDQS)². The RdQs are state and municipal funded social enterprises designed to develop the social capital and political resources of a neighbourhood in decline.

The RdQs mitigates against other *cycle of dependency* programmes since they are 'bottom-up' initiatives emanating from the locality (either from the local authority or from local associations or residents) rather than a 'manufactured' response to a centrally funded government initiative.

In a RdQs, residents are helped to develop skills and to make links which will enable them to access employment in the longer term. Importantly, residents are expected to be fully involved in the management structure of their *Régies* – and so are offered empowerment and control of their own neighbourhood.

It is within the context of Scotland's environmental diversity and the differing levels of sustainable development between Scotland's regions and local communities, that the BEFS submits the following consultation response which advocates that *Regeneration* should remain a priority for the Scottish Government.

¹ Green, H. et al. (2001), An Experiment in French Urban Policy: Evaluation and Reflection on the Implementation of the Zones Franches Urbaines, in *Planning Theory and Practice* 2(1): 53-66).

² Clark, D. and Southern, R. (2006), Comparing institutional designs for neighbourhood renewal: neighborhood management in Britain and the 'régies de quartier' in France, *Policy & Politics*, vol. 34 (1).

Questions Summary

- *Should regeneration activity remain something which takes place in marginal communities or should we widen our scope? What else should we consider?*
 - No, the scope needs to be widened to ensure the promotion of sustainable place-making across all communities – not just marginal communities. For instance, many of our town centres have benefitted from the Town Centre Regeneration Fund which helped to create a better sense of place. This is a start, but insufficient if we are to prevent the slow economic and physical decline of our high streets. What is required is more regeneration initiatives which encourage more economically active people to live and work in our town centres. This means the investment in the built and historic environment to provide affordable and modern office space and the public sector choosing to use vacant space on our high streets.
 - Despite 70 years of economic development planning and expenditure of large sums of money to regenerate marginal communities, there are still marked regional and community inequalities.
 - Many area based regeneration initiatives have failed to make the impact they should have in the past due to sectionalism and short termism. The relative success of the more recent URCs is due to longer term integrated strategy, using strengths as far as possible, outward focus and emphasis on community capacity building through place making.
 - Those same assisted areas still suffer from higher unemployment, lower incomes, poorer health, lower educational attainment, higher levels of crime and out-migration.
 - One consequence is that, on average, Scotland continues to have the lowest life expectancy in the UK, with men in Glasgow expected to live 69.3 years. It is a sad indictment of previous regional economic development policy that Scotland has 7 out of the 10 areas in the UK with the lowest average life expectancy.
 - **Lowest Life expectancy at birth**
 - Glasgow City Scotland 70.8
 - West Dunbartonshire Scotland 71.9
 - Inverclyde Scotland 72.5

- North Lanarkshire Scotland 72.7
 - Eilean Siar Scotland 72.9
 - Blackpool North West 73.2
 - Manchester North West 73.4
 - Belfast Northern Ireland 73.6
 - Renfrewshire Scotland 73.7
 - North Ayrshire Scotland 73.7
-
- Much of the regional/ economic regeneration policy in the past has been applied to depressed and marginalised areas. What is required now is the need for a balance of investment in all areas – both weak and strong - aimed at promoting overall sustainable development and greener local economies. Otherwise today's prosperous areas can (through technological change or some other external factor which makes location no longer an economic advantage) soon become a depressed area and will be more vulnerable to volatile global economics and climate change. BEFS supports the stated intention in NPF2 para 45 – that Government Economic Strategy should be for the whole of Scottish Society and not at the expense of the environment.
 - In theory, if we deliver on the national outcomes contained within the National Performance Framework – we should deliver fairer and more sustainable regeneration which is required for all our communities.
 - Delivering the national outcomes requires our Community planning and Community Health partnerships working to engage more effectively with local communities to benefit all and not just the marginalised communities.
 - Given that across Scotland there are 32 local authorities delivering Community Planning in a way that meets their own local needs – this can lead to variation and disparities in terms of collaboration and participation between the public, private and voluntary sectors. There is, therefore, a need for the Scottish Government to provide strategic leadership which ensures regeneration is fully integrated into the National Performance Framework and delivered consistently with local communities through Community Planning Single Outcome Agreements.
 - There is a need to provide co-ordination, sharing of best practice, looking to learn the lessons from other countries such as France, packaging of projects, developing new national initiatives, and providing support resources.

- BEFS' Manifesto seeks to put people at that heart of good place making, therefore BEFS supports the Scottish Government's principal objective for the regeneration policy (as stated in NPF2, para 51) to promote the *sustainable transformation of communities across Scotland by creating the right environment for private and public investment*; through targeted action in the *most disadvantaged communities*, and by devolving power to the local level.

- *Which funding models do you feel have the most potential to deliver regeneration projects in the future?*
 - No comment

- *What other innovative approaches to funding development and infrastructure should we be considering and how would these be funded?*
 - BEFS supports the comments submitted earlier by one of BEFS' members, Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), that there is a need for flexibility through a range of partnership financing tools – other models should also be actively promoted including BIDs, JESSICA, Deferred Payment Mechanisms, Local Asset Backed Vehicles, and the HUB Initiative. Successful places naturally attract private investment (see below).

- *Given the reliance on core public sector grant funding, is the URC model the most sustainable model to deliver regeneration in the longer term?*
 - BEFS is not in the position to comment on the sustainability of public sector funding, but would comment that whilst the URC model has delivered it is not necessarily the easiest solution to the task of regeneration as it has required a commitment to longer term integrated strategy delivery. Which begs the question, given the same allocation of resources, would local authorities achieved results comparable to those of the URC and possibly has ensured that regeneration programmes were more efficiently linked into mainstream services.

- *How can we encourage private sector investment in regeneration in the future and how far should the public sector go in securing this, i.e., should the public sector provide minimal risk and a guaranteed return?*
 - Because we have a mixed economy – of state and private enterprise, the power of government to intervene is naturally limited – requiring a partnership approach to regeneration.
 - In the current economic climate, partnership is even more essential – between central and local government; between public, private and third sectors; and crucially involving local communities in the process. This is particularly essential in developing realistic approaches to establishing an economic purpose for places that are facing decline.
 - The private sector is however facing many financial challenges at present, but will ultimately recover from the current economic recession. In the meantime there is a need for a new approach to regeneration, with a more appropriate balance of risk and return.

"Urban regeneration is concerted social, economic and physical action to help people in neighbourhoods experiencing multiple deprivation reverse decline and create sustainable communities. It isn't property development by another name. Property development happens through market forces. Physical urban regeneration requires public sector financial support which is only given to benefit deprived communities." (Chris Brown, Chief Executive, Igloo Regeneration Fund).

Therefore, perceived successful places which offer a high quality of life will attract private investment.

- According to one of BEFS' members – RICS - at an overarching level there are three critical issues facing the private sector in delivering successful regeneration:
 1. Securing the funding to deliver projects;
 2. Working through local policy that encourages delivery; and
 3. Having appropriate regulation and legislation to enable activity.
- The partnership approach can help foster the direct relationship between the quality of the built environment and an area's economic development potential. A well maintained historic built environment helps to project a positive image, create investor confidence, attract high value jobs and improve competitiveness. The historic built environment creates places where people positively choose to live, work, invest and spend recreation time.

- *How should spatial regeneration priorities be selected in the future?*
 - Using a sustainable development *traffic light system* that identifies inequalities across a range of economic, environmental and community indicators using the 20% population in poverty baseline. This would require a strategic framework which combines spatial priorities (e.g. marginalised communities) and thematic priorities (e.g. economic drivers such as town centres; health inequalities; access to affordable energy; resilience against climate change).
 - Local authorities should be encouraged to undertake resilience audits (in partnership with Community Planning partners) to identify regeneration priorities based on an assessment of :
 - a) **employment opportunities**: the range of employment and associated wage levels – which are just as important as the gross numbers;
 - b) **infrastructure**: the requirements will include employment space town and village centre ‘public realm’ works, community land and buildings, access to buildings, information channels;
 - c) **skills**: skill levels (particularly around development of traditional construction skills to sustain the existing historic built environment) will influence both the type and scale of employment which can be sustained within spatial and thematic areas, as will the provision of training opportunities, each of which impact on the built environment requirements;
 - d) **accessibility**: this covers transport provision of all types and provision of services and facilities at neighbourhood and community levels.
 - e) **involvement**: engagement of community planning groups and partner agencies addressing the needs of marginalised communities brings many benefits to the planning process.

- *How can we encourage RSLs to play a greater role in local regeneration strategies?*
 - BEFS supports a continuation in policy terms of the presumed benefits of devolving power downwards, and empowering citizens to take more responsibility for their own life outcomes. In housing terms, a focus on community action and the devolution of autonomy and responsibility

has a long history, especially in the Scottish context where the Registered Social Landlord sector is dominated by small, community-based housing organisations.

- There is a considerable legacy of Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) involvement in regenerating inner-city areas. Community-controlled housing associations first emerged in Glasgow in the 1970s. Initially, these associations worked to renovate older tenements in their own communities. They were influenced by communitarian ideas, evident in the domination of tenants and other residents on their management committees. In the mid-1980s, this community-controlled model was adapted in Glasgow to deliver a programme of small-scale, neighbourhood-level stock transfers to associations and co-operatives under the banner of 'community ownership'.
- During the last 35 years the RSLs have delivered many benefits for Scotland's communities. As well as bringing physical investment through renewal and rehabilitation programmes, they have also delivered community empowerment and local accountability. BEFS therefore considers that the Scottish Government will be *pushing against an open door* on this issue of RSL involvement in regeneration.
- It is however recognised that as many former Community Based Housing Associations have evolved into major new build developers, that some may no longer recognise the potential of regeneration and rehabilitation and may need to be reminded of the potential benefits of investing in the existing underused assets within the built environment, such as:
 - In areas of market failure and deprivation, schemes to improve and enhance heritage assets can often help to create confidence, improve image, attract investment, create new facilities for social enterprise and act as a catalyst to reverse economic decline and in some instances deliver structural economic and physical transformations.
 - Historic buildings and areas are key elements in the regeneration of cities, towns and rural areas all around the UK. Historic buildings have often undergone repeated adaptations and have proved to be durable and flexible to changing needs.
 - There are many enlightened RSL's that have recognised that Historic areas were designed for a low-carbon economy in terms of movement and activity patterns, usually having urban design characteristics based on the needs of pedestrians, with rear of pavement active frontages and permeable layouts. Older areas usually provide a fine grain of mixed use. Historic settlements

often contain a concentration of community facilities. Historic building patterns are often high density and utilise party-wall construction. Therefore, historic areas tend to support more sustainable lifestyles.

- One excellent example of this is the Little Houses Project in Peterhead. Here formerly derelict Georgian Townhouses in Threadneedle Street, within the Peterhead Conservation Area, were renovated to provide much needed affordable specialist and general needs accommodation. This partnership approach involved the NTS raising the funding to restore the buildings, Tenants First Housing Cooperative buying them back with grant funding from Aberdeenshire Council and private loan finance once the renovation work was completed.
- Equally, it must be recognised that national RSLs have developed capacities as developers and strategic partners to provide new sustainable solutions, e.g. Scottish Sustainable Communities Initiative delivery.
- Against a backdrop of mounting political pressure for cuts, efficiencies, mergers and sharing services the value and positive strengths of community housing should not be forgotten. BEFS believes that the Community Based RSL sector should be supported and encouraged to carry on the legacy established nearly 40 years ago.
- One way for the Government to encourage the RSL sector to (re-) engage in Regeneration is to consider a proposal by the Glasgow and West of Scotland Forum in 2005, to distinguish their unique contribution to the wider RSL sector by establishing a statutory designation of ‘community-based housing association’ in the register of social landlords.
- Another way to encourage the RSL sector is to afford “Social housing” the same value, status and protection (in spending decisions), as say health and education has in delivering regeneration outcomes - whilst comprehensive schooling and the National Health Service are for everyone, social housing has increasingly become marginalised in policy discourses as ‘welfare housing’ for those who cannot afford to buy.
- For the RSL sector the delivery of Regeneration on the ground is still primarily seen as a housing renewal driven process. To ensure a lasting legacy of sustainable economic development, the RSL sector must be encouraged and supported in participating in a more integrated approach to regeneration focus. The Built Environment Directorate and Housing Investment Division should be given the remit

to establish a (virtual) integrated team to lead regeneration on a stronger planning basis.

- *Are there any procurement issues or other barriers which prevent you using local goods and services?*
 - One of the key issues is that despite the fact that on March 10th 2009, the Ecofin Council gave EU Member States the right to permanently reduce the rate of VAT to 5 per cent for building repair and maintenance work, to enable Governments to help kick-start the economy and raise the standard of living for millions of people, there has not been a universal response, especially here in the UK.
 - BEFS would, therefore, welcome a consistent reduced rate across all EU Member States and in particular BEFS' Members would like to highlight the public goods aspect of heritage and recommend that lower rates of VAT should be used to encourage people to deliver those public goods – to this end the tax system should therefore incentivise not penalise.
 - BEFS considers that regular maintenance of regenerated historic areas and buildings is essential for sustaining the economic gains arising from regeneration. A major burden on both private organisations and private individuals is the VAT level that is applied to maintenance as opposed to zero rating for new build and reduced VAT for Capital works. BEFS would therefore encourage the Scottish Government to lobby and pursue the UK Government for devolved powers for setting VAT levels.
 - Many of BEFS members and partner organisations have commented about the current tight profit margins in contracting for work in the current market. One consequence is that those maintenance and construction contractors who have committed to engaging apprentices from both within and outwith areas of the marginal communities, engaged in regeneration, are finding this commitment to be a disadvantage in the procurement process. Consideration must be given again to including a commitment to investing in skills development as part of the maintenance and construction procurement process.

- *How could the Scottish Government and its economic development agencies best support regeneration activity in the future?*

- The Scottish Government and its agencies can best support regeneration activity by improving an integrated approach to national outcomes, continuing to engage and maximise local authorities and local communities' involvement (and delivery) in major national and international cultural and sporting events such as demonstrated by the Legacy Strategy associated with the Commonwealth Games.
 - BEFS commends the approach taken with the pilot study into the 'surviving heritage' of the East End of Glasgow. In partnership with Clyde Gateway URC, Historic Scotland commissioned a pilot study into the 'surviving heritage' of the East End of Glasgow. In conjunction with this, the area was re-surveyed to identify heritage assets of special architectural or historic interest and to bring the current list up-to-date.
 - This provides an informative resource, highlighting the area's rich legacy of industrial heritage and revealing narratives which are critical to successful place-making. Historic Scotland has advised on projects throughout the East End, including the restoration of an important landmark, the Bridgeton 'Umbrella' and the nearby Olympia.
 - Historic Scotland and Glasgow City Council (GCC) are working in partnership to protect and promote Glasgow's built heritage, particularly in the lead up to the Commonwealth Games in 2014. From 1 October 2009, Historic Buildings Grants for listed buildings within the Glasgow City boundary have been administered locally by GCC in order to offer a straightforward approach to possible funding within the Games timescale.
 - The work in the East End of Glasgow has demonstrated that design and heritage-led regeneration have become synonymous with dramatic urban transformations, often in previously failing areas. Where there is great pressure for development, the historic environment can help to maintain variety and a range of community facilities. In rural areas, historic buildings assist tourism and promote local economic diversity.
- *Have we got the balance right between supporting investments which stand to make the greatest contribution to the Scottish economy and delivering local and regional regeneration projects?*
 - At both a UK and Scottish level, there have been wrong solutions chosen to regenerate the local economy – too much aid has gone on capital intensive investment in industries and services that employ few people and generate little secondary industry – more should have been

done to develop local (sustainable and greener) industry instead of bringing in branch plants.

- BEFS endorses the benefits of selective redevelopment based around the historic environment is almost universally more successful than large-scale comprehensive redevelopment, better fulfilling the needs of local communities and maintaining local cultural, social and economic diversity. A BEFS' member, the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) has promoted the following benefits of selective redevelopment:
 - Historic buildings and areas can provide accommodation for a range of social and community facilities, better accessibility and choice for non-car owners, low rental business accommodation, affordable housing, and a basis for transforming under-performing areas and creating new opportunities.
 - Specialist shops and businesses providing low-cost or minority-interest goods and services (for example vinyl records, musical instruments, ethnic foods and fashions) are often to be found in older, more-peripheral areas of town and city centres, where rentals are lower than in redeveloped areas. Preserving older buildings and places therefore helps to support choice and diversity.
 - Refurbishing old buildings places a greater emphasis on skilled labour and less emphasis on the use of physical resources than is the case with new-build development. Building refurbishment therefore generates higher levels of pay and investment in local economies.
 - The conservation and refurbishment of historic buildings is an intrinsically sustainable form of development, avoiding the use and waste of scarce resources associated with demolition and redevelopment, and helping to achieve sustainable growth.
 - The investment of energy in the construction of historic buildings has already been made and has resulted in many instances in more durable structures, some of which have lasted for centuries. Such structures often require less maintenance and have lower lifetime costs.
- *What more could the Scottish Government do to support its regeneration delivery partners and ensure practitioners have the necessary skills and knowledge needed?*

- BEFS supports the Scottish Government's redesign and relaunch of the activities once the responsibility of the Scottish Centre for Regeneration and the work of its focused Learning Networks.

- *What might realistically and practically be done to promote and support leadership in community led regeneration in the public sector, the third sector and in communities themselves?*
 - Many of BEFS' conservation members, such as the professional body IHBC, are actively involved in historic building projects aimed at supporting local communities, providing education, assisting cultural development, promoting tourism and improving the quality of life.
 - The establishment of a Community Services budget "pot" – derived from mainstream Community Planning Partners service budgets. This Budget would be the responsibility of the local community to determine the priorities for service delivery which will contribute to alleviating dependency within marginal communities.
 - A recent French example of a Community Services budget "pot" is the Contrat de Ville³ which has evolved from a multilevel contract for urban regeneration to an arena for modernising public services and enhancing democratic participation and accountability (this therefore has relevance to the Scottish Government's consideration of the forthcoming Christie Commission Roadmap for the future reform of public service delivery in Scotland). The aim was to ensure urban policy was more linked to other national policies such as social inclusion, sustainable development and housing. For instance, Education is linked to the contrats de ville through a local education contract. Cultural activities have an important role in the Nantes contract (Brittany), and have helped establish linkages between the school and other educational institutions. For example, music and dance workshops are delivered in neighbourhoods, sculpture courses are developed in co-operation with museums, reading and writing activities are linked to the local city library, and heritage and history initiatives are linked to the city archives
 - With the Contrat de Ville the city council consults the neighbourhood councils extensively and stages regular consultation through information booths at the daily markets. Neighbourhood councils can

³ Governance International (2006), *Study Trip to the Paris Region on Participatory Budgeting*, (Governance International, Birmingham).

decide to finance investment projects up to 152,500 euros and other projects up to 15,250 euros per year. Recently, Participatory Budgeting techniques have been used to consult on them, prior to the council taking the final decision. For the local elections in 2005, the local council set up a website, giving all the candidates space for a web blog (and free training to run it), with an animated cartoon character to explain to users in simple terms everything about the elections. The site was also used for secure internet voting.

- Reconnecting marginalised communities to place is a key part of building sustainable, liveable and well connected communities. Ownership or leasing of space and places may have a positive impact for marginalised communities (see earlier comments of resilience audits and comments below on findings from the Scottish Social Attitudes Survey). But given the risks and responsibilities associated with ownership/leasing and management thereof such assets⁴, the local community must have the capacity or potential capacity to take on such responsibilities.
- *What are the key issues for governance in relation to community empowerment might be.*
 - See comments above regarding responsibility for expenditure and outcomes; community ownership of places and space.
- *How could community-led solutions best be incorporated into mainstream services and the community planning process and how would this affect organisational structures and delivery?*
 - BEFS' manifesto seeks to promote *a collaborative approach which puts local communities at the heart of local places*; this requires a genuine devolvement of responsibilities and funding through the community planning framework to local groups – supported by community planning partners (see earlier response on Community Budget). BEFS considers this is the right approach because:
 - When people were asked what makes somewhere a good place to live (2009 Scottish Social Attitudes Survey, Scottish Government), it was suggested that to be a 'sustainable place',

⁴ Appreciating Assets – Carnegie UK trust Feb 2011, T O'Leary, I Burkett & K Braithwaite.

- an area needs to encompass the more qualitative, ambient features of an area and not just its amenities and functionality.
- The Scottish Social Attitudes (SSA) Survey verifies what we have seen in TV programmes like “The Scheme” – which people are more likely to have below average levels of satisfaction with their area if they live in low income households or in the most deprived areas of Scotland.
 - Feeling that their area is not nice to walk around in, feeling bad about the quality and experience of the built environment and the apparent abandonment of the cultural heritage within the community, were all associated with below average ratings of the local area.
 - This again highlights the importance of paying attention to the wider place making aspects of the local environment.
 - And yet in the Built Environment Sector we understand the value of renewing and conserving such iconic buildings, since they can contribute so much to not only meeting our practical needs in housing, but also to respond to the social and cultural values which improve everyone’s quality of life.
 - An exemplar of the significant contribution Building Preservation Trusts can make to regenerating communities is the Castlemilk Stables – which is deservedly featured in a photo on the Scottish Government’s Architecture & Place webpage.
 - While overall most people express high levels of satisfaction with their local area as a place to live in (72% give it a score of 7 or more out of 10), the SSA Survey findings suggest that a large group of people nonetheless feel disempowered to do anything about changing their local area.
 - 4 in 10 agreed that *‘it is just too difficult for me to do much about improving my local area’*. Further, people in the most deprived areas are both eight times more likely than those in the least deprived areas to express below average feelings of satisfaction with their local area, and significantly more likely to feel disempowered to do anything to improve it.
- *How might we disseminate learning more effectively and bring together practitioners to share skills and discuss approaches including, for example, peer support?*

- By all sectors of Government working closely with national Forums like BEFS. BEFS intermediary role; through the Forum, members join together to discuss matters of common interest and concern, to raise awareness and to share information. By expressing views, members can identify problems and needs that are common within the wider membership. Issues are discussed at the strategic level, the aim being to put views forward to the relevant authorities, usually the Scottish Government and Parliament.
 - Performing an intermediary role; BEFS supports its members by raising awareness of, and facilitating joint working on strategic issues of common interest. We are the only membership forum operating in Scotland that brings together voluntary and professional bodies in the built environment sector. Through collaborative action, we influence and promote relevant issues to policy-makers and decision-makers.
- *What more could national and local government do to support and build capacity in community organisations?*
 - There is a need to ensure that Local Authorities understand and incorporate the connection between spatial planning, regeneration and economic development. There is a need for planners to engage positively in the development system, particularly where projects clearly support the Government's objectives for economic recovery and sustainable placemaking.
 - *What other innovative ideas do you have for resourcing support for community-led regeneration?*
 - BEFS is aware of the DWP initiative to investigate the options for expanding the role of Credit Unions in marginal communities and to make Credit Unions more sustainable and diverse over the next 4 to 5 years. This may include using local post offices to remove any stigma associated with credit unions as everyone uses post office services.
 - *What would facilitate further targeting of mainstream resources on the issues faced by our most disadvantaged communities, especially in relation to delivering early intervention and prevention programmes?*

- Approximately 20% of the population⁵ is having a disproportionate affect on Scotland's overall economic recovery and the wellbeing of its citizens. To facilitate further targeting, the Scottish Government must ensure that Regeneration is part of the wider strategic planning approach to sustainable economic growth, and the issue of mainstreaming resources on the issues faced by disadvantaged communities must aim to reduce dependency and encourage and support people into employment – paying taxes instead of drawing welfare support.
- BEFS would encourage the Scottish Government to argue for more direct control over those mainstream resources that impact on disadvantaged communities. The challenge is how to exercise influence both upward to the UK Government and downwards to employers and service providers in Scotland. Unless progress is made in this area, gaps will remain in the Governments antipoverty programme and this will adversely impact on the future reform of public service delivery:
 - standard of provision for essential services for low-income and other disadvantaged households;
 - whether there is sufficient focus on education outcomes for poor and other disadvantaged children and adults;
 - living standards of workless adults; and
 - the means to escape in-work poverty.
- *How can we move away from funding pilots and demonstration projects to a broader and more mainstream approach to fostering change?*
 - Again, BEFS considers that the Community Planning Partnerships and single outcome agreements are a way to move away from projects and demonstration projects to mainstream service approach to fostering sustainable change.
 - In particular, it must be more widely promoted and understood that the historic built environment is at the heart of sustaining the economic viability of our communities and creates a sense of place and local identity. The historic built environment is not as it may be perceived in some communities as an obstacle to change it provides continuity with

⁵ **Monitoring poverty and social exclusion in Scotland 2010:** J Row ntree Foundation Sept 2010 - At the end of 2009, 18.2% of the working-age population was receiving an out-of-work benefit, up from 16.8% two years earlier. This rise has led to a slight increase in the degree of area-based inequality within Scotland

the past, but also accommodates change and helps places adapt for the present and future. To thrive, historic places need the specialist and cross-disciplinary management skills that BEFS membership organisations can provide, drawing on the highest professional standards, nationally and internationally.

- *What should the Scottish Government's approach and role be in fostering change in future?*
 - At a national level there is a need for monitoring and evaluation of progress in achieving regeneration objectives. Single Outcome Agreements support this approach, but do not allow attribution of outcomes to specific regeneration activities, and the learning that would ensue from this.

- *How could we improve accountability of public sector services in the context of regeneration and area-based issues and problems?*
 - Through the National Performance Framework.

- *How can we support learning and sharing of information to ensure practitioners have the skills and knowledge they need to tackle area based deprivation?*
 - Working with Forums such as BEFS – both at a national and local authority level.