

Sale of Council houses to sitting tenants brought to an end in Scotland



The Scottish Government had a long session yesterday to approve The Housing (Scotland) Bill which is designed to improve condition of houses let to either private or social tenants. The new law also prevents the sale of up to 15,500 social houses over the next ten years and will support improvements to the private rented sector.

The Bill will end the Right to Buy social housing in Scotland over the next two years, giving tenants time to consider their options and find financial advice if they want to exercise their right to buy their home

The legislation will establish a private rented sector tribunal which gives tenants and landlords access to specialist justice and allow them to resolve disputes more effectively.

Changes to mobile home site licensing will also improve the rights of over 3,000 households, many of whom are elderly, living permanently in mobile or park homes across Scotland.

Other measures in the Bill include introducing a regulatory framework for letting agents and giving local authorities new discretionary powers to tackle poor housing conditions in the private sector.

Housing Minister Margaret Burgess said: "This is a historic day for housing as it marks the end of Right to Buy social housing in Scotland.

"Stakeholders from across the sector have given this

legislation widespread support as they recognise that we have put together a package of measures which will help improve housing in the social, private rented and owner-occupied sectors.

“Today I put forward a number of amendments to the letting agent provisions in the Bill to provide a robust regulatory framework that will ensure consistent and high standards of service for tenants and landlords across Scotland.

“I am very grateful to all those who have contributed their views on the Bill over the last nine months and more. But legislation is only one of many actions that this Government is taking to improve housing in Scotland.

“This government continues to invest in affordable housing. Earlier this week the First Minister confirmed we have invested £1 billion in affordable housing since April 2011, putting us well on track to delivering an additional 30,000 homes across Scotland by March 2016. This investment is supporting 8,000 jobs in each year of the five-year parliamentary term.

“This Bill is a landmark step forward for housing. With the full powers of independence we will have greater control to tailor our grants and housing supply investment, and to integrate housing and welfare policies to meet the needs of our communities and the homebuilding industry in Scotland.”