I write as the chairperson of LoveMilton, a Scottish Charity and Company Ltd by Guarantee, operating according to the principles of a Development Trust according to the Development Trusts Association Scotland, for the Milton housing scheme in the north of Glasgow. Milton sits within the bottom 5% of parishes on the SIMD, with its poorest 3 datazones ranked 16, 18, & 50 on the 2012 SIMD.

We were founded by local people wanting to improve our community in 2009, and have received financial support from the Climate Challenge Fund. We have grown from nothing, to 283 members, from a catchment population of 6659 according to the 2012 census, just over 4% of the population. We aim to increase our membership so that all of the population of Milton become members of LoveMilton.

We think we are just the kind of community organisation that the Community Empowerment Bill is designed to assist.

Since our creation we have sought to create our own community self-build community centre, from reclaimed and natural materials, owned and run by the community, for the benefit of the community. We have identified a piece of derelict and vacant land, which used to have tenement housing on it about 15 years ago. Within Milton there are many areas of derelict and vacant land which are now within the remit of Glasgow City Council’s arms length company City Property.

City Property are willing to sell LoveMilton the land to build our community centre, at the full market value for a residential development of £350,000, on the basis that the site had housing on it and is zoned for housing. If we choose to ‘underutilise’ the space, that is our problem.

So while I am interested in the right to buy being extended to local communities, I wonder if there will be any provision to low cost or no cost right, when the land is already in theory in community ownership via a council or its agent, but who are intending to maximise financial return as they are duty bound to do?