Dear Mr Doris,

I read your article in yesterday’s Scotsman with interest, feeling I ought to tell you of the thoughts I have had for quite some time.

I have been counselling for many years and particularly with those who have a crisis pregnancy. I found that for many quite young single girls who wanted to keep their babies, there was an attitude of anxiety re the allocation of a small council flat which some told me that when their friends did get a flat it was in such a bad area that they were frightened to go outside sometimes.

I have no experience in finance or architecture but have often looked at empty office buildings either in a large city or surrounding areas and wondered why someone couldn’t turn them into small apartments. Particularly thinking of young single girls with a baby---they could be housed together in these buildings once converted into small flats, have their own flat door key and maybe the premises could have a communal sitting room where the young people could get to know one another and support each other. It might also be good to have a female Caretaker who could guide and help them in skills required for mother-hood. The rent might be smaller than a ‘normal’ council flat and would hopefully cost less for the DSS. The central heating could come from the main building but be controlled and paid for by each flat tenant.

We could do the same for homeless people with built-in support where necessary. Some conversions could be sold maybe.

There are also now many empty BHS stores! They could also be turned into flats and sold at a reasonable cost.

Maybe my suggestions are a ‘pipe dream’ but with all the gifts and talents of your committee, surely not impossible?

I would hope that the costs would not be huge but we would use our solid empty buildings for a very good purpose and hopefully many people would feel safe, secure and regain their feelings of self-worth.

Yours Sincerely,

Christine M Campbell (Mrs)