

CHT comments for Housing and Planning Committee

Key questions the session will deal with; Brief CHT thoughts (Lots of Opportunities)

1. **Are we building/renovating enough homes:** We are falling short on building anywhere near enough homes for multiple reasons (material costs, lack of labour, flexibility, silo working, risk apportionment), however CHT believe we can achieve much higher delivery numbers if, as a sector supported by SG flexibility we take a much more holistic, pragmatic and localised approach to delivery which will benefit all.
2. **Are we building homes focusing on placemaking;** CHT feel we are unfortunately not appropriately dealing with the placemaking issue, which is again for various reasons but mainly lack of flexibility and working in silos. CHT believes we have the tools in place through excellent SG policies to enable much stronger placemaking that will benefit all, but we do need to work more co-operatively and flexibly to maximise benefits across all sectors in the places we need. An example is missing opportunities to work with local businesses to deliver housing.
3. **Are we building/retrofitting for affordable warmth and zero emissions.** Lack of skills, unrealistic standards, focus on large scale, unfit regulation and centralisation of delivery services is restricting opportunities. CHT believe with co-operation, flexibility and de-centralised working practices greater impacts can be achieved for all sectors and the environment. We do need to take a radical look at utilities and especially power supply.
4. **Are we ensuring new/existing homes are safe and high quality;** Standards and safety processes are clearly set out and laudable, however these can be detrimental to delivery of housing as they require skills that are very limited and whilst the highest standards are a fantastic aspiration if they prevent delivery they are counter-productive in achieving anything so balance is required.

Requested brief comments on impacts of budget cuts to supply programme

Cuts to any budget are always a concern, however CHT feel that since Brexit, Covid, cost of living crisis etc etc the sector has been suffering extremely high costs, lack of flexibility plus a co-operative focus which meant it was heading for a crash regardless of budgets.

CHT think a re-focussing of the housing sector will be positive and good in the longer term for Scotlands communities and various sectors, assuming this can be done with great urgency. It will need SG to work closely with all sectors (especially rural sector) to enable flexibility, co-operative working, de-centralisation, and an enabling approach to delivery of not just housing but real placemaking. By doing this we firmly believe more will be delivered even at the lower budget levels.