Local Government and Communities Committee

Planning (Scotland) Bill

Submission from Suzanne Elrick

I would like to add my voice to those asking that the Agent Of Change principle be adopted into Planning policy.

Live music and small, independent venues are really important to me, and are central to creating and sustaining a healthy arts scene in any town or city, and as such are vital to the health of our creative industries at a grass roots level. I do have a vested interest in this issue as I'm a lawyer in the entertainment industry so I'm behind anything which helps our creative industries in Scotland to thrive, but I think my vested interest also gives me a credible insight into why this is so important. I am lucky enough to live in Glasgow which has a thriving scene for now, but I have seen far too many venues in Scotland close. We need to do all we can to protect them, and adopting the agent of Change Principle into planning policy would be a good first step. To put it bluntly, if a developer moves onto a thriving venue's patch, well, the venue was there first so the developer should put up or shut up. That's the only fair way to approach it.

Please let me know if there is anything more formal I can do to have my view on this noted.