“Plus ca change...”
“Be the change”

A report from the SURF 2008 Annual Conference

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“Plus ca change, plus c'est la meme chose”

(The more things change, the more they stay the same)
Jean Baptiste Alphonse-Karr

“You must be the change you wish to see in the world”

Mahatma Ghandi
1 Introduction

The Scottish Urban Regeneration Forum (SURF) is the independent regeneration and inclusion network, sharing information and promoting discussion so as to help shape, policy, opinion and the delivery of successful regeneration efforts in Scotland. We aim to stimulate constructive debate about community regeneration; to promote and disseminate examples of current practice; and to achieve a higher status for community regeneration on Scotland’s political agenda.

We do this through organising seminars, study visits and lectures; by publishing documents such as a quarterly journal, reports and briefing notes; through organising an annual awards scheme; and by working closely with key policy makers.

We utilise our position as a truly independent forum for our wide membership to explore current practice and experience, and then to positively influence the development of successful regeneration policy.

Through our close links with the Scottish Government and its agencies we act as a channel for information, consultation and policy proposals based on the knowledge and experience of our membership and the wider networks we connect with.

An important part of SURF’s programme of events and publications is our Annual Conference.
2 Background

The purpose of our 2008 Annual Conference was to promote fresh thinking for the challenges ahead by gathering crucial lessons from the recent past.

If a week is a long time in politics, then the 15 years since SURF was set up in late 1992 is a substantial period of evolution, or de-evolution depending on your point of view.

In that time, among many other changes, we have seen:

- *New Labour in power at Westminster since 1997 and devolution of important powers to a new Scottish Parliament.*
- *The introduction of proportional representation in national and local government elections*
- *The development of Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Communities Scotland*
- *A continuing decline in manufacturing and the rise of service industries and ‘the knowledge economy’*
- *City centre redevelopment, ‘out of town’ retail growth and the rediscovery of urban waterfronts*
- *Continuing property price rises*
- *Urban Aid, to Social Inclusion Partnership funding, to the Community Regeneration Fund, to the Fairer Scotland fund.*
- *Community Planning and the rhetoric and reality of Community Empowerment and Engagement*
- *A new stream of investments via Lottery Funding*
- *Recurring upheavals in health service administration arrangements*
- *The introduction of Urban Regeneration Companies*
- *Climate change, challenges and responses*
- *Acceleration of the IT revolution in work and leisure*
- *A ‘silent revolution’ in community ownership in Highlands and Islands*
- *The introduction of the minimum wage*
- *‘Right To Buy’ and large scale housing stock transfers*
- *An increasingly ‘market based’ approach to services and infrastructure*
- *The further development of the social enterprise and development trust models*
- *Competitive tendering, to best value, to the public finance initiative.*
- *Massive public investment in health, education and infrastructure.*
- *The first Scottish National Party administration at Holyrood*
So, a lot has changed, but for many, a lot remains the same:

- Intergenerational poverty remains ingrained in concentrated areas
- Social mobility is low
- Health and income inequalities have increased
- Poverty and poor health remain closely linked

However, the level of understanding of the issues, and the linkages across regeneration agendas, are greater than ever. There is a wealth of knowledge and experience and a shared understanding of the importance of community and partnership based responses.

This Conference provided an opportunity for delegates to hear from keynote speakers on how we got here, what seems to have worked, and what we need to consider if we are to meet the challenges of the next 15 years. Guests were also given a chance to debate the way forward with the help of 20 knowledgeable SURF contacts in four policy priority areas:

1. Gainful Employment
2. Healthy Futures
3. Skills and Learning
4. Community Empowerment

SURF’s greatest asset is its independent network of regeneration practitioners, policy makers and academics. The expertise, experience and commitment of our members and contacts are key to unlocking long standing problems and meeting new challenges in the future.

Our 2008 Annual Conference was an important step towards further enhancing understanding and co-operative action in future efforts to regenerate Scotland’s most disadvantaged communities.

This paper summarises the main messages from the event.

Additional materials, such as copies of the speakers’ presentation slides and a more detailed outcome of the keypad voting sessions, can be found on the SURF web site at the link below:

http://www.scotregen.co.uk/knowledge/events.asp?sid=2
3 Executive Summary

This SURF conference report summarises the wide range of topics covered by the key speakers, policy discussion groups and delegate voting sessions.

A further distillation of the main messages would include:

Progress
While appreciation of the factors involved and the value of partnership approaches have increased over the last fifteen years, so have the gaps in economic and societal inequalities.

Policies
Wider U.K. Government policies directly affecting wealth and poverty distribution have the potential to greatly reinforce or overwhelm specific regeneration programmes and practice.

Priorities and Empowerment
The refocusing of Scottish Government priorities within a clarified framework of responsibility is helpful, however, progress on ‘double devolution’ and genuine community empowerment is essential for sustainable community regeneration. This will require more leadership, creativity and resources.

Potential
Partnership approaches to integrating economic and social regeneration remain key to successful and sustainable regeneration efforts. The Scottish regeneration policy and practice context is well placed to deliver on this in comparison to other areas of the UK.

Purpose
There is considerable potential in determining the positive ‘health and wellbeing’ of the whole population as the point of community regeneration, not just a factor in that process. This could be helpful in defining and describing what ‘real’ regeneration is (as distinct from purely economic and property development activity). Such a position would also help different players at various levels to see the value of orientating and co-ordinating their efforts towards that goal.

Poverty
Employment remains the best route out of poverty and as such is a major element of successful regeneration efforts, but the quality of employment opportunities is crucial to this aim.

Production
Developing and engineering new technologies to respond to the increasing demands for renewable energy production offers the possibility of rebuilding a productive manufacturing base.
4 SURF and the City of Dundee

SURF was pleased, once again, to host its Annual Conference in Dundee.

4.1 Welcome from SURF Chair, Ian Wall

Ian Wall is Chief Executive of the EDI Group Ltd and a long-standing SURF Board Member. He has been Chair of SURF since 2006.

Ian welcomed the 130 delegates in attendance to the Annual Conference on behalf of SURF. In his opening remarks he noted:

- The 15 year period since SURF was established offers a good chance to look back, now that we are in a position to be clear about the depth and volume of developments such as the advent of devolution, and identify what has and hasn’t worked.

- This is also a timely opportunity to look forward during a period of transition with regard to governments, agencies and regeneration vehicles.

- Regeneration stakeholders are too often kept apart in silos – SURF works to help us combine more effectively to make the most of a “genuinely fierce shared commitment to making a better Scotland”.

4.2 Welcome from Cllr Kevin Keenan, Leader of Dundee City Council

Cllr Keenan has been Leader of Dundee City Council since May 2007 and has held a number of roles in the Local Authority including Convener of Communities. He is also Chair of Dundee Partnership, which is one of SURF’s key sponsors.

Cllr Keenan gave a welcome on behalf of the City of Dundee and in a brief presentation noted that:

- There have been “huge changes” and some “enduring challenges” for Dundee since 1992

- To substantiate this view, Cllr Keenan compared some local headlines between one week in 1993 and one week in 2008, e.g. “Private plan unveiled for New Forth Road bridge” (Dundee Courier 02/02/93) and “Green Light for £4.2m Forth Bridge” (The Herald, 30/01/08); “Tay Flood Aftermath: who carries the can?” (Dundee Courier 04/02/93) and “Anger at response to Perthshire floods” (Dundee Courier 28/01/08).

- Cllr Keenan went on to demonstrate large-scale positive changes in the city between 1992 and 2008 by contrasting “then and now” photographs of such local landmarks as Overgate Shopping Centre, Dundee Contemporary Arts Centre and Dundee Waterfront. He also noted major improvements in a number of areas from transport infrastructure to the quality of housing.

- Over the same period Dundee has also witnessed significant demographic changes, such as a fall in population during the 1990s (of about 12,000), a 13% proportional rise in service sector jobs at the expense of the manufacturing industry and a steady decrease in unemployment (see graph below).
Scottish Urban Regeneration Forum 2008 Annual Conference Report

- Dundee seeks to “continually improve itself and its image”.

### Unemployment in Dundee 1993-2007

![Bar chart showing unemployment rates in Dundee from 1993 to 2007.](image)

**4.3 Guest Chair, Alistair Grimes**

Alistair is a Director of consultants Rocket Science Ltd and has an extensive background in regeneration with considerable experience in previous roles working for Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations, Community Enterprise in Strathclyde and the Wise Group. He is also a SURF Board Member and served as Chair from 2004-2006. Alistair was guest chair of the Conference, introducing speakers and chairing panel sessions.

### 5 Learning from Experience? – Adrian Colwell

**Adrian Colwell** is a freelance consultant working in the areas of regeneration, physical development and planning. Prior to this he was the previous First Minister’s principal Special Adviser on planning, regeneration, housing and transport, finance and local government policies between 2002 and 2007.

Adrian has an extensive background in policy and legislative analysis, strategy development and implementation. He has lead policy development for CoSLA, worked in Local Government and also worked in the US Congress, UK Parliament and European Parliament.

He has lectured and published widely on Regional Policy, Regeneration, European and Environment issues.
Adrian is currently a member of the Scottish Government’s National Planning Framework Steering Group and ‘Visiting Senior Research Fellow’ at Strathclyde University.

He is also Director of his own consultancy, Adrian Colwell Associates.

With particular regard to the policies of the new Scottish Government, Adrian considered if, and in what respects, we were “Learning from Experience?”

The following points were made in the course of his input:

- The current Scottish National Party administration has a different way of working when compared to the Liberal Democrats-Labour Party coalition that dominated the first eight years of devolution. The emphasis is on more functional agencies, larger directorates and a smaller, more focused cabinet. The objective is to demonstrate efficiency and competence to the Scottish electorate.

- There has been criticism of the amount of consultation that the Government has previously carried out in many policy areas. The new Government appears more focused, which is perhaps a reflection of its minority government status and it also shows a strong commitment to partnership working, as shown in the new concordat with COSLA.

- Adrian compared the previous administration’s 2003 Partnership Agreement with the current Programme for Government. In 2003 he identified the governing coalition as having a big legislative programme with extensive commitments; in 2007 the new minority government had a smaller legislative programme (restricted to five key themes) with a stronger focus to its commitments and the proposed use of non-legislative tools to secure social change.

- The SNP Government’s policy priorities centre on the key themes of “wealthier and fairer”, “healthier”, “safer and stronger”, “greener” and “smarter”. Manifesto commitments, initial legislation and spending review all reflect the focus on these five themes.

- Their economic strategy identifies population decline and economic participation, growth, participation and sustainability as key challenges for Scotland. Strategic priorities include improving learning and skills, developing infrastructure and producing a more supportive business environment.

- The economic strategy also contains a new emphasis on creating ‘good quality sustainable places’ and supporting ‘sustainable economic growth’, with significant new language on the importance of the ‘built environment’. It places an emphasis on a joined-up planning and development regime and a robust framework that both ‘protects the quality of Scotland’s natural and built environment’ as an asset for achieving ‘sustainable economic growth’.
The “National Planning Framework for Scotland 2” and housing policy discussion paper “Firm Foundations” are two of the new Holyrood administration’s key policy publications.

- The 2007 Spending Review sets out how the administration wishes to secure outcomes rather than set targets. To help achieve this there will be devolution of powers to “share responsibilities” with Local Authorities, less central direction and less budgetary “ring-fencing”.

- There are a number of changes and continuities which have particularly strong implications for regeneration:

  - The National Priority Areas identified in the previous administration’s 2006 paper “People and Place – Regeneration Policy Statement” will not change
  
  - The Community Regeneration Fund will be devolved to Scotland’s 32 Community Planning Partnerships
  
  - Built Environment commitments will be delivered via Single Outcome Agreements with Local Authorities
  
  - Six Urban Regeneration Companies (URCs), three Derelict Land Grant (DLG) areas and six Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) will continue to receive national support.
  
  - City Region Plans which flow from the new planning regime will attempt to build upon the previous Government’s City Growth Plans and address the future growth of cities.

- There are also a number of continuities with regard to housing policies, although there arguably a new “emphasis” for housing:

  - Much of the issues identified in the 2005 Housing Statement (e.g. population shifts, pressure for affordable housing, stock transfer) have also been recognised by the current Government.
  
  - Among the housing changes announced in October 2007 paper “Firm Foundations” are a clear vision for housing in Scotland and plans to increase the housing supply across all tenures, to make the market easier for first-time buyers
and low-income groups to enter, to expand the private-rented sector and to improve tenants’ rights.

- In transport, there are again a number of continuities in terms of policy focus. Major issues for the new Government are ensuring an economic and social balance in the provision of public transport, securing modal shift and implementing Regional Transport Partnerships.

- The 2008 “National Planning Framework for Scotland 2” sets out analysis and priorities in spatial planning. Its objectives include strengthening links with the rest of the world and contributing to climate change and renewable energy targets. Major strategic projects include a series of deep-sea port developments, the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, redeveloping Glasgow and Edinburgh airports and grid support for renewable energy development.

- Adrian noted that regeneration activity is now taking place in a “complex environment” (see diagram below). The new concordat between Government tiers and an increasing role of Local Government is an important feature in the current landscape.

- There are many policy continuities from the previous administration, not wholesale change as might have been anticipated; the continued development of regional joint working in the planning, housing, regeneration & transport fields. But also a new language in regeneration, for example the current Government talks of “wealth and fairness” instead of “tackling poverty”.

- While there is continued support for national regeneration, there is a stated commitment to a quality local built environment, though what this really means requires further explanation. It is yet to become clear whether this mix of changes and continuities demonstrate that the Scottish Government really is “Learning from Experience”.

![Regeneration in the new Scottish political landscape](image-url)
6 Devolution and Tackling Deprivation – Professor David North

David North is Professor of Regional Development and Head of the Centre for Enterprise and Economic Development Research (CEEDR) at Middlesex University. He has over thirty years experience of undertaking research and teaching in the fields of regional and local economic development, urban regeneration, as well as small enterprises and business support policy. In recent years, David has conducted research on the economic and employment dimensions of neighbourhood renewal for the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) including a study entitled ‘The dynamics of local economies and deprived neighbourhoods’ (published by the DCLG in 2006). This led to a two year research project for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) on devolution, regional governance and the economic needs of deprived localities, focusing on four English regions, Scotland, and Wales. David's 2007 JRF Findings paper, entitled “Political devolution, regional governance and tackling deprivation”, is available online at this link: http://www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/government/2155.asp

David made a number of interesting analyses at the Conference:

- David's JRF study focused on the relationship between two policy agendas:
  1. Devolved governance in the UK since 1997 (devolution of power and responsibilities in Scotland and Wales and administrative decentralisation to English regions)
  2. Reducing social and economic exclusion in the most deprived localities
• David referred to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, which uses a wide range of data to identify small concentrations of poverty in areas of the UK (see maps for Scotland and England below).


• In Scotland, the Index of Multiple Deprivation identifies concentrations of deprivation in Glasgow, Inverclyde and Dundee. Its English counterpart recognises high relative poverty levels in areas of the North East and North West regions in addition to London.

• For the JRF research four key questions were considered:

  1. Is there evidence of linking between the economic growth and social inclusion agendas?
  2. Has the existence of a regional governance structure in England made a difference?
  3. Has greater devolution of power made a difference?
  4. What lessons can be drawn from some ‘good practice’ initiatives?

• In England, it was concluded that not enough had been done to link areas of opportunity and areas of disadvantage. Earlier economic strategies had faith in ‘trickle down’ processes, though evidence indicates that this has been a slow drip rather than trickle, with few benefits for the most deprived.

• Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) were competing with each other to raise overall economic performance, but this does not necessarily reduce deprivation. Comparing the strategy to a race, one RDA representative that David interviewed said that when everyone runs faster the people at the back are unlikely to catch those at the front.

• In Scotland, Scottish Enterprise had also given a low priority to ‘closing the opportunity gap’ compared to improving national economic performance. Highlands and Islands Enterprise, however, achieved closer integration between economic and social development.

• In 2006, English Regional Economic Strategies had a stronger focus on the need to reduce deprivation and regional inequality. In Scotland, the ‘Smart, Successful
Scotland’s economic strategy prioritised a ‘knowledge economy’, based on highly skilled sectors, but the benefits of this approach were less apparent to neighbourhood renewal project managers. The beneficial impact of a general focus on high-profile ‘flagship’ regeneration projects was also unclear in deprived neighbourhoods.

- In Scotland, the ‘Linking Opportunity and Need’ and ‘Workforce Plus’ strategies demonstrate a commitment to linking economic inclusion and economic growth. However, there is evidence that many ‘entry-level’ jobs offer few prospects for developing skills and moving out of poverty.

- Integration of economic and social agendas is hampered by:
  1. Different departmental agendas and responsibilities
  2. Employment and labour market policy not a devolved responsibility
  3. Lack of integrated strategies
  4. Enduring nature of social and spatial inequalities resulting from economic restructuring and labour market polarisations

- Has devolution made a difference? There is some evidence for this, such as the development of the Communities First regeneration programme in Wales and the Mayor of London’s strategies that address economic and social inclusion as a major priority.

- Devolution in Scotland has led to the creation of Communities Scotland, involving the targeting of resources at the most deprived communities, Regeneration Outcome Agreements and the Community Regeneration Fund. The 2006 Scottish Government regeneration policy statement ‘People and Place’ also identified the need to closely link social and economic objectives.

- The JRF study identified a number of ‘good practice’ initiatives, including South Lanarkshire Council’s ‘Routes to Inclusion’. Such initiatives highlight the importance of partnership working within and across spatial levels, clarity over roles and responsibilities, the involvement of employers, and leadership and strong commitment from key stakeholders.

- Case studies show that effective and coordinated interventions linking deprived areas to wider economic developments are possible, despite limitations of governance arrangements.

- Referring back to the Conference title, “Plus ca change…”, David compared regeneration efforts to a long-running play. While the actors change, and the scenery changes, the storyline remains the same. Therefore we need to get to grip with the storyline – the issues.
Chris Harvie is a distinguished academic and writer whose works include *Scotland and Nationalism* (Allen & Unwin, 1977) and *Scotland: A Short History* (Oxford University Press, 2002). He was Lecturer, Senior Lecturer and Acting Head of History, Open University, 1969-80, pioneering distance learning in history with Professor Arthur Marwick. In 1980 he was appointed Professor of British Studies at Tübingen University, Germany, and also directed the British regional studies part of Tübingen's International Economics faculty, becoming Professor Emeritus in autumn 2007.

He is Honorary Professor of Politics at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth, and Honorary Professor of History at Strathclyde University, Glasgow. Since 1990, with Eberhard Bort of Edinburgh’s Institute of Governance, Harvie has run the annual Freudenstadt Colloquia on Regionalism for the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung.

In 2006 he was approached by Alex Salmond to stand for the Scottish National Party in the 2007 Holyrood elections, and was returned as List Member for Mid-Scotland and Fife. He serves as Parliamentary Liaison Officer to the First Minister, covering the Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee of which he is a member. He is also President of the Scottish Association for Public Transport. His next book, *Floating Commonwealth: Politics, Technology and Culture on Britain’s Atlantic Coast 1860-1930*, will be published in 2008 by Oxford University Press.

Presenting his personal view of “A Future Scotland”, the following points were made by Professor Harvie at the Conference:
Chris specialises in economic development, regional policy and higher education and sees himself as following in the tradition of Thomas Carlyle and Hugh McDiarmid as a critic of Scottish society. He describes the future Scotland is facing as “short-term grim realities”.

The shipyard that built Ocean Alliance has been replaced with four call centres – is this a great success for the ‘Knowledge Economy’? Similarly John Brown’s Clydeside shipyard is to become a retail park with luxury homes and a new town is being created on the former Ravenscraig Steelworks in North Lanarkshire.

In the meantime the so-called European “tortoise economies” – France, Germany Sweden – are still engaging profitably in “metal-bashing”.

Scottish society has fragmented into hyper individuality, typified by a fractional media, and further illustrated by a considerably sized black economy.

Scotland cannot sustain itself economically with a manufacturing ability of just 15%. This renders it incapable of adapting to the technological infrastructure demands of a competitive modern economy.

Scotland has failed to achieve a linkage between new technology and traditional industry, in sharp contrast to other European states. The Swabian German word “Tiffln” means to play around with an invention until it becomes marketable, presenting an alternative to the abandonment of heavy industry.

Scotland has a proud tradition of inventions and inventors – but almost all achievements in this area are in the distant past. Great Scottish inventions in the past decade are limited to the entrepreneur Michelle Mone’s Ultimo lingerie.

One little-known Scottish invention, however, made the capture of North Sea Oil possible. The use of computer and satellite technology to keep oil rigs firmly in place in rough seas was originally developed by a Scottish industry that has now disappeared or been sold to foreign competitors. Wavegen in Inverness, for example, is now owned by a German company.

Chris asked guests to compare Norway’s oil experience with Scotland. The Scandinavian country now has double the national income of the UK after making better use of its share of North Sea oil.

There is, however, a solution which may bring about much-needed reindustrialisation – a renewable energy revolution. Scotland is almost uniquely placed internationally to develop new technologies and capture ecologically sustainable fuel energy from natural sources.

One major opportunity in the near future is a wave farm experiment on the Isle of Lewis will begin in 2009. If successful, there is no reason why it can’t be extended across the whole of the west coast of the country.

Establishing a national stakeholder body would help make the most of the development of this fledgling industry. It would act as a representative and an executive.

A “new democratic intellect” would also be required to sustain its growth. This is a radical way of embracing new communications and educational technologies and producing highly skilled workers vital to a renewables-centred economy.
Although there are many reasons to be generally pessimistic about Scotland’s economic prospects, we can look forward to a bright future if the right choices are made in the present.

8 Plenary Question & Answer Section

Panel Chair Alistair Grimes with key speakers Adrian Colwell, David North and Chris Harvie

In response to questions from the floor the following points were made by the panel:

- The privatisation of state-owned industries in the UK did not necessarily improve its overall economy. Nationalisation of central industries can be justified in some circumstances. The successful French state electricity company, for example, provides energy to the Downing Street offices and this implies that it is more desirable than a private UK supplier. It is, however, important to use state power pragmatically.

- If the objective is purely to improve the quality of public services and develop new ones, we should start asking questions about the level and role of public subsidies in private monopolies.

- Short-term solutions to regeneration problems have a poor track record. There have been “more pilots than British Airways.” We need to start building on successful approaches rather than repeatedly starting again from scratch.

- However, as a cautionary note, there will always be some risk in investing in large-scale projects when there is the potential for significant changes of political composition and resulting policy upheavals.

- We should not underestimate the possibility of agreement at all Government levels when the end product is to make a better Scotland. Nations operate at their best with a balance of strengths. Often there is more agreement between political parties than within them.
The ‘black economy’ has grown up alongside computers, multi-nationals and tax-havens. We must look at new ways of matching challenges with opportunities. For example, where fly-tipping of white goods was a major issue there is now a highly successful Glasgow firm which recycles refrigerators.

There is no reason why Scottish electricity must be provided by several large producers. There is a tremendous opportunity for small organisations to competitively generate and sell energy across Scotland.

Devolution has to go ‘right through’ to the more localised community and neighbourhood levels. However, this will require significant investment in developing local capacity and resources and a meaningful transfer of decision-making responsibilities.

Some key challenges such as employment require central leadership within a national framework to support successful local activities and outcomes.

9 Policy Discussion Group Outcomes

The four topical policy panel discussions at this Annual Conference were interactive debates chaired by SURF directors and supported by the expertise of a panel of invited guests. No formal presentations were made by the panel guests but they were encouraged to help inform the debate based on their own expertise and views.

The purpose of the discussion groups were to offer delegates the chance to discuss current and future challenges and opportunities in a specific policy topic and to propose policy improvements consistent with meeting these. The main participative focus of the conference will be four policy panel discussions involving interested delegates and a panel of key figures in the relevant regeneration policy fields.

Each discussion group was chaired by a relevant SURF director who introduced and encouraged open discussion on:

- Where have we been in the last 15 years in policy terms?
- Where are we now?
- What changes will we need to meet the demands of the next 15 years

The intention of the policy panel approach is:

- To maximise the opportunity for participants to contribute to policy discussion in their area of interest and expertise.
- To promote constructive debate with the help of a panel of relevant key figures who will be invited to offer their views and informed comment.
- To produce a list of up to 5 specific policy proposals to feed back to policy makers directly and as part of a conference summary report.
9.1 Gainful Employment

**Key Question:**
*What can be done to help ensure that employment really is an effective route out of poverty and is of sufficient quality and potential to genuinely improve the quality of life of the employee and his/her family?*

**Panel**
- Matthew Crighton, Strategy Manager, Capital City Partnership
- Mike O’Donnell, Workforce Plus Partnership Delivery Manager, Scottish Government
- Laurie Russell, Chief Executive, The Wise Group
- Carol Young, Director, Scottish Low Pay Unit

**Chair:**
- David Coulter, Head of Inclusion, Scottish Enterprise

**Group Policy Proposals:**
1. More devolution of welfare to work powers to Scotland
2. Support people moving into work to know employment rights
3. Improve tools for improvising workforce development on English model or an alternative
4. Make smarter use of planning powers for employability
5. Concerted effort by partners for early intervention e.g. education, family support

**Other issues discussed and points raised include:**
- Technological development is central to continually creating good quality jobs
- A lack of in-house training hinders professional development
- Getting people into jobs at any cost can be bad for the whole economy as well as those taking the jobs
- Can we incentivise providers to support people in work more effectively?
- Links to health strategies are important in providing effective employment policy
- Partnership working must improve – employer engagement is evident only in some good initiatives
- Economic and social policies must work together; some agencies have tried to split them and this must be avoided
- There needs to be a greater emphasis on the role of the voluntary and community sector

9.2 Healthy Futures

**Key Question:**
*What regeneration activities have proved effective in reducing health inequalities? What more could be done through the regeneration agenda to significantly reduce inequalities in health: by Government and by organisations on the ground?*
Panel:
- Geoff Huggins, Deputy Director, Healthcare Policy and Strategy Directorate, and Head of Mental Health Division, the Scottish Government
- Dr. Allyson McCollam, Chief Executive, Scottish Development Centre for Mental Health
- Janet Muir, Manager, Community Health Exchange
- Della Thomas, Local Government Health Improvement Programme Manager, NHS Health Scotland

Chair:
- Anne Clarke, Senior Manager, NHS Ayrshire and Arran

Group Policy Proposals:
1. Access to good quality employment is essential
2. Promote the social model more than the medical model of health
3. Health is a complex field; be realistic about the timescale of impacts and outcomes
4. Health is the point, not just a factor of regeneration

9.3 Skills and Learning

Key Question:
What skills and learning policy developments would further enhance regeneration outcomes?

SURF Director Paul Ballantyne chairing the Skills and Learning discussion group
Panel:
- Maggi Allan, former Chair, Curriculum for Excellence
- Sandy Campbell, Director, Working Rite Ltd
- Phil Denning, District Inspector, HM Inspectorate of Education
- Dr Jonathan Sher, Director of Policy, Research & Practice Development, Children in Scotland

Chair:
- Paul Ballantyne, Knowledge & Practice Manager, Scottish Centre for Regeneration, Communities Scotland

Group Policy Proposals:
1. Need for more ways to recognise learning and achievement
2. Teachers learning materials and places of learning must be meaningful and adequate
3. Policy on debate must be deeply rooted in realities
4. Learning provision must be linked to the needs of families and other community residents
5. Do more to match up people, learning and jobs rather than “learning for the sake of learning”

Other issues discussed and points raised include:
- **Regeneration is really all about ‘connecting’, linking up social, physical and economic needs – this is where we need to make improvements**
- **Place-based learning needs should be given a higher priority – people need to know and understand where they come from**
- **Even in apparent social and economic wastelands there are untapped and unrecognised talents and skills.**
- **“No more classrooms” can be a valuable option for those under school-leaving age who can develop skills much more effectively in other ways, e.g. vocational training**
- **Changing family units need to be reflected in how communities and schools cater for them**
- **More must be done to match up people and learning with suitable jobs**

### 9.4 Empowered Communities

**Key Question:**
*What opportunities are there for policy improvements that would have a significant impact in supporting the development of genuinely and appropriately ‘empowered communities’?*

Panel:
- Wilma Duncan, Member, Dundee Community Regeneration Fund
- Pauline Gallacher, Project Lead, Neilston Community Trust
- Angus Hardie, Director, Development Trust Associations Scotland
- Stephen Maxwell, Associate Director, Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations

Chair:
- Stewart Murdoch, Director of Leisure and Communities, Dundee City Council
Group Policy Proposals:
1. There is a need for a national platform for community views to be expressed to Scottish Government
2. Government principles play out differently locally – there is a case for “devolution on demand” wherever practical
3. Community ownership and management of assets needs government support
4. Community empowerment should be organised around the needs of the community, not the needs of the Local Authority
5. There is a need to resource community engagement adequately and provide access to independent advice

9.5 Further Reading

Some useful background information for each Policy Discussion Group can be downloaded from the SURF website at the following link:

http://www.scotregen.co.uk/knowledge/events.asp?sid=2
Mike Foulis is the Director for Housing and Regeneration in the Scottish Government. He took up the post at the end of April 2007, when he returned from a 16 month secondment with the Scottish Resources Group Ltd, the owners of Scottish Coal, where he worked on corporate strategy.

Prior to that, he held various Director level posts covering Environment, Economic Development, Tourism, Employment and Child Care. Previous secondments involved spells working on devolution in the Cabinet Office in London after the 1997 General Election, and being Assistant Director of Scottish Financial Enterprise in the early 1990s. In-between, he spent two years as Principal Private Secretary to the Secretary of State for Scotland.

The entries below are taken from Mike’s presentation about developing Scottish Government policy “Towards Sustainable Communities”:

- **The purpose of the new Scottish Government is to focus on a “smaller number of bigger things”, which represents a “radically different approach”**

- **The aim is to create a more successful country by enabling the Government and public services to concentrate on increasing sustainable economic growth. See “Purpose of the Scottish Government” illustration below. (use actual Purpose words)**

- **The new Government Economic Strategy sets out a framework for increasing sustainable economic growth) by increasing economic participation and reducing inequalities.**
Scottish Urban Regeneration Forum 2008 Annual Conference Report

The Purpose of the Scottish Government

- Specific economic targets include: raising the country’s GDP growth rate to UK levels by 2011; reducing emissions by 80% by 2050; and narrowing the gap in economic participation between the best and worst performing regions within Scotland by 2017.

- A sustainable community has five strategic objectives or ‘dimensions’. These are the same as the SNP’s five themes, also referred to by Adrian Colwell earlier in the day.

- Meeting the first objective, “Wealthier and Fairer”, is dependent upon making achievements in the sphere of employment. The mindset has changed – in the 1980s success was simply about finding ways of keeping unemployed people busy. In the late 1990s, with the new Deal, it became getting people to stay in jobs. Now the focus is on getting people into good jobs and getting them to stay there.

- The second strategic objective is “Health”. Although some measurements of the nation’s health such as life expectancy have improved since the 1980s, health inequalities have risen and need to be tackled.

- Becoming “Safer and Stronger” is the third objective for creating sustainable communities. Low crime with good community policing is key to this, as is having empowered communities with a strong sense of local identity.

- The fourth theme is “Smarter” Scotland. Mike referred to the challenge of reducing the number of young people Not in Education, Training or Employment (NEET, or more choices than chances. Around 14% of 16-19 year olds fell into this category between 1996 and 2004.

- The final dimension is “Greener” Scotland. The Scottish Government plan to reduce Greenhouse Gas Levels by 80% (of 2005 levels) by 2050.

- Referring to First Minister Alex Salmond’s “Arc of Prosperity”, Mike said that the overall challenge was to have Scotland compare favourably in a range of indicators with other independent small countries in northern Europe - see chart below.
The Overall Challenge We Face

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Healthier</th>
<th>Fairer</th>
<th>Wealthier</th>
<th>Safer</th>
<th>Greener</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Life Expectancy (years)</td>
<td>Income Inequality (Gini Co-efficient)</td>
<td>GDP per capita ($)</td>
<td>Educational Attainment (PISA scores)</td>
<td>Offences per 100,000 population (total)</td>
</tr>
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<td>Scotland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
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<td>43,200</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0.26</td>
<td>31,400</td>
<td>545</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2,634</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.34</td>
<td>32,100</td>
<td>511</td>
<td>11,241</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Scottish Government (2007)

- The “Firm Foundations” housing paper argued for a need to increase housing supply across all tenures and highlighted the desirability of sustainable, mixed-tenure communities.

- Urban Regeneration Companies are central to making sustainable communities work in areas of concentrated deprivation.

- Bringing objectives together often produces trade-offs, but sometimes “different bits of activity actually support each other.” Pooling current initiatives can bring added value, and the creation of sustainable places can provide an example of this.

- “Making places that work” again after many years of failure is exciting work – there are reasons for optimism but there are also big challenges ahead for the Scottish Government.

- One such challenge is the Government’s concordat with the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, which makes a major change to their fundamental relationship. A second challenge is presented by the transfer of some powers from Scottish Enterprise to Local Authorities.

- In the area of Regeneration, these include getting the new relationship with Local Government to work; managing the transfer of local regeneration activity from Scottish Enterprise to Local Authorities; and moving Urban Regeneration Companies forward, developing the Fairer Scotland Fund and building on the “Firm Foundations” discussion paper.
11 Conference Summary and Future Action

The conference ended with a short summary by SURF Chief Executive Andy Milne, who thanked the keynote speakers, the policy discussion contributors, guest chair Alistair Grimes and the City of Dundee.

Following this successful event, SURF will use the views and information gathered to help inform better policy and practice, particularly in the areas of:

- **Empowering communities in the changing political, economic and environmental policy climate**
- **The availability of good employment opportunities as an effective route out of poverty**
- **The linkages between the health improvement and community regeneration agendas**
- **Enhancing regeneration outcomes through improved delivery in skills and life-long learning**
- **The opportunities presented by devolution, effective partnership working, and lessons from comparable contexts**
- **Sustainable economic growth and tackling inequalities**
With support from Capital City Partnership, a voting system was in operation during two separate sessions at the Conference. Delegates were asked to answer a series of multiple-choice questions using an electronic keypad. The voting outcome data is available in Appendix B of this report. A more detailed breakdown by sector is available from this page of the SURF website. For information about future SURF events and becoming part of the network, please contact our Events and Communications Officer, Derek Rankine (contact details are below).

Alternatively, visit the SURF website: www.scotregen.co.uk.

Appendix A: SURF Sponsors

In order to continue to play its role as Scotland’s independent regeneration network, SURF is dependent on the support of its members and in particular its 13 sponsoring members for 2008 who are listed below.
Appendix B: Delegates’ Voting Results
In very broad terms, which of the three following geographical areas is your organisation concerned with?

1. Scotland Wide 42%
2. A region, district or city 42%
3. A single smaller town or neighborhood (less than 10k population) 16%

Which of the following sectors best describes the organisation you are from today?

1. Central government / national public body 10%
2. Local government 22%
3. Community group 20%
4. Voluntary sector 9%
5. Private sector 21%
6. Other 18%
Using this scale of 1-5, how would you rate progress in the following aspect of regeneration over the last 15 years?

On Empowerment of communities

1. is very positive
2. is positive
3. is little or no progress
4. is worse
5. is much worse

On Support for skills and learning

1. is very positive
2. is positive
3. is little or no progress
4. is worse
5. is much worse

On Improved health levels

1. is very positive
2. is positive
3. is little or no progress
4. is worse
5. is much worse
On increased availability of good employment opportunities

1. is very positive
2. is positive
3. is little or no progress
4. is worse
5. is much worse

Overall, how well do you think the current regeneration policies and delivery structure in Scotland work in terms of supporting the regeneration of disadvantaged communities?

1. Brilliant
2. Work very well
3. Work well
4. work poorly
5. Work very poorly
6. Appalling
7. No opinion
How well do you think the current regeneration policies are working?

1. Brilliant
2. Work very well
3. Work well
4. Work poorly
5. Work very poorly
6. Appalling
7. No opinion

Although we know they are all linked, what do you think should be the single top regeneration policy priority over the next 15 years? (Please vote for just one topic by its number.)

1. Sustainable economic growth
2. Health and well-being
3. Affordable Housing
4. Education Skills and learning
5. Community empowerment and local devolution
6. Climate and sustainable energy
7. Transport and infrastructure
8. Quality of jobs and training
9. Poverty and exclusion
### What one thing needs to improve most to make our overall regeneration efforts more successful?

1. More support for community participation: 9%
2. Overall investment levels in infrastructure and services: 11%
3. Greater coordination of partners efforts: 21%
4. Enhanced quality of leadership: 15%
5. More devolution to local levels: 11%
6. Wider government policies affecting wealth and poverty: 28%
7. Other: 4%

### What needs to improve the most?

1. More support for community participation: 9%
2. Overall investment levels in infrastructure and services: 11%
3. Greater coordination of partners efforts: 21%
4. Enhanced quality of leadership: 15%
5. More devolution to local levels: 11%
6. Wider government policies affecting wealth and poverty: 28%
7. Other: 4%
This report was produced by the Scottish Urban Regeneration Forum in April 2008.