Sustaining and Reinventing Community Regeneration

A report from the 2010 SURF Annual Conference, held on 24th & 25th March in Edinburgh
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As Scotland’s independent regeneration network, SURF uses its extensive cross-sector network, which includes over 250 member organisations, to explore current practice, experience and knowledge in community regeneration in Scotland.

SURF provides a neutral space to facilitate this sharing of information through a programme of activities that includes seminars, conferences, international policy exchanges, annual awards for best practice and the distribution of the regeneration policy journal, Scotregen.

Constructive feedback from the SURF membership is used to positively influence the development of more successful regeneration policy and practice through SURF’s links with key policy-makers in the Scottish Government and elsewhere.

A key feature in SURF’s programme of events and publications is our Annual Conference. This report summarises the main points made by the keynote conference speakers, and includes highlights of the outcomes of various interactive elements, such as debate groups, plenary panel sessions and electronic voting.

The broad range of views and opinions expressed are welcomed and valued, but they do not necessarily reflect the views of SURF or the SURF network.

The stated purpose of the 2010 SURF Annual Conference was:

“**To constructively link the resources within the academic, policy and practice sectors to the practicalities of supporting more successful and sustainable community regeneration in a changed context.”**

In a time of economic inactivity, dramatic reductions in public spending, and rising levels of unemployment and poverty, SURF believes that the focus of all regeneration efforts should be on practical, pro-active and cooperative responses to the very real threat of substantial degeneration across the board.

Despite the debilitating impact of catastrophic financial market failure, Scotland retains substantial human, physical, intellectual and cultural assets. The current economic, political and climatic crises present a ‘once in a lifetime’ challenge for developing a more sustainable approach to community regeneration.

The SURF Annual Conference for 2010 looked squarely at the challenges ahead, but its focus was on linking people, projects and practice across the SURF network to examine the practical opportunities for supporting sustainable community regeneration in this challenging time of change. The assets and resources that are already ‘at hand’ to help us support and sustain regeneration – despite the increasingly difficult economic climate and its related challenges – were showcased.
Previous SURF Annual Conferences have taken the format of a full one-day event, normally held in Dundee. The 2010 version was a special two-day event in Edinburgh that explored Scotland’s rich seams of knowledge, experience and innovation, and used this as a basis for debating how we can most successfully combine and enhance them to deliver improved wellbeing for individuals, families and communities across Scotland.

Day One (Wed 24th March) – beyond academic interest

The conference began by focusing on Scotland’s substantial knowledge and research capacity, both inside and outside its formal institutions. The resources and research priorities of universities, local authorities and the community and voluntary sector were explored to discover how these valuable resources can be more effectively linked to support and inform better policy, learning and practical regeneration activity. The first day of the event was delivered in partnership with the University of Edinburgh’s Public Policy Network.

Day Two (Thu 25th March) – all together now; policy and practice

The key lessons and ideas from the above academic resource discussions were carried forward into the following day’s ‘policy and practice’ debates. Here, a full range of cross-sector resource partners were pulled together to discuss and agree how we can use such resources more effectively in our shared efforts to continue and renew community regeneration in a challenging economic context.

SURF was pleased to secure the participation of 42 different contributors across the two-days, representing a wide variety of sectors and perspectives, and was especially grateful to the following keynote speakers and guest chairs:

- Kath Beveridge, Head of Community Planning and Regeneration, Aberdeen City Council
- Mike Foulis, Director of Housing and Regeneration, Scottish Government
- Prof. Greg Lloyd, Head of School of the Built Environment, University of Ulster
- Jim McCormick, Scotland Adviser, Joseph Rowntree Foundation
- Prof. Duncan MacIlenan, Director of Centre for Housing Research, University of St Andrews
- Jim McFarlane, Managing Director of Operations, Scottish Enterprise
- Dominic Munro, Head of Communities Analytical Services, Scottish Government

“SURF’s independent, cross sector regeneration network is the ideal forum for sharing our diverse experience, knowledge and ideas, as well as gathering support for our collective efforts. The breadth of the SURF network is evident in the wide range of contributors to the 2010 Annual Conference, all of whom gave their time freely in this cooperative enterprise.” Andy Milne, SURF Chief Executive
**The Role of Research in a Flourishing Scotland**

Dominic Munro  
*Head of Communities Analytical Services, Scottish Government*

**KEY QUESTION:** How can we use existing assets and capacities better in a time of financial pressure and rising demands?

*Dominic Munro offered a Scottish Government perspective on this theme, outlining current and future research interests in housing and regeneration, and the relevance of this research to community regeneration.*

**Research in Fiscal Austerity**

The scale of the forthcoming reductions in the public sector will impact greatly upon policy and delivery in regeneration. The UK Treasury is forecasting a 50% reduction in capital spending over the next three years. An independent analysis estimates a negative growth rate in public sector spending in Scotland for 2010/11 and beyond (see graph: ‘Future Government Expenditure’ on p6). As stated in a recent *Herald* article, civil servants need to decide which policies and services to prioritise (see quote below).

Decision-making in this critical period would naturally be informed by research, but a lack of funding carries implications for the quality and quantity of research that can be undertaken. Research has to justify itself. The opportunity cost of the Scottish Government commissioning a £30K research project, for example, is the grant element of building a new council house.

Public value in research must therefore demonstrably match the value of alternative public investments. There must also be a clear demand for research, and effective dissemination in ensuring that policy and outcomes can be enhanced.

“Civil Servants will need to be ‘radical in their thinking’ about how Scotland restructures to manage a reduced public sector.... the shape of delivery of at least some public services is going to look completely different”  
*The Herald, 30/01/10*

**Better Use of Existing Data**

In this context, more emphasis should be placed upon making better use of the existing evidence base. International research, historical research and active data sets are source types that could be looked at more closely. In Scottish regeneration, some relevant examples of existing data sources are:

- **Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics (SNS)** - public access website for small area statistics (see image on p6)
- **Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)** – updated in October 2009 (the image below shows changes in Glasgow)
- **Vacant and Derelict Land Survey** – updated in January 2010
- **Centre for Housing Market Analysis** – a Scottish Government research unit
- **Scottish Centre for Regeneration** – operating five themed learning networks

**SIMD: Change in Glasgow**
• Scottish Household Survey
• Joseph Rowntree Foundation – excellent source of UK research in social inclusion
• GoWell – ambitious long-term study of regeneration impacts in Glasgow

Future Research: An Holistic Approach

Another key to future success lies in integrating policy and integrating research. As regeneration affects many of the Scottish Government’s target outcomes, as well as its overall purpose, a holistic approach is required. Multiple complex needs and multi-dimensional regeneration requires joined-up research in such fields as health, education, employability, planning, community engagement, social inclusion and crime.

The requirement for evidence-based decisions also applies at the local authority level. The 2007 Scottish Government/CoSLA concordat increased the autonomy of local government by removing the ring-fencing of funding, but there was no significant increase in the capability for undertaking research at a local level. This gap could potentially be bridged in improving local data sets (SNS and SIMD) and developing local indicators.

In the future, anticipated national government research interests include housing reform (a green paper is planned for May 2010), population ageing, climate change, energy efficiency, and household formation (Scottish Government projections estimate an additional 440K households in the country by 2031 – a 19% growth).

SNS: Local impacts of the recession
Change in claimant count unemployment rates in Edinburgh pre and “post” recession

Future Government Expenditure

% Annual Real Growth Rate in Scottish DEL Budgets

Note: Figures for 2011-12 to 2013-14 are based on IFS analysis in September 2009.
NB: DEL = Departmental Expenditure Limit

Source: Scottish Government
**Urban Renewal: Scottish Approaches in a Wider and Longer Context**

Professor Duncan Maclellan

*Director, Centre for Housing Research, University of St. Andrews*

**KEY QUESTION:** What lessons can be drawn from the international arena to inform Scottish regeneration efforts in challenging circumstances?

*To explore this theme, SURF was pleased to enlist the prestigious international regeneration expert Professor Duncan Maclellan, who has advised governments on housing policy in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, Poland, France and Sweden, as well as Scotland and the UK.*

**Understanding the Role of Cities**

The growth of modern cities and the effects of globalisation have brought more jobs, but they have also produced a more unequal distribution of income, along with a rise in land and housing prices. This situation encourages inequality and promotes the development of both deprived and successful neighbourhoods.

In Scotland, the response to this has been an attempt to avoid neighbourhood decline through the use of redistributive techniques – but now some areas are in a sense beyond decay, decline and disadvantage. The gains from economic growth have not been used effectively.

Cities are connected spaces, each one with a unique set of sectoral interactions, spatial structures, functional networks and regional links. There has been substantial policy progress in the last decade towards a holistic neighbourhood regeneration, but local systems are therefore required to ‘ground’ international forces at the city level.

**The Australian and Canadian Experience**

In Australia, key housing policies in England are often emulated. Canada, meanwhile, takes influence from US and France as well as the UK. Both states have a strong intellectual framework and major professional interests, but are poor at undertaking successful regeneration in the context of decline as compared to doing so in the context of growth. The city of Melbourne is an example of this problem.

Canada has some exceptional partnerships and projects, such as Toronto Community Housing – a major housing association that doesn’t receive any government assistance. Work on inclusion and poverty is impressive in many respects, but there is a lack of governmental support for city-wide regeneration policies. In Australia, land policy is very strong, but they are weaker in dealing with problem areas – the opposite situation to Scotland.

“Some Scottish municipalities, who now hold centre stage in policy-making, are first rate at renewal; but others lag, and some still seem to see active communities as an irritation rather than an objective and asset for change” - Prof. Maclellan
Lack of Research

In Scotland, there has been a significant reduction in the range of regeneration-related research being undertaken. The Scottish Government has not made enough of a serious effort to engage with academics since its formation. The loss of high status think tanks in Scotland has also reduced the influence of academic research on devolved policies. There is a need to better represent the Scottish experience in present regeneration commentary.

Scottish Government statistics have been getting much better in recent years, but there is still too much that we don’t know. For example, why do people live where they live? Is it out of choice, do they feel trapped, are they unable to afford to move to a different community? There is no research on this and a need for more qualitative inquiry.

There has also been a sweeping move against area-based regeneration in intellectual UK policy circles, but this collective change of opinion is not fully backed up by strong evidence.

Next Steps for Scotland

There are some things we are very good at, and we should continue to build on these while tackling those we are weaker at. For example, Community Planning is a good idea, but is overly bureaucratic and needs to be rebalanced to truly engage with, rather than ‘strangle’, communities. Single Outcome Agreements are inadequate and fail to ensure resource efficiency or improved performances. Scotland’s poor record on large scale infrastructure projects also needs to be addressed.

Scottish regeneration could benefit from policy convergence with English cities, a faster planning process, increasing community ownership and capturing growth in land policy. When resources are constrained, emphasising the local steps to the big goals can be vital.

National Priorities—Local Delivery

Kath Beveridge

Head of Community Planning and Regeneration, Aberdeen City Council

KEY QUESTION: What challenges do local authorities and their partners face in collaborating to deliver national outcomes locally in the current economic context?

Kath Beveridge outlined how Aberdeen City Council were approaching these challenges.

Dealing with Reality

According to some sources, a 14-20% drop in Scottish public expenditure over the next three years is predicted. The way local authorities negotiate changes at a neighbourhood level, and engage with communities, will be crucial as we enter a period of financial constraint with increased potential for conflict and division—at a time when collaboration in and across sectors is
more than ever a part of the solution.
It is, of course, important to be realistic about what can be done within resource constraints. Community projects are also suffering from funding cuts in this environment where local authorities pull back to providing statutory services as resources are reduced. Public spending as a whole must be looked at, both at a strategic national level and locally, to continue to strive for a holistic and systems approach to community regeneration.

Working in Partnership

Under Aberdeen Community Planning Partnership’s Single Outcome Agreement (SOA), each partner effectively owns a commitment to joint delivery. But SOAs are limited in some respects – for example, there is nothing in Aberdeen’s SOA about the need to reduce reoffending rates.

The focus on outcomes (see Scottish Government National Outcomes, below) in the new national/local government relationship is a welcome development, and future activities will continue to be fixed around partnership working. Public sector bodies in Aberdeen are increasing alignment in this respect through the learning gained in a Collaborative Outcomes Programme peer review.

It is hoped that this programme will create a consensus on outcomes while overcoming the diversity of organisational structures, sharing perspectives on problems and highlighting good practice.

Aberdeen Action Points

Aberdeen City Council SOA peer review focused on five complex issues:

1. Waste
2. Alcohol Misuse
3. Transport
4. Community Engagement
5. Closing the Gap (in educational attainment)

The local authority also plans to take a more visible leadership role by building capacity at a strategic level through a similar local leadership programme, continuing to engage with central government colleagues on performance targets and policy setting.

An organisation’s ability to meet targets in this collaborative context is not as simple as throwing a stone into a corner; a relatively straightforward task. It’s more like trying to persuade a bird to fly into the corner.
Regeneration—A Shared Enterprise

Jim McFarlane
Managing Director of Operations, Scottish Enterprise

KEY QUESTION: In recent years, the regeneration role of the economic development agency Scottish Enterprise has been geared towards a focus on projects of a national significance.

Jim McFarlane informed conference delegates of the agency’s current regeneration remit and its future priorities.

New Responsibilities

Since 2007, following changes in Scottish Government policy, Scottish Enterprise’s sphere of activity has been more directly focused on the role of enterprise, innovation and investment in economic development. Its previous local regeneration and business gateway functions were transferred to local authorities, and its responsibilities in skills, learning and national apprenticeships were assigned to the Skills Development Scotland agency. Scottish Enterprise does, however, continue to play a leading role in Scottish regeneration efforts, most visibly in support of large-scale projects of regional or national importance.

Successful Initiatives

Scottish Enterprise has been centrally involved with some of Scotland’s most ambitious regeneration projects in recent times, including the urban redevelopment of the Edinburgh Exchange Financial District. This took place in the early 1990s through a joint venture scheme after a private sector competitive route failed to deliver (see ‘before and after’ photos to the left).

Other initiatives that the agency has played a key role in supporting include the following (also see illustration on p11):

- Clyde Waterfront
- Edinburgh Old Town (and Our Dynamic Earth)
- Ravenscraig
- Newtongrange
- Eyemouth harbour development

“As Scotland’s main economic development agency, Scottish Enterprise has had a significant role in regeneration since its inception” - Jim McFarlane
Emerging Focus

Scottish Enterprise appointed a new Chief Executive, Lena Wilson, in late 2009. Key objectives for the new leadership team have been on making Scotland a globally competitive business environment and working more closely with potential foreign investors from international companies and sectors.

The agency has also been working to commitments under Scottish Government economic and regional equity strategies. This includes continuing to fund Urban Regeneration Companies and the major Dundee Waterfront initiative, in addition to contributing to regeneration support in the town of Kilmarnock following the intended closure of the Diageo drinks packaging plant.

Another key aim during a time of extreme change is to build a more mature partnership with local authorities, and explore the potential for more involvement in policy formation, shared evaluation and new funding mechanisms.

Scottish Enterprise’s national transformational and regeneration projects
KEY QUESTION: What regeneration priorities are identified by the Scottish Government under a greatly different context for Scottish community regeneration?

Mike Foulis underscored the actions being taken by the Scottish Government’s Housing and Regeneration Directorate to support ongoing and future projects and developments.

What Has Been Achieved Already

The Scottish Government has played a central part in getting a great deal of good work to help those living in disadvantaged communities in Scotland underway. For instance, by funding the six Urban Regeneration Companies (URCs) in Scotland, which take a long-term and coordinated approach to linking opportunity and need in some of Scotland’s more deprived areas.

In recent years, there has been considerable investment in Wider Role funding for housing associations and the £435m three-year Fairer Scotland Fund programme. The Scottish Government has also put resources towards increasing quality in master-planning, making use of vacant and derelict land, and community empowerment.

The 2009 £60m Town Centre Regeneration Fund also brought an outpouring of high levels of creativity through a competitive process for applications to revitalise local high streets across Scotland (see images on p13). The acceleration of funding into the Affordable Housing Investment Programme contributed towards a record number of new houses being built in the country.

There has also been Scottish Government commitment to engage with academic research and increase the dissemination and networking opportunities for practical learning. The Scottish Centre for Regeneration, for example, is now operating five themed learning networks to share good practice, research and expertise across the regeneration fields.

A Broken Model

In regeneration, the Scottish Government is committed to dealing with the challenges and taking advantage of the opportunities resulting from the effects of the recession.

We know that budgets are being reduced, and as Dominic Munro had previously informed conference delegates (see p6), capital spending is likely to be reduced very significantly. The property-led regeneration model is now effectively broken, and serious private sector investment is only coming into prime sites.

So a new model is required, and we have to work out how to make it work financially.

“We want to support you to deliver more and better regeneration in future” - Mike Foulis
Land policy, Tax Increment Financing, the Compulsory Purchase Order system, the EU JESSICA initiative and lessons from England and abroad may all play an important part in contributing to a new model, but the real need is for debate and consensus.

**What the Future Holds**

A recent Scottish Parliament debate on regeneration showed strong cross-party support for the need for community regeneration, and a lack of dissension on the need for community engagement. So we are all on the same side, and the Scottish Government is in the market for developmental ideas.

One example to take heart from is the invention of the ipod, which took place during the dot-com bust. The question to ask now is: where is the ‘regeneration ipod’?

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**Town Centre Regeneration Fund projects**

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**Learning from Success**

*Representatives from the three winning projects in the 2009 SURF Awards for Best Practice in Community Regeneration attended the conference to share the lessons behind their success with conference delegates.*

The winners in each of three 2009 SURF Award categories were:

- **People:** Playbusters Ltd
- **Place:** TACT Healthy Park
- **Partnership:** South Lanarkshire Childminding Development Programme

For more information, [SURF Awards case study publications](#) on each project are available for download from the Scottish Government website. A 2009 SURF Awards publication, highlighting all of the shortlisted entries, is also available from the SURF website.
Panel Session Outcomes: Day One

There were three panel sessions on the first day of the conference. Three groups of three expert panel guests were invited to represent academic, local authority and community/voluntary sector perspectives respectively. Each session and the resulting session were chaired by Professor Greg Lloyd, a leading expert on urban planning in the UK and the Head of School of the Built Environment in the University of Ulster.

Panel Session 1 – Academic Institutions
Knowledge as a Resource for Change

The purpose of the first panel session was to explore academic perspectives on:

• What do we know and what can we do with it?
• How can research better support regeneration outcomes?
• How can academic resources be more directly connected to policy and practice?

Panel members:

• Prof. Ade Kearns – Professor of Urban Studies, University of Glasgow & Principal Investigator of GoWell project
• Prof. Ron McQuaid – Director of Employment Research Institute, Edinburgh Napier University
• Prof. Gill Scott – Professor Emeritus in Sociology at Glasgow Caledonian University & Honorary Director of the Scottish Poverty Information Unit

Key points from the discussion:

• Academic students, especially those working towards a PhD, can be an excellent resource for regeneration-related research.
• Industry-linked partnerships are significant, but are not always the best route for examining regeneration processes given their tendency to focus on economic approaches.
• Demand exists for access to raw data, as well as to sources of information and interpretation from academic studies.
• Often regeneration stakeholders know what to fix, but they do not always know how to fix it. More investment in research is required, and funders should appreciate that simply monitoring developments can take up a lot of resources.
• No-one has all the answers, and academics can be unaware what regeneration practitioners are looking for. Useful knowledge often comes from interaction, so increased dialogue will be beneficial.

"Academics can provide packaged data for campaigners to fire the bullets"
Prof. Ade Kearns
Panel Session Outcomes: Day One (continued)

Panel Session 2 – In Practice: Local Authorities and Local Regeneration

The purpose of the second panel session was to explore local authority perspectives on:

- What do we do and what do we measure?
- What information do local authorities have, and what more do they need?
- How can local authorities link more effectively with each other and with academic/research capacities?

Panel members:

- **Stewart Murdoch** – Director of Leisure and Communities, Dundee City Council
- **David Webster** – Chief Housing Officer: Policy Review and Development, Glasgow City Council (retired in March 2010)
- **Chris Mitchell** – Corporate Research Officer, Fife Council

Key points from the discussion:

- Local authorities need to know how to best apply research. Current practice is often more about management and public relations.
- Community Planning brought in lots of new processes, but the overall function is the same as before.
- The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation and the Scottish Household Survey are excellent research sources for informing local policy. There is, however, a severe lack of serious qualitative research. A shift from quantitative to qualitative research is therefore desirable, although the latter can be very expensive.
- There are lots of data sets and indicators for measuring success in regeneration, but no agreed benchmarking system.
- Funding sometimes limits the ability of local authorities to engage with academics; and regional barriers can cause challenges for partnership working.
- Measurement is important, and investing in research is vital in making sure public money is wisely spent.
- On the other hand, there aren’t always measurements that ‘prove’ the value of the good regeneration work that local authorities already do. As Einstein said, “Not everything that counts can be counted”.

Panel Session 3 – The Community: A Point of Impact and Vital Feedback

The purpose of the final panel session on day one was to explore community and voluntary sector perspectives on:

- What special knowledge and research capacitates exist in organised communities and related third sector organisations?
- How can they be better supported and included in co-operative efforts?

Panel members:

- **Robert Cuthbert** – Development Manager, Scottish Community Development Centre
- **Pauline Gallacher** – Volunteer Advisor, Neilston Development Trust
- **Alison Miller** – Support Worker, North Edinburgh Trust

“Personal journeys of people living in communities can help to better inform regeneration practitioners and local government policy; people who live it know it best”

David Webster
Panel Session Outcomes: Day One (continued)

Key points from the discussion:

- In Community Planning, there is frequently a lack of synergy between the community and the local authority. We need to be more clear about deciding who should be responsible for what.

- There is considerable scope for the community taking the lead in some local regeneration processes. Local authorities should be more open to symbiotic proposals for land and asset transfers.

- It can be difficult for community projects to evidence need. However, when they are able to, as via the 2002-09 Scottish Community Action Research Fund (SCARF), a general lack of flexibility in local/national government responses led to many community-led initiatives not being commissioned.

- There are issues about scaling up. Projects such as the Neilston Development Trust work well in a community of 5K-10K, but may not be replicable in larger towns and cities.

- There is a great deal of knowledge and research capacity in communities, which is currently an under-utilised resource. This could usefully be applied in the recession if the right support is given.

- Those who did not benefit from the recent economic boom are suffering most in the bust that followed. This may inspire more communities to ‘do it for themselves’ out of local necessity and resources.

- There is a need for new policy frameworks which support a more community-led approach within “a staged theory of change” to deliver it.

"Communities are going to be hit worst in the economic downturn; we need to go out and support people living on the poverty line“ - Alison Miller

Panel Session Outcomes: Day Two

There were two plenary panel sessions on the second day of the conference. The first attempted to find an answer to the ‘big question’ – should we centralise to sustain current regeneration efforts with restricted resources, or should we devolve to deliver wider objectives as part of a holistic approach?

The second panel session showcased some of the key sources for resources and support that are still available for ongoing and future community regeneration initiatives.

Both panel sessions were chaired by Dr Jim McCormick (left), the Scotland Adviser to the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, and former Director of the Scottish Council Foundation think-tank.
Panel Session Outcomes: Day Two (continued)

Panel Session 1 – The Big Question: Centralise to Sustain or Devolve to Deliver?

Panel members:
- Chris Higgins – Head of Culture and the Third Sector, Highland and Islands Enterprise
- Jim Rafferty – Chief Executive, Capital City Partnership
- Archie Thomson – Community Activist, Renton Community Development Trust

Key points from the discussion:
- In spite of, or perhaps because of, all the upheaval caused by the recession, it is a potentially good climate for community organisations “to do business”.
- In rural settings, it can be easier to devolve power to communities through trading assets. In towns and cities, the situation is often more complex.
- Communities are naturally resourceful, and more effort needs to be made to draw this out.
- Communities empower politicians, but often aren’t able to hold them to account other than through elections.
- Land is the ultimate asset, and is an essential element of real community empowerment.
- Local is a relative term. To some UK Government agencies, Scotland is classed as a “local” region; to others, it can mean a sub-region, city, neighbourhood or village.
- Ultimately, there is no ‘right answer’, the key consideration should be the scale and purpose of the activity.

Panel Session 2 – Making It Real: Continuing Sources of Support and Resources

Panel members:
- Alasdair Kerr – Director of Business Development and Enterprise, Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce
- Jackie Killeen – Head of Policy and Programmes, Big Lottery Fund in Scotland
- Jim McFarlane – Managing Director of Operations, Scottish Enterprise.
- Gordon McLaren – Chief Executive, ESEP Ltd

Key points from the discussion:
- The Big Lottery Fund in Scotland (BIG) intends to open funding applications to their new community investment programmes from the end of June 2010. The fund is now worth £400m in Scotland over 2010-15.
- 80% of current BIG funds go to voluntary organisations, who will be hardest hit by the recession. Demand is ex-

“We don’t want good houses to enjoy our poverty in” – Archie Thomson (pictured above)
Panel Session Outcomes: Day Two (continued)

- **Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce** offers a variety of activities to support regeneration projects, such as an Enterprise Trust, Business Incubators, unemployment and training services, third sector mentoring, and access to finance.

- **ESEP Ltd** manage European Union structural funds in Scotland, a £500m contract currently in the final year of a 4-year programme. ESEP are currently working with the Scottish Government, the European Commission and the European Investment Bank to deliver a major new investment stream for regeneration projects in Scotland (**JESSICA**).

- **Scottish Enterprise** also supports co-operative business development and capacity building in rural areas.

- **Social Return on Investment** and similar measuring tools can help justify project potential to funding bodies.

- Sustainable development is now a headline policy agenda across all areas, and funders will always view sustainability as the ‘holy grail’.

“Battening down the hatches and sticking to tried and tested ideas is a standard response to economic difficulties; but we always need risk, innovation and community leadership”

Jackie Killeen
Conference delegates had the choice of participating in one of five themed discussions, which were initiated by brief presentations from two invited speakers with differing perspectives on:

i. Assets, Land and Politics

ii. Improving Services

iii. It’s Poverty, Stupid!

iv. Master-Planning and Sustainability

v. More Than Housing?

Delegates were able to inform their choice of debate topics via short statements provided in advance by the introductory guest debaters. These statements are available on the SURF website by clicking here.

Further information on the main messages arising from the discussion in each group follows.

1 Assets, Land and Politics

Debaters:

- Robert McDowall, Director, DTZ
- Stephen Maxwell, Board Member, SURF & former Associate Director, SCVO

Facilitator:

- Martin Stepek, Chief Executive, Scottish Family Business Association

Facilitator’s summary of key learning outcomes from the debate:

- There was a presumption that assets should belong to the community, rather than any level of government.
- Participants agreed that there was a need for regular strategic meetings of all key players in a community – businesses, social enterprises, local authorities and community groups – to align long-term visions and ensure commitment of all to the tasks required to deliver. The present Community Planning structures is not sufficiently meeting this purpose.
- There is a need for a significant Communities Spending Budget/Endowment to act as the community business equivalent of private equity/venture capital sources of funding.
- There was agreement of the need to progressively move delivery of public services from local authorities to communities themselves, giving power and responsibility to communities, whilst re-creating local government as the strategic arm and empower-ers of communities. At present, many authorities are perceived by communities groups to be obstacles to progress at a community level.

2 Improving Services

Debaters:

- Bob Christie, Outcomes Programme Manager, Improvement Service
- Stewart Murdoch, Director of Leisure and Communities, Dundee City Council

Facilitator:

- Jim Rafferty, Chief Executive, Capital City Partnership

Facilitator’s summary of key learning outcomes from the debate:

- Are we improving or are we cutting? We need to be clear about this to manage expectations.
- Are we now at the stage where it’s not about improving services – but which services we need to (or should) stop delivering? Suggestions included
empty schools, unnecessary housing consultancy costs, and aspects of universal services (more targeting etc.).

• Who decides the agenda for improving public services? The general experience is that it is not the communities covered.

• We routinely underuse the resources that exist in voluntary and community groups – the public sector avoids conceding control over the agenda.

• One of the biggest barriers to service change and devolution is middle management in public services, whose interests can often appear to be at odds with serviced users.

3 It’s Poverty, Stupid

Debaters:

• Dr Carol Craig, writer and Director of the Centre for Confidence and Well-being

• Dr John McKendrick, Director of the Scottish Poverty Information Unit

Facilitator:

• Pippa Coutts, Head of Operations, Scottish Development Centre for Mental Health

Facilitator’s summary of key learning outcomes from the debate:

• There was an extensive discussion around the role of culture and class, in addition to income inequality, in determining ‘social ills’. Dr Craig’s view is that we need to look more closely at the family culture in Glasgow and other areas in the west coast of Scotland. This culture, she argued, is traditionally a macho one, with men frequently staying away from the family unit and drinking heavily. Men become disjointed from the family; this is bad for their health and well-being, and that of their children.

• We need to work with young people through early and sustained intervention. Dr McKendrick made an argument that the central problem is the lack of opportunities for young people, not single parenthood or anything else. Participants felt that it was most critical to work with the generation that is now teenage.

• Participants identified a need to pursue social, rather than economic, regeneration, and expressed concerns about the negative effects of materialistic culture. The goal should be to move away from wealth creation and the associated debt culture.
Constructive Debates (continued)

- In terms of ‘capturing the gains’ – how do we provide support to those really suffering poverty? The experience of poverty makes it really difficult to participate in society, and is very damaging to health and self-esteem. The recession has, once more, hit those people hardest.

4 Master-Planning and Sustainability

Debaters:
- Alistair Scott, Director, Smith Scott Mullan Associates
- Petra Biberbach, Chief Executive, Planning Aid for Scotland

Facilitator:
- Craig McLaren, Director of the Scottish Centre for Regeneration, Scottish Government

Facilitator’s summary of key learning outcomes from the debate:
- The creation of a master-plan is a process, not a one-off event.
- Better civic leadership is required to develop a culture of trust in master-planning.
- Vision and imagination should be encouraged in master-planning, but final plans must be rooted in reality and must be deliverable.
- Participants identified a need for holism – developing master-plans in partnership, and bringing together all major stakeholders, would make it possible for them to be used as a basis for service planning.
- Investing more in research and taking the time to analyse it could improve the “future-proofing” aspect of master-plans.

5 More Than Housing?

Debaters:
- Diarmuid Lawlor, Head of Urbanism, Architecture + Design Scotland (below)
- Martin Pollhammer, Chief Executive, East Lothian Housing Association

Facilitator:
- David Stewart, Policy and Strategy Manager, Scottish Federation of Housing Associations

Facilitator’s summary of key learning outcomes from the debate:
- Housing has to be about much more than the numbers of houses. New housing developments should have more of a focus on providing services, and they should create an environment – not just buildings – that people want to live in.
- Housing associations have a role in providing leadership in place-making, and have the potential to do more in focusing on wider development in place-making.
- Outputs and investment should not be measured purely in terms of value or...
Constructive Debates (continued)

numbers. More meaningful measurements, such as Social Return on Investment and triple-bottom-line accounting, should become the norm.

- One positive from a possible shortage of funding is the development of wider community needs through social enterprises. Such organisations should be able to continue their work by raising their own income, becoming less vulnerable to funding cuts.

What’s Next?

SURF’s Chief Executive Andy Milne (right) closed the conference by stating that although SURF is just a very small cog in a big machine, there is every chance that it will help the machine to work better.

The March 2010 Scottish Parliament regeneration debate showed that there is an overwhelming consensus about the need to maintain keystone regeneration strategies and resources beyond parliament lifespans.

The challenge now is to use our collective knowledge, experience, imaginations and resources, as discussed at the conference, to work successfully together under extremely challenging circumstances.

SURF will be using the conference feedback to inform its next set of activities in an ongoing busy programme of events and publications.

For further information on SURF and its current work programmes, please see p27 or visit: www.scotregen.co.uk
Appendix 1: Electronic Voting Results

The opportunity for all participants to answer set questions on a range of relevant topics was a key feature of day two of the conference. This appendix includes selected highlights of the delegates’ voting results.

A full breakdown of the results by sector is available from the ‘knowledge centre’ section of the SURF website.

### Who are we?
Which of the following terms best describes the organisation you are representing here today?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Central Government or National Public Body</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Local Government organisation</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Community group</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Voluntary Sector organisation</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Private Sector organisation</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Academic organisation</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Other</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Who are we?
In very broad terms, which of the three following geographic areas is your organisation concerned with?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Scotland-wide</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Region, district or city</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Part of a city or a whole town</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. A smaller town or neighbourhood</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### How are we?
What do you think the realistic scope is for successfully ‘Sustaining and Reinventing Community Regeneration’ over the next 3 years?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scope</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Excellent</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Good</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Fair</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Difficult</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. No Chance</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### In terms of ‘the big question’ of **sustaining by centralising or devolving to deliver**; which one of the following options would you favour most?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Less and bigger local authorities, on a city region basis.</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Top slicing Council Tax receipts to increase resources and powers for all Community Councils</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Top slicing Council Tax receipts for substantial grants to community owned ‘anchor’ organisations in disadvantaged areas (based on SIMD)</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Set up new regional development agencies with physical planning and employment remits</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 1: Voting Results (continued)

What would you say is the single greatest potential source of untapped resources for community regeneration?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Community-based projects and social enterprises</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. More progressive physical planning, land management and taxation</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Creative industries and cultural activities</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Local green energy and food production schemes</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Better public service coordination and targeting via Community Planning</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Academic institutions’ research and intellectual capacities</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Charitable trusts and economic philanthropists</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Private sector enterprise and capital</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. A dedicated regeneration organisation for all of Scotland</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. More use of devolved UK and international co operation and exchanges</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Under its existing powers, what do you believe is the most important role of the Scottish Government in supporting future community regeneration?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Setting out a high level strategic framework and leaving Local Authorities to lead in local regeneration plans and activities.</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ring-fencing a dedicated regeneration fund for use via Local Authorities</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ring-fencing a dedicated regeneration fund for use via local community organisations</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Prioritising sustainable economic growth</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Prioritising health and wellbeing</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Prioritising planning and physical infrastructure development</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2: SURF Sponsors

SURF is grateful to its nine key sponsoring organisations for 2010. SURF sponsors provide the organisation with much of the resources it needs to maintain its political and financial independence, and to continue to further develop its activities programme.
Appendix 3: Special Thanks

SURF is also grateful to Burness and the Public Policy Network for additional support in the successful delivery of the 2010 SURF Annual Conference.

Burness

Burness sponsored the electronic voting system used in the second day of the conference.

Burness is one of Scotland’s leading legal firms in the regeneration field, and a long-standing member of SURF.

The focus of their regeneration work is often at a strategic level, and they have carried out innovative work on a number of high-profile projects, working with local authorities and other agencies to develop structures for linking property development with economic development and/or wider social objectives in the context of urban regeneration initiatives. Burness was directly involved in setting the legal framework for five out of the six Urban Regeneration Companies (URCs) designated in Scotland to date.

Burness also advises a number of private sector developers and funders who engage in regeneration projects in partnership with the public sector, bringing with them their understanding of the wider regeneration agenda, and their ability to anticipate and address the likely concerns of public sector partners.

The Burness team includes leading specialists in corporate and contractual frameworks, European Union procurement and state aids, commercial property, planning, construction, funding and environmental law.

Website: www.burness.co.uk

The Public Policy Network provided University of Edinburgh facilities for hosting day one of the conference.

The Public Policy Network, based at the a University of Edinburgh, aims to promote communication and collaboration among researchers, policy-makers in Edinburgh, across Scotland, and beyond. It also serves as a reference point for those looking for an expert opinion on a particular issue.

The Network is directed by Dr Richard Freeman and managed by a small team in the University’s Policy and Planning section.

Public Policy Network activities include:

- Hosting free public sessions with guest speakers to raise and debate issues of common concern to network stakeholders
- Operating working groups to bring together researchers to discuss particular public policy aspects.
- Running a website with an events calendar, individual profiles of University researchers, lists of ongoing policy-related research projects, and links to relevant resources and networks.

Website: www.publicpolicynetwork.ed.ac.uk
Appendix 4: Further Information on SURF

SURF is Scotland’s independent regeneration network.

Aims and objectives

SURF’s overall objective is to improve the health and wellbeing of residents in Scotland’s disadvantaged communities.

To meet this goal, SURF's key aims are:

- To provide a neutral space for all sectors and players in Scottish community regeneration to share their knowledge and experience
- To stimulate challenging debate about community regeneration policy and practice
- To maintain a high status for community regeneration on Scotland’s political agenda
- To provide relevant and constructive feedback to key policy-makers

SURF network

The SURF network aims to be the primary arena for debate on community regeneration in Scotland. It acts as a channel for information, consultation and policy proposals, based on the knowledge and experience of its membership and wider connections.

SURF network activity includes seminars, conferences, international policy exchanges, annual awards for best practice and the distribution of the regeneration policy journal, Scotregen.

This all provides a truly independent network to explore current practice, experience and knowledge, with which to positively influence the development of more successful regeneration policy and practice.

Background

SURF was established in 1992 as a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. It is directed by a board of voluntary directors drawn from across its wide cross-sector membership of over 250 organisations.

SURF members range in size from small community groups to some of Scotland’s largest private companies. Membership organisations also include local authorities, housing associations, health boards, academic institutions, professional bodies, voluntary organisations and charities.

Further information on SURF’s activities, and how to get more involved, is available on our website: www.scotregen.co.uk