

CONTENT

Industry Insight	P3
SPF Annual Dinner 2026 : Recap	P6-8
Policy Bites: current policy work	P10
- Housing (Scotland) Bill - Permitted Development Rights - Compulsory Purchase Orders	

SPF VOICE

Annual Dinner Special

October 2025

Volume 18 Issue 9



Welcome from the Chair

Jonathan Guthrie
Robertson Group

Summer has ended and autumn is speeding toward winter! However the calendar is a busy as ever...

This time of year is always packed with events, conferences and dinners. Among them all, the SPF Annual Dinner was outstanding. For me, highlights of the evening were the insights from Sarah Smith, the Manifesto launch, the Honorary Lifetime Membership award to David Peck and our support for Scotland's return to MIPIM. It was amazing to have so many members and guests in attendance, thank you all for making it such a special event.

The appeal for all sectors to work more closely together seems to have struck a chord. The objectives to jointly deliver change and ramp up industry activity, have been the subject of many meetings and roundtables over the last few weeks. These have included Scottish Government, UK Government, Local Authorities and industry groups.

UK Government, Scotland Office Ministers hosted an event to focus on The High Street, particularly sustainable economic activity in town centres. There was real passion around the table, around why we must work together, between public and private sectors, and also among the various membership organisations

that champion town centre business. We were able to share our Manifesto – Building a Better Scotland, highlighting the three key themes. Follow up is in hand to discuss hot topics for development viability and economic stability.

Similarly, interest around the Stalled (residential) Sites programme has been encouraging. We are working with some Local Authorities, investors and land owners, who are jointly working on new ways of working together. Similarly, the Scotland @ MIPIM Founders are keen to see a collaborative Scotland representation, to champion the need for long term, residential and regeneration investment in Scotland. It is encouraging to see these strands of activity coming together, with a focus on long term, sustainable investment across the country. Please get in touch if you would like to know more about these. We hope you can join Team Scotland at MIPIM in March 2026.

The SPF team are currently planning for the SPF Annual Conference, more on this soon! Other events in the diary include the Holyrood Parliamentary Reception with our members, the regional lunch meetings for Nov / Dec and further engagement with Scottish Government on Certification and Procurement Policies. By the time I pen the next Voice introduction, another major diary event will be my annual fitness assessment, which hopefully is not just a pass or fail!

All the best to you all,

Jonathan

Featured Industry Insight

Build to Rent - Beyond the Housing (Scotland) Bill

By

Will Scarlett

Founder
Scarlett Land and Development

SCOTTISH PROPERTY FEDERATION TEAM

Robin Blacklock
SPF Interim Director
rblacklock@bpf.org.uk

Anamika Dwivedi
Senior Policy Officer
adwivedi@bpf.org.uk

Josie Sclater
Senior Policy Officer
jsclater@bpf.org.uk

Spaces Lochrin Square
92-96 Fountain Bridge
Edinburgh
EH3 9QA

spf@bpf.org.uk
T: 0131 220 6353



"We are delighted to support the Scottish Property Federation again this year for their twelfth annual dinner. The SPF continue to play a vital role in helping to shape our shared ambitions for the whole real estate industry. Now more than ever, collaboration is needed to ensure that everyone in Scotland has a safe, secure and affordable place to call home and that businesses and communities can thrive."



Graeme Steel

**Relationship Director,
Real Estate & Housing**



**BANK OF
SCOTLAND**

Industry Insight



Build To Rent – Beyond the Housing (Scotland) Bill

Will Scarlett

Scarlett Land & Development

It is likely that by end 2025 / early 2026 the Housing (Scotland) Bill will be implemented having completed Stage 3 of in Scottish Parliament and passed through Secondary Legislation. The Bill will contain an “exclusion” for Build To Rent (BTR) and Mid-Market Rent (MMR).

Finally, common sense prevails following the damage done by the introduction of rent control in September 2022. Meanwhile, in England the Renters Reform Bill was passed by Parliament on 22nd October; once implemented it will abolish no-fault evictions, convert all assured tenancies to rolling periodic tenancies and introduce new rules for rent increases (one per year and must be aligned to the local market rate). The Bill brings England in line with the Scottish rental landscape. Given the added uncertainty for developers in England because of the “Gateway planning” system under the Building Safety Act (not applicable in Scotland), funds are once more assessing BTR investment north of the border.

Even with a level playing field, significant challenges remain across the UK in terms of viability due to a combination of construction costs and local regulations. An end to rent control in Scotland is unlikely to be sufficient to re-ignite full-scale BTR investment. Whilst local and

national Government can do little about construction costs, they can adjust regulations to help bring development back to life.

The barrage of policy requirements and regulations means that many flatted BTR schemes will remain unviable. Policy will need to be more flexible if mothballed schemes are to re-commence.

For example, Edinburgh requires developers to provide 35% Affordable Housing in any large scale residential scheme (whether for sale or for rent). This is arguably the biggest drag factor on development appraisals and has strongly contributed to a significant

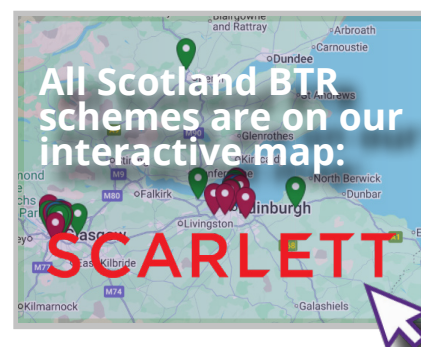
“
Even with a level playing field, significant challenges remain across the UK in terms of viability due to a combination of construction costs and local regulations.

decline in housebuilding in the city. It is a similar situation in London where housing completion numbers have collapsed due to development cost and regulatory burdens. Consequently, the UK government and mayor Sadiq Khan have recently agreed to reduce the percentage of Affordable Housing units required in any development in London from 35% to 20%. The intention is to revitalise development activity. The same needs to happen in Edinburgh – and quickly. Whilst the 35%

requirement is well intentioned, 35% of nothing is nothing.

Single Family Housing (generally two story houses for rent in suburban locations) may be the real beneficiary from rent control exemption given the relative viability of this form of housing development. Unlike Multi-Family Housing (generally high rise flatted apartments in cities), land in the suburbs is cheaper, build costs lower, fire regulations lighter; housing schemes can be phased and are liquid.

Demand for rental housing has grown dramatically in the last decade (2011-2022) which has seen an increase of over 12,000 households in the Private Rental Sector; in part this increase has been driven by the trend to work from home, which has opened up new geographies for many families. In the 2011 census, 11% of households worked from home; in the 2022 census that figure had almost tripled to 31%. With fewer than 550 houses for rent operating in Scotland, compared to 17,000 in England, we expect considerable investor activity in Single Family Housing BTR to satisfy this growing demand for houses to rent.



CBRE Scotland



Matt Willcock
Executive Director
Head of National Office
Leasing
+44 7920 117 257



Steven Newlands
Executive Director
Head of Scotland Capital
Markets
+44 7887 795 501



David Smith
Executive Director
Investment Properties
+44 7718 805 922

CBRE Scotland Planning



Colin Smith
Senior Director
Planning and Development
+44 7967 302 129



Kate Donald
Senior Director
Planning and Development
+44 7464 492 139



Hannah Munro
Senior Planner
Planning and Development
+44 7900 965 249



Alison Ewing
Senior Planner
Planning and Development
+44 7353 102 901



Andrew Strachan
Senior Planner
Planning and Development
+44 7345 472 869



Kerri Atkinson
Planner
Planning and Development
+44 7795 671 472



Building a better future together

Here to help you...

Put safety and sustainability at the heart of your portfolio.

Be informed and prepared to buy, sell or build.

Protect your interests whether you occupy or own.

Realise new beginnings for older buildings.



Dilapidations
MEP Consultancy
Project Management
Project Monitoring
Technical Due Diligence
Sustainability



Find out more
about our
services

SPF Annual Dinner 2025

A Night of Collaboration and Celebration

Earlier this month, on 2 October, over 500 senior figures from across Scotland's real estate sector gathered at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre for the 17th Annual Scottish Property Federation Dinner. The event brought together developers, investors, planners, and policymakers, joined by senior civil servants, city leaders, and MSPs, including Cabinet Secretary for Housing Mairi McAllan MSP, previous Housing Minister, Paul McLennan MSP and Scottish LibDem's Willie Rennie MSP. This event could have not been possible without our sponsors - Bank of Scotland, CBRE, Turley, TFT, Pentland Communications and Womble Bond Dickinson.

It was an evening that celebrated Scotland's property industry, the importance of partnership, and a collective vision for the future.

A Call for Collaboration and Action

Our Chair Jonathan Guthrie set the tone for the evening with a clear and inspiring message: Working Together. Reflecting on the year's theme, Jonathan explored why effecting change within Scotland's built environment remains challenging and, crucially, how progress can only be achieved through "collective collaboration."

He highlighted key policy achievements and SPF's growing influence across the political and regulatory landscape from tracking ministerial changes to hosting roundtables across the country that gathered member insights and industry priorities. These contributions have helped the team shape the SPF Manifesto for the 2026 Scottish Elections.



calls for a renewed partnership between government and industry to foster economic and social renewal across Scotland's towns and cities.

Jonathan credited our constructive engagement on critical legislation, including helping to secure inflation-linked rent controls and exemptions for Build to Rent and Mid-Market Rent homes under the Housing (Scotland) Bill. He also acknowledged the contributions of former Housing Minister Paul McLennan, Cabinet Secretary for Housing Mairi McAllan, and opposition MSP Willie Rennie present in the audience in advancing balanced housing policy and accountability.

BPF Futures: Building Networks and Careers

Jonathan praised BPF Futures for energising the evening with their pre-dinner reception kindly sponsored by Addleshaw Goddard.



He highlighted the mentoring programme's role in supporting junior professionals and matching them with industry veterans who offer practical guidance and encouragement throughout a pivotal six-month period.

Jonathan concluded by encouraging a greater sense of collaboration and called on attendees to build the next generation of Scotland's homes, retail centres, workplaces, and vital infrastructure together. "Let's go to MIPIM," he urged, "and find the scale of operators and investors we need to deliver Scotland's ambitions."

Building a Better Scotland

One of the highlights of the evening was the official launch of the SPF Manifesto, "Building a Better Scotland," ahead of next year's elections. Setting out industry



priorities under three core themes: viability, urban regeneration and planning, and a tax and regulatory reset - the manifesto

Trusted independent advisors with restless ambition to shape a more sustainable future across Scotland

Offering expert services for the built environment and beyond, our team deliver places and communities that thrive



Gordon Thomson

Director, Head of Scotland
gordon.thomson@turley.co.uk



Christine Dalziel

Director,
Planning
christine.dalziel@turley.co.uk



Hannah Tweedie

Associate Director,
Heritage & Townscape
hannah.tweedie@turley.co.uk



Mary McCabe

Senior Planner
mary.mccabe@turley.co.uk



Jessica Powell

Senior Planner
jessica.powell@turley.co.uk



Iona Sutherland

Planner
iona.sutherland@turley.co.uk



Michael Bruce

Planner
michael.bruce@turley.co.uk



Christabel Walker

Assistant Consultant,
Heritage & Townscape
christabel.walker@turley.co.uk



turley.co.uk



linkedin.com/company/turley

Honouring Industry Leadership

The evening's celebrations continued with the presentation of the SPF Lifetime Achievement Award to David Peck, Managing Director of Buccleuch Property, recognising his outstanding contribution to Scotland's property industry. With a career spanning over three decades, he led SPF in 2011-12 and has grown Buccleuch through sustained leadership and innovation, driving major developments including Hanwood Park, one of the UK's largest urban extensions and fostering partnerships with Native Land on landmark projects in London and Edinburgh.



After-Dinner Reflections with Sarah Smith



As the evening drew to a close, anticipation built for the after-dinner speech from Sarah Smith, whose career as the BBC's North America

correspondent has placed her at the heart of seismic political events. Smith riveted more than 500 guests as she recounted her experiences covering recent news in the United States and her anecdotes from US president Donald Trump to the wider anxieties shaping Western democracies today.

Her remarks were both sobering and utterly engrossing, reminding listeners of the fragility and resilience of democratic institutions across the Atlantic. Smith's distinctive ability to blend sharp insight with empathy made the conversation feel deeply personal. She drew on vivid encounters from the campaign trail and behind the scenes at the world's most watched political moments, illustrating the challenges facing journalism and society in the digital age.

Guests left Sarah Smith's segment energised and reflective, concluding a night rich in celebration with an honest assessment of the global forces shaping Scotland's future - a true highlight of the Annual Dinner programme.

As the evening came to an end, the room buzzed with conversations and laughter. We would like to thank everyone who attended and for making this event the success it was.

Watch this space!

Save the date for SPF Annual Conference 2026!

We will be announcing details soon!



NEW PROBLEMS NEED NEW PERSPECTIVES

We're proud to sponsor the SPF Annual Dinner, which continues to be a cornerstone event for Scotland's real estate community. We deliver full lifecycle legal support across all asset classes UK-wide and internationally. From urban regeneration to national infrastructure, we help clients unlock value and drive impact.



Check out our landmark
BTR report: Building Blocks



WOMBLE
BOND
DICKINSON

Policy Insights

Housing (Scotland) Bill Stage 3 Update

The Residential Investment and Management Committee met last week, joined by representatives from the Scottish Government's Rent Control Team and Scottish National Investment Bank (SNIB). This was the first meeting since the conclusion of the Housing (Scotland) Bill, with discussion focused on the next steps for secondary legislation.

Work to finalise the exemptions framework is expected to conclude early in the new year. As these details are developed - particularly those relating to Build to Rent - the SPF will continue to engage with government to ensure that industry perspectives are fully reflected, and that the resulting regulations are clear, consistent, and practical in their application.

This marks an important new phase in housing policy, moving from legislation to delivery and defining how Rent Control Areas will operate in practice across Scotland's rental markets.

Our Response to Permitted Development Rights for more homes consultation

On Monday, 27 October, we submitted our response to the Scottish Government's consultation on Permitted Development Rights (PDR) aimed at supporting the provision of new homes and for proportionate modernisation of PDR that aligns with the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and local development plans, while maintaining the plan-led system and design quality.

A key focus of our response was the importance of rural repopulation, urging that future PDR reforms explicitly recognise demographic sustainability consistent with NPF4's spatial strategy. We proposed modest flexibility in increasing the current limit on residential units per agricultural or forestry holding in depopulated areas, alongside safeguards for design, infrastructure, and landscape. And also called for national guidance to ensure consistency in policy implementation.

On urban matters, we backed PDR measures to enable residential conversions in town and city centres, stressing a need for design-led approaches with minimum space, fire safety, and ventilation standards to safeguard housing quality and urban vibrancy. Recommending retaining mixed-use flexibility and managing impacts on residents.

Further, we supported simplifications to prior approval processes, encouraged extending PDR to certain rural buildings, and advocated for measures facilitating connections to low-carbon heat networks.

You can read our full response [here](#).

Consultation on Compulsory Purchase Orders

The Scottish Government is consulting on reforming Scotland's compulsory purchase laws, recognising the need to modernise this legislation. The consultation seeks views on reforms aimed at simplifying and updating the statutory powers that enable public bodies to acquire land, streamlining confirmation procedures, and improving early engagement with landowners.

We acknowledge the importance of these reforms in making compulsory purchase orders a more effective tool to support housing delivery, community regeneration, and infrastructure development. The consultation also proposes modernising how possession and title transfer, alongside enhancing fairness and clarity in compensation arrangements for affected landowners.

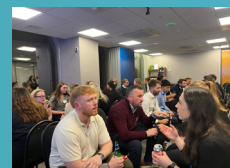
The paper explores new powers designed to address long-term vacant or derelict land, including the introduction of **Compulsory Lease Orders** and **Compulsory Sales Orders**. These proposals were introduced after the Stage 2 of Housing (Scotland) Bill. We have carefully considering member concerns on this matter including the determination of rent, the mechanisms available when parties cannot agree on terms, and the potential impacts on ongoing private contractual relationships and will be discussing the details of these with officials along with Planning & Development and Commercial Real Estate committee members on 5 November.

The new Compulsory Purchase Act expected to be introduced in the next parliamentary session. You can read the consultation paper in full [here](#). If you have any views or questions contact us at spf@bpf.org.uk.



BPF Futures Autumn Speed Networking

BPF Futures was back this month with one of its most popular events- Speed Networking! This high-energy session gave attendees the chance to connect with nearly everyone in the room through a series of 4-minute, focused one-to-one conversations. A huge thank you to Harper Macleod for generously hosting and sponsoring the event at their Glasgow office. If you would like to sponsor a BPF Futures event to support the next generation of real estate professionals, please email futures@bpf.org.uk.





Client focused, objective led, results driven

It's all about relationships!

- Councillors

- Local authority officers

- Members of Parliament

- Members of Scottish Parliament

- Community groups / Local residents / Community councils

- Local media

E: barriecunning@pentlandcomms.co.uk
pentlandcomms.co.uk

