

## Scottish Home Zones Survey - Summary Findings: *Active involvement from new-build developers*

More than three years on from the announcement of the four Scottish home zone pilot schemes, it could seem that little has happened, with progress slow or non-existent, and Dundee, the only one of the schemes with anything actually on the ground. Why is this? Is the Home Zone a example of an idea that has been imposed from abroad, and from above, and is the lack of progress in the pilot schemes a result of this? The high level of interest in the Scottish Home Zone conferences held in 1999 and 2002 would suggest not, and the Home Zones Scotland Network decided it would be worth trying to find out what, if anything was going on on the Home Zone front elsewhere in Scotland.

### The survey

In late 2003, we surveyed every Scottish local authority, and as comprehensive a list of builders, housing developers, architects, landscape architects, urban designers and housing associations as we could put together. In all, 478 surveys were sent out, and 65 returned. The survey was designed to assess whether respondents were involved in 'home zone type' developments, defined according to the inclusion of certain characteristics, rather than whether the developments held the official label of 'home zone'.

### The results:

#### *Interest from new-build developers*

While the percentage return was small, at 13%, the surveys returned yielded some interesting results. Of the 65 surveys returned, 17 claimed an active involvement in a 'home zone type' project. Of these 17, three were actually completed, one was in progress, and 11 were still at the planning stage, while in two cases it was not possible to determine their rating. It is significant that the vast majority of the 17 are new build housing association projects. There are a few local authority developments, and a few of the projects relate to existing rather than new build areas. None of the



surveys returned related to private housing developments.

Many of the respondents, whether or not they were actively involved in a 'home zone type' development were interested in the concept, and interested in attending the

forthcoming conference in February.

The importance of enthusiasm, knowledge, and a will to find solutions to problems on the part of all the parties involved in such projects was flagged up, even in the case of new build developments, generally seen as far more straight forward and less costly than adapting existing streets. The major obstacles were seen as: difficulties in getting roads consent, including persuading local authority highway officers to deviate from traditional roads guidelines; lack of relevant design experience; lack of confidence that prospective residents (including older people and disabled people) would want to live in such a development. Lack of funding was seen as an almost insuperable barrier to one adaptation of existing neighbourhoods.

## Conclusions

The results of this survey should not be treated as gospel. The returns, and even the original distribution list are not sufficiently complete. However, the survey has yielded some interesting and important information, and revealed that the home zone concept is alive, and well in Scotland.

## The 4 local authority pilot projects

**Aberdeen** - Alexander Terrace in the Tillydrone area of the city. This will complement other regeneration projects: traffic calming, football and basketball pitches, communal wheelie-bins, and a fenced-off play area.

**Dundee** - a new housing development on the old Royal Infirmary site will become a pilot Home Zone. The project will incorporate specially designed roads and a large play area linked to adjoining housing estates.

**Edinburgh** - west of the City Centre in the Caledonian Crescent area (off Dalry Road), the aim is to create a higher quality of life for local people by reclaiming the streets for community use: more pleasing streetscapes, green areas, seating and play equipment will all feature.

**Highland** - the Ormlie area on the edge of Thurso. This will be in partnership with Ormlie Regeneration and the Social Inclusion Partnership and will be developed in three phases. Traffic calming and a play area have already been introduced. Future plans include carriageway works, planting and opening up greenspace. Phase three is in development.

## "Actively involvement" in developing Home Zones:

According to this survey, Home Zones (in addition to the 'official' pilots in Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh and Highland - see above) are being actively planned or implemented in the following local authority areas:

**Dumfries**  
**Dundee**  
**East Dunbarton**  
**East Lothian**  
**Fife**  
**Glasgow**  
**Highland**  
**Inverclyde**  
**Stirling**  
**West Lothian**

Some of these have more than one area planned.

Many, but not all, of these are new-build. The majority are housing association developments. The two developers that responded to the survey as being actively involved were Bennetts and Kings - but there will be others.

**HomeZones**  
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