

REPORT

To: HOUSING COMMITTEE		Subject: POSITIVE ACTION IN HOUSING LIMITED
From: DIRECTOR OF HOUSING		
Date: 13 NOVEMBER 1995	Ref.: GSW/MR	

1.1. *Introduction*

1.1. The purpose of this report is to consider affiliation to Positive Action in Housing Ltd.

2. *Background*

2.1. Positive Action in Housing Limited is a non-profit making organisation established in June 1995 for the benefit of:

- people from ethnic minority communities in Scotland who are in acute housing need; and
- housing providers in the public and social rented sectors who are seeking advice, practical guidance and training on meeting those needs.

2.2. The organisation is committed to working with communities and housing providers in Scotland to enable everyone to have an equal chance to live in good quality, affordable and safe housing, free from discrimination and the fear of racial harassment and violence.

2.3. Both the Scottish Office and Scottish Homes have committed funding to support the organisation and over 60 Housing Associations and ethnic minority organisations have now affiliated. Positive Action in Housing Limited by letter of 7 November 1995 has invited North Lanarkshire Council as one of the four largest public sector housing organisations in Scotland to affiliate (Appendix 1). The cost of affiliation for the current year is £2,500.

3. *Conclusions and Recommendation*

3.1. The broad aims and objectives of the organisation are extremely worthwhile and affiliation would provide access to a research resource which could be useful to ensure that the specific housing needs of ethnic minority communities are taken full account of in formulating future housing strategies for North Lanarkshire. In addition the organisation could be used to audit proposed housing policies to ensure that they adequately addressed all sectors of the community.

I would therefore recommend that the Council should confirm its support for Positive Action in Housing Limited by agreeing to affiliate for financial year 1996/97 and make appropriate provision in the revenue estimates for this purpose.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G S Whitefield', with a stylized flourish at the end.

G S Whitefield

Encl.

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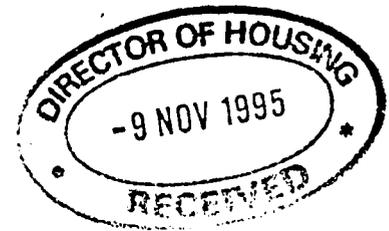


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Positive Action in Housing is working with communities and housing providers in Scotland to enable everyone to have an equal chance to live in good quality, affordable and safe housing, free from discrimination and the fear of racial harassment and violence

7 November 1995

Mr Gavin Whitefield
Director of Housing
North Lanarkshire Council
Civic Centre
Motherwell ML1 1TW



Dear Gavin,

Affiliation to Positive Action in Housing Ltd

I am writing to you to ask North Lanarkshire Council to affiliate to the setting up of a new organisation working in the field of housing for people from ethnic minority communities.

Positive Action in Housing Limited is a national membership-led organisation of ethnic minority organisations and housing providers. We are working with communities and housing providers in Scotland to enable everyone to have an equal chance to live in good quality affordable and safe housing, free from discrimination and the fear of racial harassment and violence.

Our main aims are to:

- Provide housing advice and information, to people from ethnic minority communities who are in acute housing need.
- Assist vulnerable groups and individuals within ethnic minority communities who are living in deprived and/or inner city areas, and/or whom local authority housing policies have adversely affected, to express and participate in meeting the housing needs of their communities.

Our current membership includes ethnic minority organisations and housing associations from all over Scotland.

Promoting Equality in Housing

A Bit of Background...

As you may be aware, Positive Action in Housing Limited's predecessor, the Housing Equality Action Unit (HEAU) has:

- organised and facilitated four major race & housing conferences,
- published several best practice publications for housing providers,
- worked with ethnic minority communities to develop community-based campaigns and support groups and brought national media attention to the problems of racial harassment and unsuitable housing provision affecting people from ethnic minority communities in Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow
- provided an incisive race perspective to Scottish Homes' policy development work, and, through working with ethnic minority organisations nationally catalysed some level of change in persuading Scottish Homes to develop its first ethnic minority housing policy.

We therefore are an organisation with a track record that we can all be proud of.

Please Affiliate

The work of the HEAU and now Positive Action in Housing Limited consistently shows that housing is and will remain a major concern for people from ethnic minority communities in Scotland. Hence a firm need for a campaigning, advice-giving organisation that is led by its members: housing providers, ethnic minority organisations and affected individuals.

We would like your organisation to show your support by becoming a member of Positive Action in Housing Ltd.

What Will You Get for Your Affiliation Fee?

- The Provision of Housing Information and Advice:*

our fees will directly assist those for whom language, culture and colour act as a disadvantage to their housing opportunities. You will have direct access to an Agency which can represent, interpret for and lobby for effective solutions for your existing and future tenants.

- Research into Race & Housing Issue:* Establishing the specific housing needs of the ethnic minority community is often a difficult task for housing associations and we can provide either the research findings or work with you in drawing up research briefs, accessing funds and even carrying out the research. We can also provide you with access to up-to-date research findings on both national and local issues.
- free and discounted publications
- special rates for conferences, training & seminars
- access to an influential network of housing providers and community organisations concerned with race & housing issues

- quarterly newsletter and regular briefings
- The right to stand for election to committee

So far, over sixty Scottish housing associations and ethnic minority organisations have affiliated to Positive Action in Housing Ltd, raising a total of £11,500. Both the Scottish Office and Scottish Homes' HomePoint have committed funding over three years as a demonstration of their support for the project. We now seek affiliation from the four main local authorities.

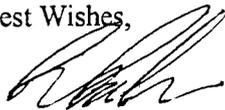
I enclose a copy of our Business Plan, *Strong Roots to Grow From...*, our recent conference report *Testing Good Intentions* and details of membership benefits. If you, wish, a member of our committee or staff would be happy to meet with you and discuss the benefits of affiliation.

In conclusion may I suggest that you put Positive Action in Housing to the test. Give it a chance in the first two years to make a success of its objectives. Help the new agency by ensuring that it does not have to operate on a shoestring budget. Allow Positive Action in Housing to make the most of the government money committed so far.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best Wishes,

P.R.



Robina Qureshi
Coordinator