



Scottish Environment

LINK



Association of Scottish  
Community Councils

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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## **New Coalition asks Parliament to get real on planning.**

Scottish Environment Link has joined forces with the Association of Scottish Community Councils to fire a broadside against the Executive's planning white paper.

Together, they have launched a petition to the Parliament calling for the introduction of a limited third party right of appeal within the planning system – rather than the feeble promise of more opportunities to express an opinion offered by the Executive.

The petition also insists that all planning decisions, especially those related to the proposed National Planning Framework, must be open to challenge and public inquiry. The two groups will be working throughout the summer to gather as many signatories as possible before the issue goes back to Parliament in the autumn.

On launching the petition, Anne McCall, Convener of Scottish Environment LINK's planning task force said - "The white paper is a mess. The new system would allow people to express their view of a planning proposal - but give no real weight to their opinion. It would still be the case that the developer had rights of appeal, where objectors would be left almost powerless. The opportunity to put some fairness and balance into planning is being thrown away."

Douglas Murray of the Association of Scottish Community Councils said – "The ASCC position is simple. Community Councils want stronger powers for their communities and accountability from both local and national government. The White Paper does not deliver on either nor does it allow communities sufficient safeguards on decisions made against their wishes or even where the Local Authority makes an error. The Scottish Parliament has the power to make these changes, and this petition gives notice of our intentions.'

### **Editors Notes**

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ASCC Secretary: 01356 623330

1. Scottish Environment Link comprises 36 member bodies representing over 500,000 members in Scotland. Further information about LINK is available from [www.scotlink.org](http://www.scotlink.org) and further information about the campaign is available from [www.everyonecan.org](http://www.everyonecan.org)

2. The Association of Scottish Community councils represents approximately 650 Community Councils across Scotland. Further details are available on the ASCC website <http://www.ascc.org.uk/index.html>

3. The white paper "Modernising the Planning System" was published on the 29 June. During the original consultation on widening the rights of appeal in the planning process 86% of respondents supported a limited third party right of appeal.

4. Paper forms of the petition are available from: Scottish Environment LINK 2 Grosvenor House Shore Road Perth PH2 8BD Tel: (01738) 630804 Fax (01738) 643290, email: [enquiries@scotlink.org](mailto:enquiries@scotlink.org) and an electronic version can be signed at <http://epetitions.scottish.parliament.uk/viewtopic.asp?TopicID=66>

5. The text of the petition reads as follows:

**We, the undersigned, call upon the Scottish Parliament to seek to secure real rights for all in the planning system by ensuring that the forthcoming Planning Bill will:**

- establish real and effective rights for people to have their views taken into account on planning decisions and conditions, through the introduction of a limited third party right of appeal in the planning system, rather than just more opportunities to express opinions; and
- ensure that all strategic planning decisions taken by Government at the national level, including the National Planning Framework, will be open to challenge and public inquiry.