

**Date:** 16 February 2011  
**Consultation:** Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister  
Budget Proposals

## Introduction

The Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations (NIFHA) represents registered and non-registered housing associations in Northern Ireland. Collectively, our members provide 34,000 good quality, affordable homes for renting or equity sharing. Further information is available at [www.nifha.org](http://www.nifha.org)

## Comments

The Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations (NIFHA) welcomes this opportunity to comment on the content of the draft budget. We note with interest that the Executive's new Social Investment Fund will provide an additional £20m per annum to support Executive projects and to tackle disadvantage. However, we are concerned that the budget does not indicate the type of projects that will be financed under this fund.

NIFHA were broadly supportive of a number of initiatives which were proposed within the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration consultation, which took place in 2010. Our Federation supports the funding of a number of the initiatives outlined in the document, such as those that assist people to live in shared future communities; we have highlighted those initiatives in our response to the consultation. NIFHA hopes that the finalised programme will still contain proposals to deliver the themes contained in chapter 2 of the programme. Of particular interest are the proposals concerning community participation and engagement, developing shared spaces and encouraging shared neighbourhoods.

Our Federation is also encouraged to see that driving investment and sustainable development remains a priority in this budget as we believe that these should assist in stimulating economic growth and we hope they therefore will have a much needed positive impact on our construction industry.

NIFHA recognises that there may be challenging times ahead, not only for our political leaders but for all of us in Northern Ireland. We hope that by working in partnership together that we can effectively deliver the key themes of a peaceful, fair, equal, socially inclusive and prosperous society.

I hope you find our comments useful please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information or clarification on any of the points raised in this consultation response.

**Submitted on behalf of NIFHA by:**

**Maire Kerr, Housing Policy and Research Manager**

*NIFHA – Working Together for Better Housing*

Join *today* as an [Associate](#) of NIFHA

**A:** 6c Citylink Business Park, Albert Street, Belfast, BT12 4HB **T:** 028 9089 7695  
**F:** 028 9023 8057

**E:** [MKerr@nifha.org](mailto:MKerr@nifha.org) **W:** [www.nifha.org](http://www.nifha.org)

 **Consider the environment; please don't print this email unless you really need to.**

**Disclaimer:** This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they are addressed. Any disclosure, copying, distribution or any action taken or omitted to be taken in reliance on it, is prohibited and may be unlawful. If you have received this email in error please notify the system manager. Please note that any views or opinions presented in this email are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations (NIFHA). Finally, the recipient should check this email and any attachments for the presence of viruses. NIFHA accepts no liability for any damage caused by any virus transmitted by this email.

Company Number: NI 11996 Registered in Northern Ireland.