

Clerk to the Communities and Local Government Committee  
7 Millbank  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1P 3JA

02 September 2014

Dear Sir/Madam,

### **Communities and Local Government Inquiry into Community Rights**

1. The Carnegie UK Trust is pleased to respond to this inquiry. The Trust works to improve the lives of people throughout the UK and Ireland by changing minds through influencing policy and by changing lives through innovative practice and partnership work.
2. Throughout our 100 year history the Trust has been a supporter and advocate of community rights
3. For the last 18 months, under the leadership of Carnegie Fellow Sir John Elvidge the Trust has been exploring [the rise of the Enabling State](#) a set of 7 key policy shifts that give communities and individual more control and that are present in each of 5 jurisdictions of the UK and Ireland.
4. Following extensive research and consultation we have published our final recommendations report [A Route Map to an Enabling State](#) which sets out 8 steps that government can take to give communities more control and make it a success.
5. We are pleased to share our insights with this inquiry.

### **Background**

6. There is a changing relationship between state and citizen across the UK.
7. Governments are increasingly aware of the limitations of traditional 'top down' models of public services, particularly in improving complex and intractable social problems.
8. In response there has been a paradigm shift toward policies and measures that give citizens and communities more control over their own lives, their own wellbeing and the wellbeing of their local communities.
9. We have found that while the move toward an Enabling State opens up important opportunities for individuals and communities it also presents risks. One of the most significant risks is that those least able to take advantage of increased opportunities for control are left further and further behind.

Andrew Carnegie House, Pittencrieff Street, Dunfermline, Fife, Scotland, KY12 8AW

Tel: +44 (0)1383 721445 | Fax: +44 (0)1383 749799

Honorary President: William Thomson CBE | Chair: Angus M Hogg | Chief Executive: Martyn Evans  
Carnegie United Kingdom Trust. Incorporated by Royal Charter 1917. Scottish Charity No: SC 012799 operating in the UK and Ireland.

## A package of measures

10. So how can we give communities more control and make it a success? Legislative rights such as the Community Rights contained within the Localism Act –giving communities rights to assets and a greater role in the development of their local area are a critical step. In Scotland, for example, we have seen the transformative impact that community ownership has had with the legislative underpinning of the 2003 Land Reform (Scotland) Act. Half a million acres of land are now in community ownership in Scotland.
11. Legislative rights on their own are however not sufficient – they should form part of a larger package of measures and policies. With this in mind our recommendations for governments are also to:
  - **Get out of the way:** governments must stop doing the things that discourage or prevent individuals, families and communities from exercising control over their own lives or contributing to shared wellbeing.
  - **Give permission:** create a stronger presumption in favour of the benefits of control and engagement.
  - **Help people to help each other:** facilitate mutual support within and between communities. This may be as simple as bringing people together to share experiences.
  - **Give people help to do more:** boost community capacity by giving communities more scope to acquire assets.
  - **Make enabling 'the new normal:** build in a presumption of engagement into all new government policies.
  - **Invest in disadvantaged communities:** give everyone a fair chance to engage with an Enabling State (and to take advantage of the new opportunities offered by community rights) by making additional support available to disadvantaged communities.
  - **Focus on wellbeing:** a strategic focus on outcomes and on the full range of environmental, social and economic factors that make our lives worth living rather than process and input helps create the conditions for the holistic, flexible and preventative approach taken by an Enabling State.

We hope that you find these insights helpful. If you would like to discuss our response, or would like to find out more about our work please contact me Jenny Brotchie, Policy Officer at [jenny@carneгиеuk.org](mailto:jenny@carneгиеuk.org) or by telephone 01383 721 445.

Yours sincerely,



Jenny Brotchie, Policy Officer