



SCOTTISH OFFICE
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AU

The Rt Hon Norman Fowler MP
Secretary of State for Social Services
Department of Health and Social Security
Alexander Fleming House
Elephant & Castle
LONDON
SE1 6BY

3 December 1986

NBPN

Dear Norman,

**ABOLITION OF DOMESTIC RATES ETC (SCOTLAND) BILL
COMMUNITY CHARGE REGISTRATION: EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION**

Thank you for your letter of 26 November about the difficulties envisaged in providing information from social security records for Community Charge Registration.

A number of comments on our proposals have identified social security recipients as likely to constitute a difficult group of residents to deal with in terms of registration; it would clearly be very useful to be able to say that social security records would be available to the registration officer as a long stop to prevent people evading the net. However, I accept that this could present difficulties for your local offices and will require further discussion between our officials. In those discussions account should be taken of the argument that the continuation of the present arrangements for exchanging information would also do much to ease the administrative burden of operating the community charge rebate scheme.

I know that a meeting to discuss housing benefit administration will be held with the local authority associations on 4 December. I hope that you can agree that pending further consideration by our officials, our options in the exchange of information should not be closed off at this stage.

I am copying this letter to members of E(LF) and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Jan [unclear]
Malcolm Rifkind

MALCOLM RIFKIND

LOCAL GOVT: Rates: PLS.

