



Debbie Ward
Chief executive, Dorset County Council

Tackling challenges head on – Dorset's approach



Dorset is a beautiful part of England with a reputation for fabulous coastline, countryside and as a holiday or film destination. It is all those things and so much more. We have a world-class engineering and aviation industrial base, a strong digital economy, airport, universities, growth potential, and an ambitious local government. We are unwilling to settle for just trying to cushion the impact of austerity and manage the reduction of services. So what is our approach?

Significant challenges

Dorset has a population of around 800,000 and people face a range of urban and rural challenges. Despite the picture postcard backdrop, there are significant levels of deprivation in our county. Indeed, Dorset faces many challenges: education; growing demands on children's services; high housing costs and low house building; lower than the national average gross value-added; major social care demands – 25% of the population is over 65; and all the characteristics of a seasonally driven economy.

Dorset is a popular holiday destination for many but the local population faces significant levels of deprivation

Across the local government sector, our funding has reduced by about a third since 2010, and, in common with other parts of the country, we face further cuts. The impact has varied across the different organisations in Dorset, but we took the view that it was the community that mattered. As a result we have focused on what our collective spending can achieve, with less time spent on bureaucracy and more focus on outcomes.

Better together

Dorset has a rich tapestry of local government bodies, with six district councils, two unitary councils and a county council – plus town and parish councils. We have a good history of working in partnership, but recognised this was not enough if we were to meet our aspirations and deal with the challenges of eight years of austerity.

We knew that striking formal agreements between organisations would cost months of time and governance – even when we had agreement in principle.

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Consequently, we didn't want to waste time fighting the battles of 'who got what funding' with the government for much longer. Also, we wanted to cut through the district-county-unitary narrative that is still evident in many places.

This led us to consider both the devolution and combined authority models, which gained support and shape in 2014/15. We even dared to dream of a Manchester-style devolution deal, submitting a combined authority proposal. However, with national policy being slow to crystallise, we couldn't wait and looked for other options.

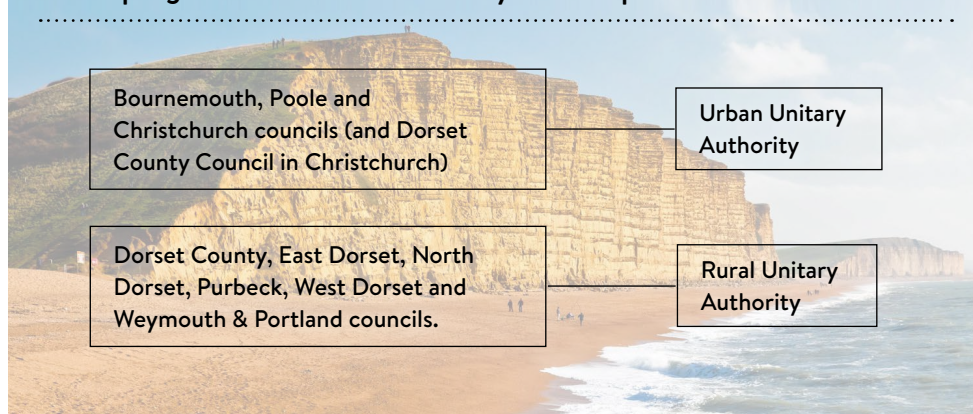
Future Dorset

After many calculations and discussions, we finally submitted a proposal to the government in February 2017 to combine the existing nine councils into two new unitary councils (see graphic). Our proposal 'Future Dorset' had the support of business, public sector colleagues and across the local population. Importantly, it had full agreement of six of the nine local authorities.

So how did we do this? We set out a clear ambition to transform services across the county in the new authorities. This included improving the economy and our digital capacity. We also focused on building more affordable housing,

"Our ambition was to maximize local authority capacity to tackle inequality. Along the way we would also save £25 million per annum."

Reshaping Dorset's local authority landscape



as well as working towards delivering a Sustainability and Transformation Plan with health colleagues. Our ambition was to maximize local authority capacity to tackle inequality. Along the way we would also save around £25 million per annum with greater potential for transformational approaches.

The road ahead

In February 2018 the Minister for Housing, Communities and Local Government decided to support our plans and we now have just 12 months to set up the new organisations. Thankfully, we didn't stand still in the year since we submitted our Future Dorset proposal. We formed joint committees to cross the new authorities with all nine represented, and eight of the nine councils now support or accept the decision to create two new councils for Dorset.

We have also demonstrated the

potential for our systems to work across health and social care, using our health and wellbeing boards. Working with our Dorset clinical commissioning group has enabled us to ensure a collective focus across all council services on improving the health of our population.

It has been a difficult process, requiring both patience and determination and it may not be the right solution for other areas. As we count down to the new authorities and the transformational opportunities, our ambitions remain high.

I know the formal process will take time, but I believe we are creating the opportunity for a new model of local government, with much greater resilience for a future as a strong and successful a county.

To discuss the issues raised in this article, contact

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James Palmer
*Mayor, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough
Combined Authority*

Using our clout to maximise affordable housing



Last year the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority received £170 million from central government to spend on bringing forward 2,500 affordable homes by March 2022. Of the money, £70 million has been ring-fenced for Cambridge City Council to decide how to bring about 500 additional affordable homes.

The remaining £100 million will be spent by the Combined Authority on at least 2,000 affordable homes across the rest of the area (see box, overleaf: In numbers). In particular, we will seek to deliver affordable housing that supplements the existing development pipeline and to accelerate developments that are identified in existing local plans. We will focus on strategic sites and those sites that are ready and/or had previously been stalled.

The government has given combined authorities a degree of freedom to determine their own approach, but the new homes must be genuinely affordable. So how best can this £100 million be spent?

Key principles

For me there are three key guiding principles that should determine this. First, it should promote affordable housing that is in addition to the existing development pipeline and accelerate delivery of current growth within adopted local plans. This is set out in the Strategic Spatial Planning Framework adopted by the Combined Authority in March 2018.

Second, our ambition is to be creative using a range of financial delivery mechanisms such as loans, joint ventures, infrastructure investment to unlock development,



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and acquisition of stalled sites. This aims to create a revolving fund that will outlast the five-year programme and enable us to meet the longer-term target of an additional 100,000 homes by 2037.

To achieve this target I hope the Combined Authority's track record of delivery will encourage the government to provide further affordable housing funding.

Third, and a very important point for me, is that the money is used to promote homeownership across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

It is wrong that young people today too often struggle to get a foot on the property ladder and as mayor

I'm determined to do something about it. In the

medium to long term, I've made clear my view that land value capture can play a key role in the south of the county in bringing forward new transport corridors to support thousands of new homes.

However, in the short term, increasing opportunities for

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's affordable housing plan aims to make homeownership, an attainable goal for young couples in the county

homeownership can be achieved in a number of ways. I'm keen to work with developers to explore ways of providing discounted homes for first-time buyers – essentially our own starter home scheme.

My aim would be for a young couple in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to buy their first two-bed home for around £100,000. Currently there is no way this would be possible in the vast majority of our county.

Community Land Trusts

I'm also keen for the Combined Authority to back the spread of Community Land Trusts (CLTs). Last month the Combined Authority approved a commercial loan of £6.5 million for 60 new homes in Haddenham in East Cambridgeshire – around 20 of which will be CLT affordable units for rent at approximately 60% of market rent.

The Combined Authority is also exploring the possibility of a longer-term, 10-year commercial loan of £40 million to East Cambs Trading Company (wholly owned by East Cambridgeshire District Council) to bring forward 1,830 new

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"I'm keen that we work with developers to explore ways of providing discounted homes for first-time buyers."

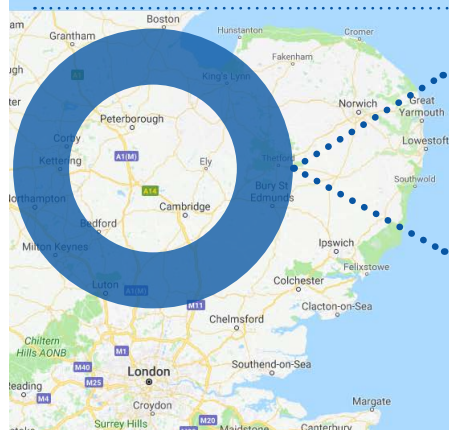
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homes over the next 10 years. Of these, 553 will be CLT affordable homes to rent.

The great thing about these schemes is that they are part-funded through land value capture. The land on which the homes will be built lies outside the development envelope and the new market homes will essentially pay for the CLT units. This concept was successful in Stretham when I was leader of East Cambridgeshire District Council. The East Cambs Trading Company will pay back the Combined Authority, meaning there will be no cost to the taxpayer.

Community support

By and large the CLTs are also supported within their communities, as they prioritise people who live and work locally. Those who are on low incomes, between around £16,000-£25,000, who are often not eligible for traditional social rent but who are also unable to get on the property ladder, qualify for CLT homes. This provides breathing space to save for a deposit to buy their own home, if they so wish.

In numbers: affordable homes for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough



£170 million
to bring forward 2,500
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March 2022

£70 million
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Cambridge City
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500 affordable
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£100 million
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Combined Authority
on at least 2,000
affordable homes
across the rest of
the area

100,000
Combined Authority's
target of additional
homes by 2037

The Combined Authority clearly recognises its responsibility to address homelessness across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough by investing in more traditional forms of social rent and will work with housing associations on this and other affordable housing schemes.

However, I'm also keen that we explore all avenues to find ways to promote homeownership across the county and one way to do this is to use our

borrowing powers. Ultimately, the Combined Authority has a responsibility to develop a housing strategy that is varied, innovative and ambitious in catering for all sections of society, from the most needy, to those struggling on low incomes and those aspiring to own their own home.

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Geoff Raw
Chief executive, Brighton & Hove City Council

Brighton & Hove venture



Increasing the supply of housing which is affordable to local communities has risen rapidly up the policy agendas of political parties of all persuasions at national and local levels. Those in housing need may be forgiven for asking their political representatives and public servants 'how difficult can it be to fix this problem?'.

If money, development capacity and the politics of planning places were no object, the reply might be 'not difficult at all'. But as I know from many years working to plan, fund and develop affordable housing schemes, sadly life ain't so simple!

Challenges manifest differently in every locality, but here are some insights from our experiences in Brighton & Hove.

Housing demand

First, some local context: housing in Brighton & Hove is in high demand. This is due to a combination of it being a beautiful place to live, having a growing economy and there being constraints on developable land. Consequently house prices and rents have risen

steadily and the average cost of homeownership is more than 13 times average incomes. Nearly 60% of newly forming households are unlikely to be able to afford entry-level market housing without support. Private sector rents have also risen, with demand heightened by a vibrant student housing market and the diversion of residential accommodation into short-term holiday lets.

Second, planning teams have found it increasingly difficult to secure affordable homes through scheme negotiations, valuation tests and housing association subsidy. Shared ownership homes have flowed, but affordable rented homes have been in much shorter supply.

Third, the pressure on local politicians has continued to increase. Consequently, over the past eight years I have worked with successive administrations to devise innovative ways to improve and increase affordable supply. This work has included establishing a special purpose vehicle, Brighton & Hove Seaside Homes, which helped to bring all our council homes up to the decent homes standard.

Housing is in high demand in Brighton, where the average home costs 13 times the average income

There has also been a New Homes for Neighbourhoods programme aiming to deliver 500 new council homes. Around 50% of these homes are now either complete or in the pipeline, making the council the largest provider of new affordable rented homes in the city.

Living wage homes

But with many thousands of households still in housing need, more is required. This is why we have recently entered a joint venture agreement with Hyde Housing Group to build at least 1,000 'living wage' homes. This project combines the development acumen, supply chain procurement, land acquisition flexibility and housing management skills of Hyde Group with those of the council to address accommodation needs, economic development and employment growth aspirations.

The opportunities and liabilities are shared equally and a joint board of senior Hyde Group directors and senior councillors provides governance and oversight. The legal structure affords greater flexibility and financial sustainability than the council could otherwise achieve. Our own experience, our talented lawyers, finance experts and housing development and management staff, have ensured we have been an equal partner in forging this new joint venture.

The first schemes will come forward for planning approval and start on-site this year. If you would like to find out more, contact Sam Smith in the New Homes for Neighbourhoods office (sam.smith@brighton-hove.gov.uk). Geoff Raw writes in a personal capacity.

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Maggie Rafalowicz
Director, Campbell Tickell

Housing strategy: the return

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Councils used to be required to produce an annual housing strategy, alongside statistical returns and HRA (housing revenue account) Business Plans. Affordable housing grant was distributed according to the Housing Needs Index, which was either uplifted or downgraded according to the quality and implementation of their housing strategy. In the noughties though, central government scrapped the requirement for a housing strategy – even though homelessness and tenancy strategies are now statutory requirements.

With the re-emergence of housing as a top government priority – cue the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government – more councils are developing housing strategies. So what do they look like and why?

Typically, the initial driver for the strategy is a desire for a prospectus for growth. But as consultation gets under way with a wider group of council officers, elected members and residents, it becomes a comprehensive document taking into account a broader range of issues and challenges.

Devolution deals and the advent of combined authorities have brought the need for a strategic approach to housing delivery and its integration with planning and infrastructure development into sharper focus.

Considering the national, regional and local contexts, an effective housing strategy sets the framework for activity and practical measures to achieve housing priorities that align and complement other key activities. In deciding on a strategy, authorities face some critical challenges (see box).

Critical challenges

- Finding sites to deliver growth
- Demographic changes and ageing population
- Limited financial resources and need to obtain maximum output
- Continuing requirement to support vulnerable households and deliver statutory services
- Affordability

Housing has boomeranged as a top priority for government, so more local authorities are developing their housing strategies

Strategy cornerstones

Traditionally the three main components of any housing strategy were:

- Supply – ensuring the right supply of homes (in tenures, types and sizes) in the right locations for the right needs and at the right price;
- Quality – improving service provision including the needs of vulnerable clients, the condition of the housing stock across tenures and neighbourhoods;
- Affordability – whereas once the focus of housing strategies used to be on those in greatest housing need, the cost of housing now means that this is an issue which touches a much wider segment of the population.

These components remain the cornerstones, but ultimately a comprehensive strategy should support the economic, cultural and community ambitions that create a place in which people want to live, learn, work and play.

So, what does a comprehensive and effective housing strategy look like, and how do we get there?

1 Vision: This will link to wider corporate priorities and the strategic context in which a council and its partners operate.

2 Evidence: The first stage is to compile a robust evidence base on which to build the strategy. This would include needs assessments, stock condition surveys, historic and planned development programmes, as well as reviewing how these will contribute to the authority's strategic housing market assessment.

3 Link to other key strategies: Homelessness, older people, asset management, health and wellbeing, economic development, place-making and regeneration, transport.

4 Consultation: In order to ground the strategy within the council's vision and to meet the ambitions of local people, you need to carry out extensive internal consultation with members and officers, and use various methods to gain intelligence and feedback from residents such as open days, online surveys and social media.

At the same time, external consultation is critical to achieving partner buy-in, and should include housing associations, developers, private landlords, funders and government agencies, in order to inform and shape the approach to delivery.

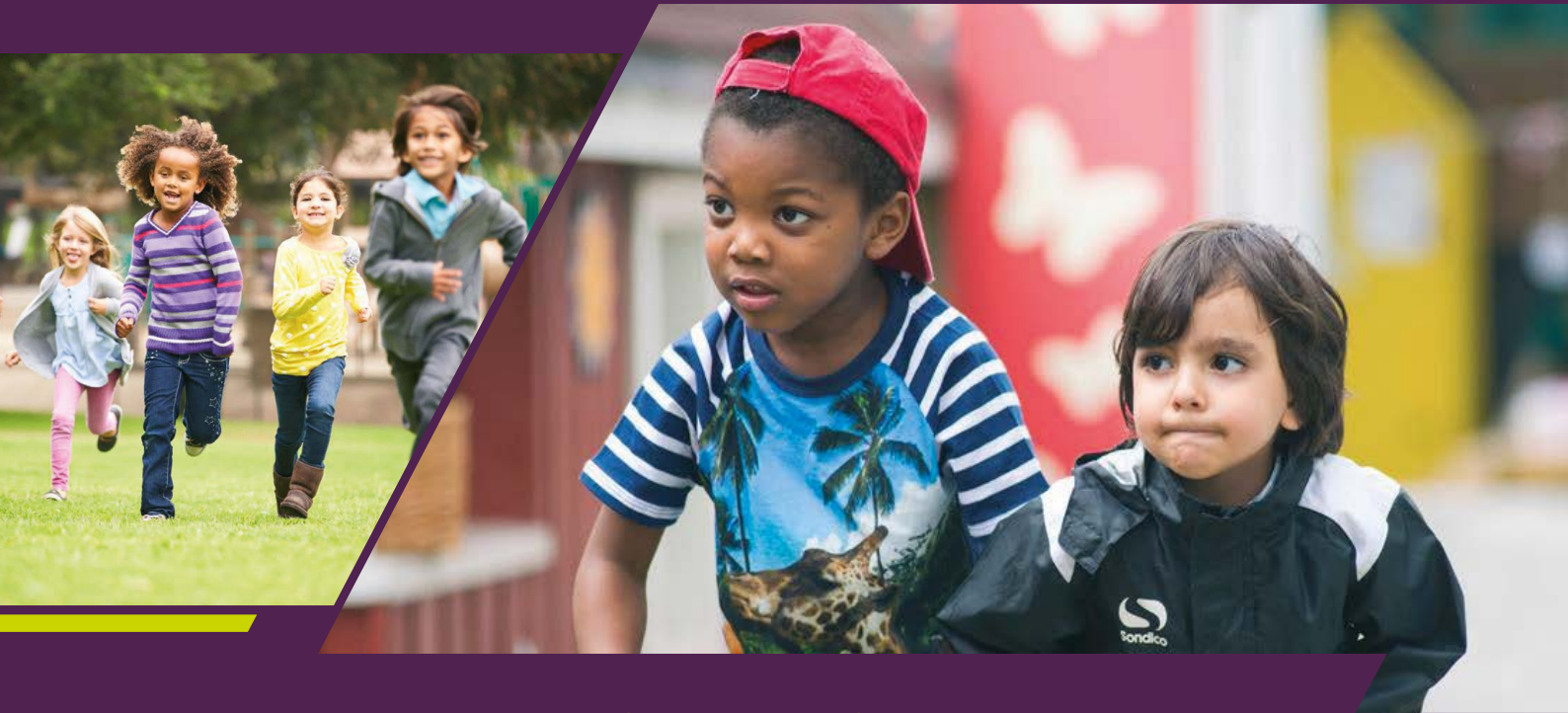
5 Action plan: A well-prepared strategy will not be something to put on the shelf; it must be a live document with measurable outcomes against which progress can be assessed and the strategy adjusted accordingly.

To discuss the issues raised in this article, contact

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Closing Date: Friday 25th May (12 noon)

First Interview: Tuesday 6th & Wednesday 7th June

Final Interview: Wednesday 20th & Thursday 21st June



Maggie Gjessing
*Head of housing growth, asset management
 and regeneration, Leeds City Council*

Building on the challenges and opportunities in Leeds



The Leeds Inclusive Growth Strategy has at its heart the objective of delivering growth that reduces inequality in the city and boosts economic performance. It sets out how the council, the private sector, universities, colleges and schools, the third sector and social enterprises in the city will work together to grow the Leeds economy. The aim is to ensure that everyone in the city contributes to, and benefits from, growth to their full potential.

Our core strategy, which was adopted in November 2014, outlines the city's housing growth principles. This includes ensuring growth targets reflect local need in terms of tenure, type and size in the context of a growing population, while protecting the quality of the environment and respecting community identity.

Housing need

The City Council's housing strategy further articulates the inclusive growth challenge. The strategy sets out the aim of "effectively meeting affordable and social housing need, promoting independence and creating sustainable communities". It clearly outlines the need for social rented housing in the city, with almost 24,000 applicants on the Leeds Homes Register in 2016 (see box: In numbers).

Leeds has been proactive in leading and shaping delivery. Government figures released in February show that Leeds was one of just three local authority areas across the country to see the delivery of more than 3,000 new homes in 2017. A key opportunity for sustainable growth is the considerable brownfield capacity in Leeds. The development plan for the city has a clear brownfield-first policy and since 2004 more than

In numbers: how Leeds is meeting housing need

3,000
 new homes
 delivered
 in 2017

75%
 of all new housing
 built on brownfield
 land since 2004

1,000
 new council homes
 being built

16,500
 potential new
 homes up to 2028
 in the city centre



75% of all new housing in the city has been built on brownfield land.

The city has recently successfully attracted resources through the housing infrastructure fund to support the delivery of a vibrant mixed community in the city centre, with the potential to realise more than 16,500 new homes up to 2028.

The City Council is a significant developer in its own right with a 1,000-unit programme of new council housing which is well over halfway through delivery. This includes a major mixed-tenure extra care project and the council is now gearing up to take advantage of the new housing revenue account borrowing freedoms recently announced in the Budget Statement.

Empty homes

The council also has an empty homes strategy which includes a programme of acquisitions to bring long-term empty properties back into use as council housing.

The focus of the programme has been purchasing properties that had been left empty and are causing

Leeds had almost 24,000 applicants on its Homes Register in 2016

blight within neighbourhoods.

We work closely with Homes England and our partner housing associations, offering tailored, multi-disciplinary support to bring forward sites, helping our partners commit their investment strategies and minimise development risk.

Funding development

As part of the strategic use of its resources, the council uses its receipts to provide grants to housing associations and third sector providers. This has included a programme of developing bespoke new homes to meet the needs of families with specific access or mobility requirements.

A recently developed approach to offering development finance through affordable loans alongside grant support for providers, further illustrates the council's ongoing innovative approach to delivering new homes.

To discuss the issues raised in this article, contact

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Fiona Fletcher-Smith
 Director of development, enterprise and environment
 Greater London Authority

Good growth by design – a useful challenge for everyone

GREATER
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In October 2016, the mayor of London launched his 'City for all Londoners' document (see here). Acting as a bridge between his manifesto and the suite of statutory strategies that have emerged from City Hall over the past few months, this introduced the concept of 'good growth'.

This idea is now being taken forward as a key underpinning policy within the new London Plan but what does it mean for local authorities in London?

Call to action

At its heart, it is a call to action. London continues to face unprecedented growth and while this brings opportunities, it also brings challenges that every layer of London government must collaborate on to deal with. The plan sets out ambitious targets and to meet them in a way that takes our residents with us, we need to underpin what do with the ideas of good growth.

This means building a more inclusive city – an inviting place to live, work and visit, supporting health and wellbeing for all Londoners. It means planning for places that support a mix of Londoners, old and young, from diverse cultures, with a range of housing tenures and workplaces.

To cope with the volume of new housing and commercial space we need, we must bring forward development that enriches our public and civic spaces. It must



take a contextual approach to new development that seeks to work with the grain of an area, respecting the historic and cultural heritage while pushing the boundaries on densities, with the highest quality design.

It means a partnership between the public and private sectors, where a long-term approach to development and investment should be taken. It means London remaining resilient to our changing climate and producing a city which is green and healthy, with clean air, easy access to green space and more efficient buildings supplied by cleaner energy.

Good growth means a city where all Londoners can fulfil their potential by creating a transport system that is accessible to all and by ensuring the widest levels

As part of the mayor's good growth concept, London must become a more inclusive city as it moves forward

of participation and recognition of the benefits of growth.

Greater diversity

It is also a call to action for the wide range of professions involved in the development sector to examine the diversity of their organisations to ensure they are more representative of the communities they serve.

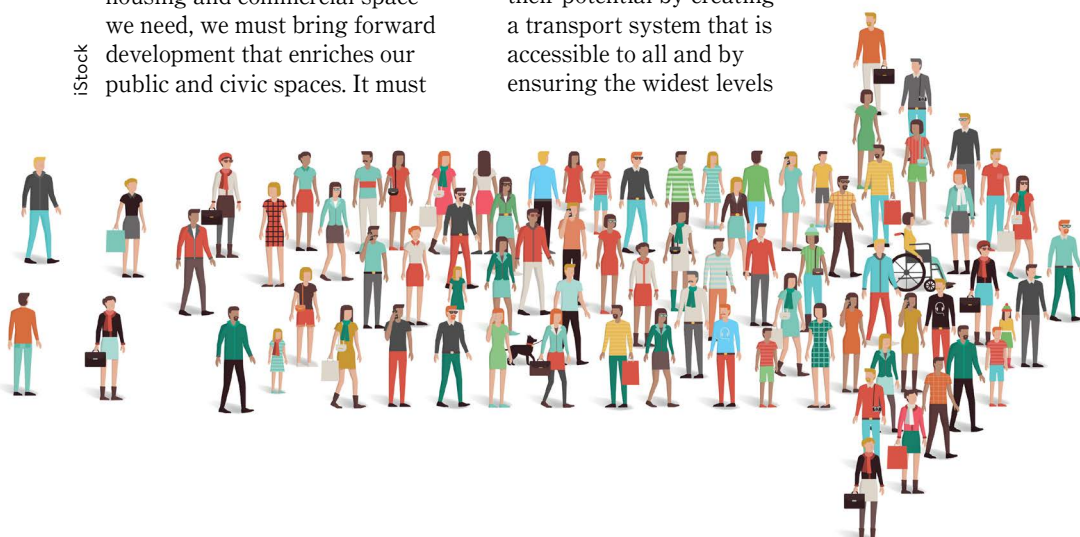
For example, in 2014, 77.6% of all jobs in architecture in the UK were filled by men and of those, 92.2% were filled by people from white groups. Equally worrying was the fact that 97.5% were from more advantaged socio-economic groups (Creative Industries Focus on Employment, DCMS).

City Hall is here to help, supporting the work of the industry and local authorities in particular, to meet the challenges that we have set out. Whether in the form of support from the mayor's Design Advocates or through additional capacity in the sector being provided by Public Practice – this needs to be a joint endeavour. Only through collaboration across the layers of London government, the development sector and our communities, will good growth become a reality.

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Janice Morphet
Professor, Bartlett School of Planning, UCL

Direct housing provision



In the pressure to find more homes at the local level, many local authorities are now engaging in the direct provision of housing across all tenures. This is occurring despite many years of government disincentives, so what has changed?

A recent research study undertaken by me and Ben Clifford of the Bartlett School of Planning, UCL, investigated the motivations, methods and means used by local authorities to increase their direct involvement in housing delivery within their own areas and sometimes further afield.

Surveying all local authorities in England in June 2017, together with 10 round tables, 10 case study interviews and further desk surveys, the research found that more than 90% of local authorities have some involvement in the direct provision of housing. This ranges from owning a group of companies to providing sites for others to develop. The research found that all types of local authorities are engaging in provision – large and small, across the political spectrum and in all parts of the country, although with slightly less activity in the north west.

So why is this happening? The research found a range of motivations that were generated by a local problem-solving approach (see table overleaf). The first single reason mentioned was the wish of local politicians to be

more in control of meeting housing need in their areas. In many local authorities the research found there is very little, or no housing development being undertaken by the private or housing association sectors and yet housing need is rising. There was a view expressed that the provision of housing is a core local authority function and councils should be providing stock directly to contribute to local delivery.

Rising homelessness

The second reason given by respondents was the requirement to meet the needs of a growing number of homeless households. The increase in 'no fault' evictions and the behaviour of some landlords has meant local authorities have been faced with rising numbers of homeless households, which have associated financial and social costs.

In response to these growing numbers, local authorities have adopted a range of strategies. Some have started to purchase property on the open market to add to their own stock. Others have purchased hotels, bed and breakfast establishments or hostels. A few councils have built hostels or commissioned specific new developments for homeless households. While some of these methods do not add to overall housing stock, they do provide a much quicker means of addressing homelessness and provide the local authority with an asset.

The third main motivation identified was the need of local authorities to generate income. After a prolonged period

of austerity since 2010 and the imminent demise of the revenue support grant in 2020, local authorities are seeking a long-term income stream that is within their own control rather than being dependent on central government. Establishing companies, joint ventures, or even just building housing using the council's general fund helps to generate a long-term stable income stream and many councils now view their role as long-term, patient investors.

Councils are building a mix of affordable, social and market rented homes together with housing for sale or shared ownership. Some councils are also establishing management and maintenance companies to provide services in the same way as private and housing association landlords.

Other local authority motivations relate to frustrations with private developers and the planning system. Many councils find renegotiations on planning permissions to reduce contributions, slow build-out rates or no development at all, are frustrating the provision of local housing and its contribution to meeting needs.

How are local authorities going about the direct provision of homes? Methods range from establishing a wholly owned company to undertake development, purchasing homes or, increasingly, to retaining housing provided through planning agreements. This latter approach is increasingly common due to greater unwillingness by housing associations to purchase such properties.

Many councils with existing joint ventures for other regeneration purposes are expanding the volume

Continued on page 11 →

"Local authorities are seeking a long-term income stream that is within their own control."

Local authorities are building more homes themselves as they seek to take control of housing provision in their areas



Continued from page 10 of housing in schemes, and some councils are undertaking their own office-to-residential conversion schemes through their companies. Some local authorities are buying land for immediate or longer-term housing development while others are starting to employ and train, as apprentices, development surveyors and other construction professionals whose services are then also offered to other councils as consultants.

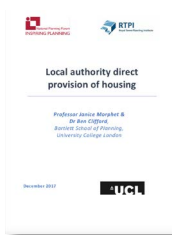
Funding methods

How are councils funding these housing developments? The research found the primary method is using a council's own capital resources, followed by using land in council ownership. In addition, councils are raising loans from the Public Works Loan Board.

Many other methods were also used including raising bonds, private sector loans, joint venture partners and investors such as hedge funds. There were also inter-council loans and some councils have development companies. Where local authorities have housing revenue accounts (HRAs),

How local authorities are providing more homes

Why increase happening?	How delivering?	How funding?
Councils to take greater control of meeting local housing need	Wholly owned companies	Own capital resources or Housing Revenue Account and/or own land
Need to meet growing number of homeless households	Joint ventures	Public Works Loan Board
Generate income	Purchasing existing homes	Private funding (issuing bond; deal with joint venture partner)
Frustration with developers seeking to minimise housing contributions required in exchange for planning permission (Section 106)	Purchasing Section 106 homes	



these are often being used to their maximum, although there are issues concerning HRA debt caps and many councils have established their own companies to overcome this barrier to providing housing. From this research, it is apparent that there is a meaningful and increasing change in the ways

councils are delivering housing. Further detail of how councils are directly providing housing can be found in the full report (see here).

To discuss the issues raised in this article, contact

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Affordable Housing in Urban Area Development Masterclass Best Practice in Amsterdam, Berlin and London

Organised by EFL Expertise in cooperation with SITE Urban Development

Across Europe social housing providers are dealing with increasing demand for affordable housing in cities. This two-day masterclass brings together first-hand experience from Eigen Haard in Amsterdam, Gewobag in Berlin and Poplar HARCA in London to analyse best practice, exchange experiences and define drivers for successful (re)development.

Location: SITE Urban Development Offices, Gedempte Hamerkanaal 91, 1021 KP Amsterdam
Cost: €825 (excl. VAT if applicable). EFL members pay €700 (excl. VAT if applicable)
Register: email ad.hereijgers@efl-expertise.com



Mark Baigent
 Chair, London Councils Housing Directors Group

Council collaboration



When times get tougher, do we compete for scarce resources or pull together to achieve more with less?

As chair of the London Housing Directors' Group over the past year I have seen the 32 boroughs and the City of London pulling together in new ways to face new challenges.

The most visible area of collaboration was the response to the awful fire at Grenfell Tower. First, the immediate rallying round of volunteer staff from across London housing teams to assist with the emergency response and rehousing effort.

Then, over the months since, there has been the wider response to fire safety: sharing learning and aligning actions to reassure residents, test and tackle hazardous cladding, and intervene in the private sector where required.

Over the past decade, the under-regulation of building control has left local authorities with minimal information about the materials used to construct and clad newer high-rise blocks built by private developers.

Creating security

Beyond fire safety, perhaps the biggest pressure on London boroughs is the duty to provide accommodation for homeless households. I have been leading two collaborative projects in this area over the past year, both aiming to increase supply and create longer-term security and affordability for households that are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

The first project is a joined-up approach to procuring demountable modular temporary accommodation on 'meanwhile' sites across London. Tower Hamlets Council is setting up a not-for-profit company that other boroughs will join. The company will buy a pool of new homes,

which will then be provided to member boroughs as temporary sites become available. Over 30 to 40 years the same homes may be reused four or five times on sites across the capital that are awaiting longer-term comprehensive development.

Increasing supply

The second project is focused on procuring temporary accommodation from private property owners. This includes homes that councils will lease from landlords to use as temporary accommodation, and homes that can provide a settled, privately rented home for households that have become homeless.

London local authorities are exploring setting up another not-for-profit company, this time to take seconded procurement staff from boroughs and to act as a landlord of leased properties. This will enable the discharge of homelessness duties or tenancy offers to prevent homelessness.

Boroughs are increasingly taking a direct delivery role in the new build arena, whether building in the housing revenue account or via local housing companies. This is an area ripe for working with housing associations, with potential collaboration around the management of development, use of right to buy receipts, joint ventures and lobbying of the government on policies to aid development.

Coordinated approach

Finally, from April 2018, we are responding to the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act, with a range of new duties and procedures for boroughs to follow.

"We can do more with less if we all pull in the same direction and combine our efforts together."

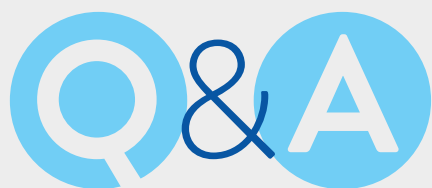
By linking together, London boroughs can tackle challenges like homelessness much more effectively

Collaboration across London is vital, with protocols needed to ensure effective referral and coordination between councils, given the need for homeless people to approach multiple boroughs for assistance.

My sense is that the context of reduced resources in local government provides an incentive to come together more rather than the feared danger of fragmentation and greater competition between us. We are certainly greater together than the sum of our parts. We can do more with less if we all pull in the same direction and combine our efforts together.

To discuss the issues raised in this article, contact

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Homelessness Reduction Act



Ian Swift
Group service manager for
housing options, London
Borough of Southwark

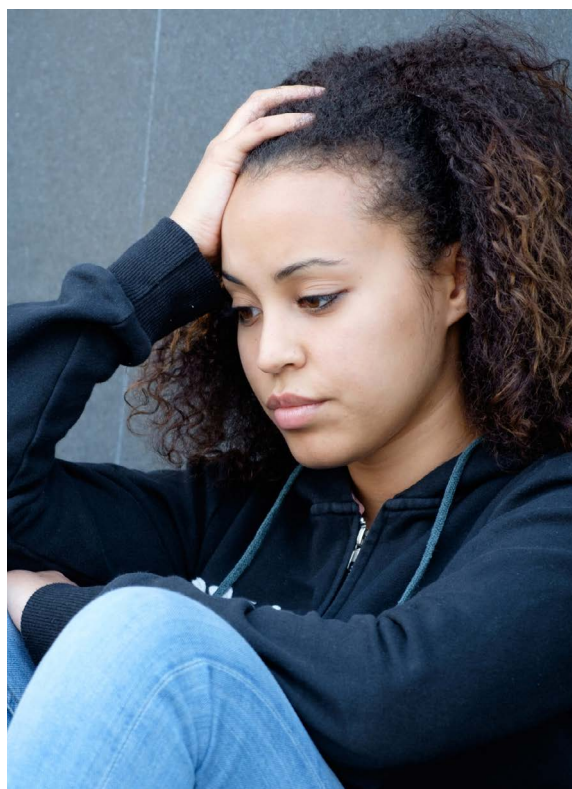
The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 came into force in April. It modifies and extends homelessness protection measures that local authorities need to undertake. This includes providing tailored advice and information, regardless of whether someone is in priority housing need and whether they are considered intentionally homeless. Councils will need to carry out assessments and produce personalised housing plans.

We ask Ian Swift, group service manager for housing options for the London Borough of Southwark, what the council has been doing to implement the Act.

Q: Southwark was chosen to be one of the trailblazers for the Homelessness Reduction Act. What have you achieved?

A: Historically we have had the third-largest number of homelessness applications in the country. We managed to achieve a 47% reduction in homelessness acceptances in 2017/18 down to 502 from 943 in the previous year. We have also eliminated the use of bed and breakfast accommodation from 326 homeless households in March 2017 to zero in November 2017.

Access to the private rented sector to prevent homelessness increased by 66%. We have been visited by more than 250 councils during 2017/18 to learn from the trailblazer work.



Under new legislation, councils must provide tailored advice to anyone facing homelessness

Q: How did you increase access to the private rented sector to prevent homelessness?

A: Take the case of a young single mother who was asked to leave the family home by her mother when she fell pregnant. She was given interim accommodation and referred to the visiting team to see if she could return home via mediation with her mother.

She was also referred to the private rented sector (PRS) procurement team to assist her by finding affordable accommodation, and she was given a self help pack to assist her in looking for her own affordable accommodation.

She managed to find her own accommodation and was given a 12-month assured shorthold tenancy (AST). She is now settled and returning to work after maternity leave.

“We managed to achieve a 47% reduction in homelessness acceptances in 2017/18 down to 502 from 943 in the previous year. We have also eliminated the use of bed and breakfast accommodation.”

Q: How have you assisted people who have been impacted by the move to universal credit?

A: We had a customer with a background of rough sleeping, who was threatened with homelessness because of rent arrears. He'd had an AST from June 2014 but when he moved from housing benefit (HB) to universal credit, he was paid the under-35 room rate, even though he had previously been entitled to one-bed accommodation.

We contacted the previous address of supported accommodation, obtained the necessary documentation to satisfy the criteria to apply for a one-bed home and handled the appropriate documentation.

We also asked the landlord to complete a UC47 form, enabling payment to go directly to the landlord. The Department for Work and Pensions agreed to the one-bed rate, backdated the payment from the changeover from HB and approved the UC47.

As a result, the customer was able to continue living in his home without the threat of homelessness.

To discuss the issues raised in this article, contact

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Optimising Care & Support Services

Ensuring your offer meets client needs can mean rethinking your service model. Your Board must understand the risks you face and have assurance that you meet regulatory requirements, including in

rent-setting and fire safety. We can help you develop new investment models and your business growth strategy, ensure digital transformation enhances customer experience, and much more.

“CT reviewed Southwark’s homeless hostels sensitively and professionally, giving us detailed options for improving pathways for homeless people. By understanding the range of our stakeholder requirements, CT delivered a first-class report and platform for going forward.”

Paul Langford, Director of Resident Services, Southwark Council

**FIND OUT HOW
WE CAN HELP:**

contact Liz Zacharias on **+44 (0)20 3434 0985**
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Gemma Prescott
Head of interim management, Campbell Tickell

Securing leadership talent when you need it most

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It is now a year since new 'off-payroll working' rules – known as IR35 rules – came into force for public sector employers. These rules apply to workers who provide their services to a client through an intermediary and, depending on individual circumstances, can require such workers to alter their taxation arrangements. This can frequently be the case for senior interim workers. So, what impact have the IR35 rules had for interim positions at local authorities?

Immediate impact

The IR35 rule change came against a backdrop of severe budget cuts, spiralling demand and increased pressure to demonstrate cost efficiencies for local government. As a result, councils have had to think very carefully about their interim senior resourcing.

At Campbell Tickell we have encountered some local authorities that will not appoint interim workers outside IR35 rules. We also have several interim workers, with long track records in the market, who do not wish to be considered for roles within IR35.

A year on, the client and candidate market seems to have settled down to some extent, demonstrating that things can work within the limitations of IR35. But we are still alert to and working with some of the more nuanced impacts. So what are these?

Managing IR35

From the point of view of an interim worker, roles that fall outside IR35 rules are more favourable, in allowing for the flexibility that is the norm for people used to working in this way, with a mix of short and long-term assignments, and sometimes two part-time assignments running simultaneously. With such

“Councils have had to think very carefully about their interim senior resourcing.”

placements we have been able to continue to provide clients with candidate lists that give choice as well as assurance on strength and breadth of experience, at competitive day rates.

Those interim workers who have advised us that they no longer wish to be considered for roles that fall within IR35 are considering roles with housing associations, private companies and charities, which are not required to comply with IR35. Some of our candidates have found that the competition for a non-IR35 placement has now increased, but are willing to offer our clients increased flexibility to give themselves that competitive edge.

It is important to note that, despite reassurance from HMRC to the contrary when IR35 rules were introduced, day rates have increased by about 20% for contracts that fall within IR35 rules. This is because interim workers in these contracts feel they have no choice but to increase their rate to cover expenses for travel, accommodation or subsistence. However, despite a

Some candidates do not wish to be considered for interim contracts that fall within IR35 rules

more limited supply, our deep pool of experienced interim workers means we have made some very good placements within IR35 rules this year.

Although the introduction of the IR35 rules has presented challenges, we have continued to grow our market share in the senior interim local authority marketplace – indeed 2017 was our most successful year. We have picked up some useful lessons along the way.

Keep an open mind

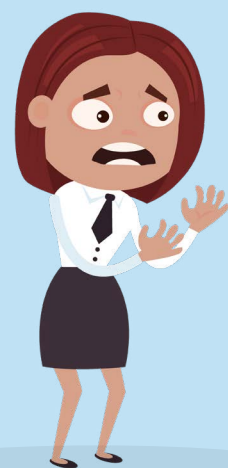
Our advice to clients is this: when you are preparing a brief, be open to considering our advice on the best way to meet your need for a high-calibre interim resource. Our interim workers offer flexibility, as well as good value for money. They will appreciate your strategic and operating context from day one and bring extensive experience to help address your particular needs.

For candidates, if you are in a position to remain firm about not taking on an IR35 contract, communicate that to us and we won't bother you unnecessarily. We recommend, however, that you too remain open. While IR35 may challenge some of the practicalities of an interim placement, many candidates in the field feel they are delivering on interesting assignments that bring rewards.

At Campbell Tickell we believe 2018 will be a strong year in the local authority market as we continue to grow our offering, taking on an important advisory role with both our clients and candidates through our multifaceted recruitment and consultancy approach.

**Contact us to find out more.
Call Gemma Prescott on 07904 497016**

Gemma.Prescot@campbelltickell.com





Martin Cheeseman
 Senior associate consultant, Campbell Tickell

Councils and older persons' housing

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With increasing numbers of us living longer, local authorities face a growing demand on their services. Traditionally, local authority housing responsibilities were considered separate to those of social care. This has resulted in separate systems being developed for both the development and allocation of sheltered housing, extra-care and residential accommodation. Equally, the development of services that enable older people to remain in their homes, such as disabled facility grants, may exist in further splendid isolation.

This often disjointed approach is increasingly recognised as unsustainable. This is both from the perspective of ensuring the efficient management of scarce resources, and more importantly, from the perspective of the older person who needs access to a variety of services in a coordinated way to meet their needs. So what can be done to address this situation?

Campbell Tickell is often asked to provide advice to local authorities in relation to older persons' housing needs. The actual briefs are varied and usually a result of a specific issue being identified. Examples include:

- a realisation that an authority's sheltered housing needs updating;
- a desire for additional extra-care accommodation;
- a need to reduce the use and cost of residential and nursing care;
- a review of current and future demands of older people for all types of housing.

Whatever the starting point, it often quickly becomes clear that the different services interrelate. Unless the authority can look at

Older persons' housing strategy: suggested long-term objectives

- Enables older people to maintain their independence, health and wellbeing for as long as possible and designs high-quality, personalised and preventative services accordingly.
- Provides a range of housing options for older people whether they are: active and pre-retirement; retired, independent and active; frailer and in need of support or care.
- Makes housing options available for older residents, irrespective of whether they are homeowners, privately renting or social housing tenants.
- Considers individuals' housing options alongside social care or health assessments, as part of an integrated preventative approach that builds social responsibility and resilience.
- Promotes the development and construction of modern specialist older persons' accommodation which is both mixed tenure and caters for older people irrespective of their level of dependency and is: -
 - 1) suitable for their changing needs;
 - 2) attractive, spacious and well located;
 - 3) safe and secure;
 - 4) affordable;
 - 5) warm in winter, comfortable in summer.

older persons' needs across a broad spectrum of housing, social care and health, then they are not going to develop optimum solutions.

A clear strategy

Where a local authority has a clear achievable older persons' housing strategy, the specific decisions in relation to the individual services become easier (although often not easy) to make. There are several essential components that must be included in any strategy:

- 1) A good analysis of the current and future demand projections. This includes not just numbers of older people, but also tenure, health and income levels.
- 2) A thorough review of current specialist housing (sheltered, extra-care, residential) that is available. This should include both quality and quantity.
- 3) An analysis of current services available to older people to help them remain in their own homes.

Around 90% of older people will remain in totally independent accommodation.

4) A clear set of long-term objectives that the local authority wants to achieve, and a plan detailing how this will be accomplished. (See box for what we at Campbell Tickell consider to be a clear set of long-term objectives within such a strategy.)

This short article has inevitably simplified what is a complex subject, where current cost constraints may make long-term planning difficult. It is worth remembering that most of us will have the badge "older person" for three to four decades, so getting it right is crucially important for current as well as future generations.

To discuss the issues raised in this article, contact

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"90% of older people will remain in independent accommodation."



Tony Hutchinson
Senior Associate Consultant, Campbell Tickell

Regeneration after Grenfell

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We are perhaps still too close, with emotions too raw for it to be possible to grasp the breadth and depth of the consequences of the Grenfell Tower tragedy. Clearly though, it has crystallised a sense of alienation between regenerators and those being regenerated.

For some, the word 'regeneration' is becoming interchangeable with 'gentrification' and expressed as a negative. Residents often say they feel their views are ignored and, in London, the mayor is now proposing resident ballots for all regeneration schemes involving demolitions.

It is also worth reflecting on how other drivers, such as changes to the benefits system, make it harder for lower-income families to live in more expensive neighbourhoods, and for public bodies to consider how their assets can best be used to generate the funds to deliver essential services.

An effective regeneration programme begins with a commitment to being open, inclusive, transparent and collaborative. Every programme starts from how to deliver better homes, improve quality of life and greater opportunities in neighbourhoods. So how can local authorities ensure the best chance of these aims being realised?

1 We should turn the telescope around: what do communities, businesses and people want? How can the needs of the council and its partners be aligned with those expectations? There will inevitably be an iterative process to understand aspirations and competing tensions, reconciling these into a coherent programme, seeking the compromises

"Every regeneration programme starts from how to deliver better homes, improve quality of life and greater opportunities in neighbourhoods."

needed to make change happen.

This must be a conversation between equals. It is too easy to make promises about timescale and the consequences of any programme. Honesty about what is possible and how to achieve it is central to developing truly community and neighbourhood-based investment strategies.

Professionals must recognise that local people have a level of knowledge and understanding about their neighbourhood, their homes and their needs that cannot be replicated or replaced. Even if what they say is challenging or inconvenient, taking time to listen and respond is invaluable.

2 Make a commitment to regular communication and stick to it, even when there has been no progress. Encourage dialogue and discussion. Multiple channels can be used: find out what channels people want to use. Communication should be a learning experience to help people contribute to the process, gaining additional confidence and skills.

3 Think about language: regeneration affects homes, livelihoods and cherished neighbourhoods. Devaluing and demeaning the places people live, for instance by referring to 'units' rather than 'homes', is unhelpful. Even that seemingly

unused garage court, a nest of anti-social behaviour, may have social and emotional value which needs respect.

4 Before making a promise, be sure you can keep it. If you find you can't, explain quickly, openly and fully. Don't compound the error by making a glib promise that has to be broken again.

5 Governance and probity are fundamental. Where authority is delegated to a community, it has to be totally clear exactly what has been delegated and what the limits of that authority are. It is too easy to 'sell' an advisory role as decision-making when in reality the views expressed are an input to a wider process.

Equally, where community representatives are involved in procurement decisions, the role and limits of autonomy need to be clearly understood. This is particularly the case where local agencies are able to bid for work on the programme.

Grenfell, like Hillsborough or 7/7, is transformational. For everyone in public services, these events change the way we think, speak and work. Housing services and in particular the renewal of homes came under caustic criticism in the weeks after the Grenfell Tower fire. Understanding, responding to and accepting that visceral sense of alienation is the starting point.

We must accept that, while our professional accountabilities require action, whatever we do requires the active, informed and freely given consent of the communities we serve.

To discuss the issues raised in this article, contact

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London residents would be able to vote on regeneration schemes involving demolitions under a proposal by the mayor



Making regeneration happen



As housing demand grows and the challenges of delivering regeneration programmes increase, access to suitable expertise and an independent view can make all the difference.

Our experience extends from feasibility studies,

establishing joint ventures, project managing regeneration, and analysing development capacity, to facilitating resident engagement, community consultations and supporting bids for major schemes.

**FIND OUT HOW
WE CAN HELP:**

contact Maggie Rafalowicz on **+44 (0)20 8830 6777**
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