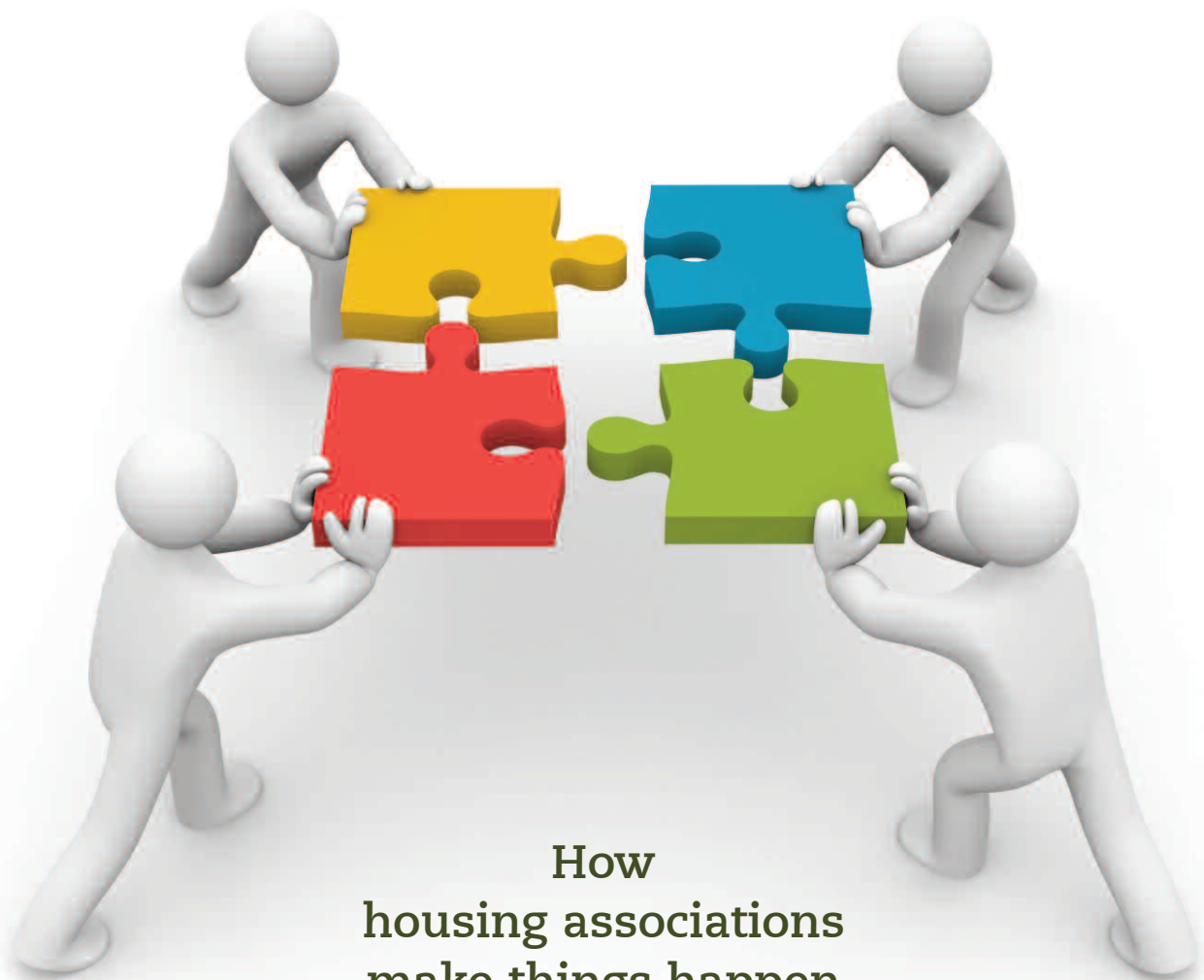


# Localism that works



How  
housing associations  
make things happen

A PLACESHAPERS GROUP REPORT



# PlaceShapers at work

PlaceShapers is a national membership body of around 70 housing associations formed in 2008. Between us, we own nearly half a million homes and provide services to well over a million people. This report shows how we deliver vital support and great community value through localism.

The PlaceShapers ethos and principles are:

- Putting residents and customers at the centre of everything we do - giving real influence on how organisations evolve.
- Providing more than simple landlord services, because we care about the people and places where we work.
- Recognising the importance of the local authority role and working with council partners to improve and shape places at both a strategic and operational level
- Believing in and delivering the strength and benefit of a diverse, independent, non-profit-making sector to residents and stakeholders.

The icons used in the report highlight the benefits created by the 16 case studies. These projects typify the passion and ingenuity of our members and their work.



## Care and support

Helping people with extra needs



## Cohesion

Bringing people and communities together



## Money

Promoting financial inclusion and stability



## Environment

Improving the look, feel and sustainability of neighbourhoods



## Health

Supporting healthy habits and lifestyles



## Jobs and skills

Helping people into education, training and employment



## Society

Building positive relationships and promoting harmony



## Saving public money

Efficiency and value for money for taxpayers



# Contents

- p5 Introduction by Rt Hon Greg Clark MP,  
Minister for Decentralisation and Cities
- p6 Localism - it's what we do
- p7 Housing associations - creating  
communities with zip

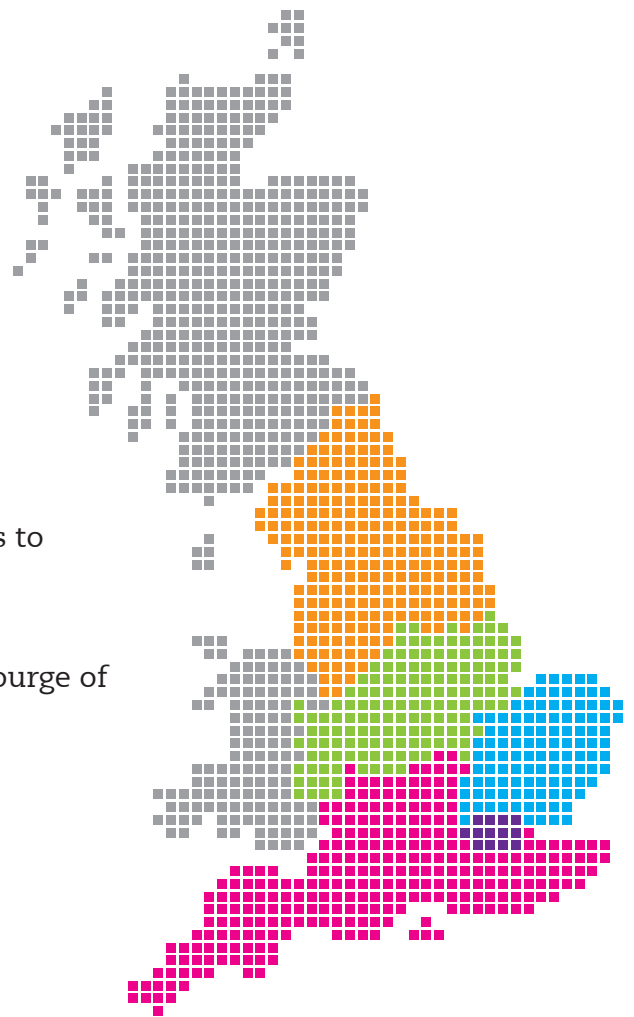
## Case studies

### NORTH

- p9 **1. Moving on up - Isos Housing**  
Support for people with mental health problems to  
return to work
- p10 **2. Shop a shark - Knowsley Housing Trust**  
Boosting financial inclusion and tackling the scourge of  
illegal lending
- p11 **3. Basketball Respect,  
South Yorkshire Housing Association**  
Reducing anti-social behaviour and promoting  
positive lifestyles through school sport
- p12 **4. Cleanstart - Trafford Housing Trust**  
Reducing crime by training and employing  
prolific offenders

### MIDLANDS

- p13 **5. LoCAL Homes - Accord Housing Group**  
Running a factory to create jobs and build low-cost, energy-efficient homes
- p14 **6. The Realise Foundation - Aspire Housing**  
Social enterprise to improve employability, lifelong learning and neighbourhoods
- p15 **7. Services for older people - Bournville Village Trust**  
Extra support to promote health and wellbeing in an ageing population
- p16 **8. Futures Greenscape - Futures Housing Group**  
Helping people back to work through a grounds maintenance social enterprise
- p17 **9. Grow Cook Share - Shropshire Housing Group**  
Engaging communities to grow, cook and eat healthy, local, seasonal food



# Contents

## EAST

**p18 10. Parkside Community Hub - CHP**

Multi-agency advice and support to build skills, confidence and job prospects

**p19 Keys to Health - Cross Keys Homes**

Community-based advice and support for healthy living

## LONDON

**p20 12. 4-Kix Football - Origin Housing**

Engaging young people in community volunteering through football

**p21 13. St Paul's Centre - Poplar HARCA**

Re-invigorating local groups and networks by refurbishing a church centre

**p22 14. InComE - Shepherds Bush HA**

Reducing overcrowding and welfare dependency for young adults

## SOUTH

**p23 15. Berinsfield Community Business - Soha Housing**

Transforming an isolated neighbourhood through community-led housing management and services

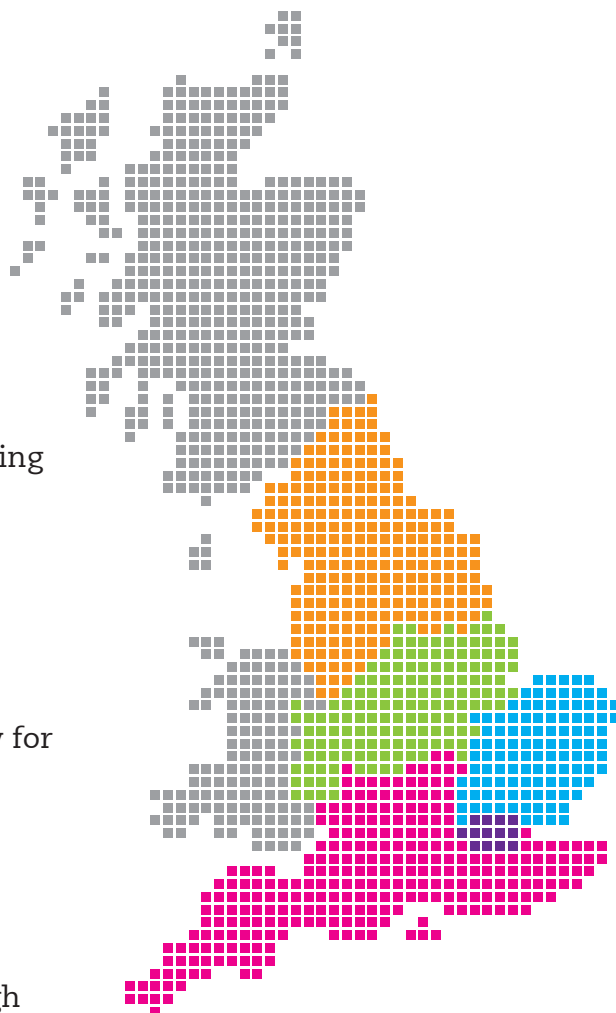
**p24 16. Neighbourhood Charters - West Kent Housing Association**

Building community cohesion and pride through multi-agency agreements

**p25 PlaceShapers housing associations tackling worklessness**

**p26 Value for money**

**p27 The PlaceShapers manifesto**



# Introduction by Rt Hon Greg Clark MP, Minister for Decentralisation and Cities

## I hear three common arguments against decentralisation.



The first says that there's no point transferring power to local communities because people don't

care about the future of their neighbourhood. The second says that they don't have the time to get involved. The third says that they don't have the skills and confidence to have their say.

These arguments are based, in essence, on a pretty glum assessment of human nature. I believe, by contrast, and have always found, that when people are given their head, they make the most of chances to shape their own future - and are more than capable of being resourceful, inventive, and public spirited in their dealings.

Social housing provides a host of examples that serve as a standing rebuke to the naysayers. For decades, housing associations have sought to place genuine power in the hands of their tenants. The PlaceShapers Group is a shining example. As their manifesto puts it, they are "more than landlords".

PlaceShapers care about their tenants and work with them to improve not just homes, but as people and communities too. There is no question that the PlaceShapers approach goes way beyond the bricks and mortar.

This report is a vivid illustration of how PlaceShapers engage with the future of their estates and communities. Across the country they have helped people return to work, reduce crime, create jobs and transform local neighbourhoods. These 16 case studies are a testament to what local initiative and local innovation can do for local communities. This is decentralisation that works - people taking control of their lives.

With the Localism Bill very soon to complete its passage through parliament, we stand on the verge of a new era. Taken together, the measures in the Bill represent an historic transfer of power from Whitehall to local councils and local communities.

They will create new opportunities for landlords to deliver services more flexibly; they will pass unprecedented freedom to communities to organise themselves and find local solutions to local problems.

Against this backdrop, the stories in this document can provide valuable insights to social landlords and communities alike who want to shape their neighbourhood for the better. I hope it will illuminate and inspire many readers.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Clark".

**Rt Hon Greg Clark MP**

# Localism - it's what we do

## The Coalition Government's focus on localism, decentralisation and The Big Society has thrown down a fundamental challenge to public and community services.

Economic slowdown and spending cuts have sharpened the demands for needs to be met in new, different and better ways. We are in a new era of relations between individual citizens, service providers and local and central government.

PlaceShaper housing associations are already meeting this challenge and going far beyond the business of 'bricks and mortar, rents and repairs' to offer an astounding bandwidth of support to the neighbourhoods they create and serve. Over the last decade, the scope, shape and style of services provided by housing associations has altered dramatically.

But the values and principles of localism lie deep in the roots of the housing association movement, dating back more than 150 years. Working with communities to improve homes, health, opportunities and aspirations is what we do. Localism is in our DNA and PlaceShapers do this particularly well because we are part of our local communities.

The projects included in this report showcase how organisations with real community presence and a commitment beyond housing are already delivering innovative, high-value projects that point the way forward.

With initiatives ranging from sport, to cooking and growing food and tackling illegal money lending, the case studies give a vivid snapshot of how far-sighted organisations with a genuine understanding of their communities are rising to the challenge of localism with energy and determination.

### Keys to success

The 16 inspirational case studies in this report show how housing associations succeed by:

- Being the catalysts for initiatives and partnerships that wouldn't otherwise exist. PlaceShapers Group members make things happen.
- Opening up their knowledge, expertise and resources for wider community benefit. This is a model other services and sectors need to follow.
- Tailoring activities and support to suit local needs - right down to the individual - and making services available and accessible on people's doorsteps.
- Achieving hard outcomes and savings to the public purse across every sort of community, from dispersed rural villages to inner cities - and reinvesting these savings to support their work.
- Forging an array of creative, dynamic partnerships and synergy with new types of organisations and agencies, including faith groups, charities and private business.
- Developing innovative new forms of accountability to reverse disillusionment with democracy and give individuals and community groups a more direct and powerful say in how neighbourhoods work.

PlaceShapers housing associations are leading the way with localism that works.

# Housing associations - creating communities with zip

**The Leader of the House of Commons, Sir George Young, once compared housing associations to zips - highlighting their ability to bring together disparate people, organisations and resources to strengthen the fabric of communities.**

The case studies in this report prove that this approach and capability is alive and well among PlaceShapers Group members and other like-minded housing providers. Most of the projects included here, and the amazing things they've achieved, simply would not have happened without the housing associations acting as the driving and unifying force to meet local needs.

Because of their unique legal status and funding options, many housing associations are rich in the sorts of skills and resources that communities on their own often lack. In all the case studies unlocking finance, business planning, technical, IT, human resources and social enterprise support from housing associations has been a vital ingredient of success.

Opening up organisations' resources in this way represents an extra return on the capital and revenue investment made in social housing over the last few decades. As well as building increasingly high quality, sustainable homes, housing associations are now making that stake go further, by sharing and reinvesting their accumulated capacity in the communities they serve.

The projects included here also show how effectively housing providers make use of public funding. By drawing on their assets, reserves and resources, they extract enormous added value from key partnerships with local authorities, contractors and the third sector.

PlaceShapers housing associations act as both community anchors - securing investment and quality of life, and community leaders - breaking new ground to transform neighbourhoods and opportunities.

As large-scale community stakeholders, we have a clear manifesto about how we believe localism can and should work (see page 27).



# Case studies

**The case studies included here demonstrate the essence of the PlaceShapers approach - showing how housing associations can promote jobs, skills, health, the environment, financial inclusion, cohesion and society.**

Many of the projects create clear savings in public expenditure (for example, through reduced reliance on welfare benefits or fewer NHS treatments). Some also enable community agencies to take over public services.

The projects also pinpoint how good, affordable housing is the bedrock for a decent quality of life and can play the pivotal role in tackling linked problems of unemployment, crime, poor health and low educational aspirations and achievement.

The sorts of partnerships developed in these case studies have never been more important than they are now.

## Lessons learnt

The organisations leading the case study projects have learnt some important lessons:

- Localism takes time and effort - building partnerships and working with communities is an intense, demanding business.
- Whenever possible, organisations leading community projects need to be rigorous about setting clear objectives and evaluating outcomes and value for money.
- Investing resources, belief and hope in one aspect of community life can often have unexpected, positive knock-on effects elsewhere. So sometimes, organisations just have to get involved because it's the right thing for community resilience and opportunities. Diverse projects produce diverse results.
- Some outcomes from localism (for example, community spirit, pride and confidence) are less suited to quantitative measurement. But these 'fuzzy' outcomes are every bit as important a part of the payback on investment as the harder indicators of jobs, training, drops in crime and health gains.
- Projects often involve working with people from backgrounds and home environments where there is not a history or culture of paid work. Others have disrupted or chaotic lifestyles and low levels of basic skills. This demands patience, persistence and a wider view of support needs.
- Housing associations and communities need to publicise and celebrate their successes more actively. Marketing and public relations skills are a critical part of projects and fundraising strategies.

The really encouraging thing is that most of the PlaceShapers members featured here believe their successes can be replicated by other organisations. It just takes the right mindset and a determination to make things work locally.

Community-based housing associations have the knowledge and agility to invest in and experiment with fresh approaches to find what works.



# 1. Moving on up

Isos Housing Group

## Support for people with mental health problems to return to work

Moving on up provides tailored, individual work placements and support to people with mental health problems to help them regain confidence and skills to get paid work or further training. Started 2009.

### Partners and funding

Moving on up is funded and run entirely by Isos Housing's Supported Housing Operations team, in partnership with its maintenance contractor, Seddon.

### Aims

Moving on up was inspired by both the Government's agenda to tackle worklessness for people with mental health problems and by direct feedback from service users. People were clear that they wanted to work and change their lives, but felt stigmatised and disadvantaged because of their illness.

The project set out to tackle stigma and help people avoid barriers to accessing training and jobs. By opening up the organisation's head office, care home, shared housing and administrative and repairs placements with Seddon, Isos can offer a mix of safe, well-supervised and positive work opportunities.

### Impact and value for money

- 50 people with mental health problems - about a quarter of those supported by Isos Housing - have taken part in Moving on up, benefitting from free training and placements within the host organisation and with Seddon.
- Four people have gained permanent, paid jobs, allowing them to move off benefits.
- The need for hospital admissions has been reduced by people developing less chaotic lives and being diverted from mental illness as their prime focus.
- Using their experience from Moving on up, service users have formed a group to deliver training on support planning and mental health to other housing and support providers. The fees earned are re-invested in the project.
- Understanding of mental illness and sharing of risk information with the maintenance contractor has greatly improved.



## What next

Moving on up is planning to expand by arranging work placements with another contractor and a wider group of local employers. A newly-formed, dedicated team for the project aims to secure external funding to offer more career opportunities and signpost people more effectively to training providers.

"All my life I was the 'it'll be your turn next' guy. I just got use to hearing this each time I was refused a job, but thanks to Moving On Up, I now have a paid job, which I love. When I got the news of the job I was in tears."

Edd, Moving On Up client.

For more information, contact Jennifer Scott, Supported Housing Operations Manager on 0191 292 2717 or [jennifer.scott@isoshousing.co.uk](mailto:jennifer.scott@isoshousing.co.uk)



## 2. Shop a shark

Knowsley Housing Trust

### Boosting financial inclusion and tackling the scourge of illegal lending

Shop a Shark provides support, advice, protection and alternative sources of finance to help people avoid and defeat illegal, doorstep lenders. Started 2008.

#### Partners and funding

Shop a Shark is part of Knowsley Housing Trust's Corporate Social Responsibility programme, run in partnership with the Illegal Money Lending Team operated by the local Council's Trading Standards service. The project works closely with community-based credit unions, schools, children's centres and local advice agencies.

#### Aims

Ranked as the country's fifth most deprived borough, with high levels of benefit dependency and worklessness, Knowsley is particularly vulnerable to the corrosive activities of illegal money lenders. By diverting and protecting people from illegal lenders, the project helps tenants to manage their rent and other finances and sustain their tenancies.

The project supports local credit unions through direct funding and savings via staff salary deductions.

#### Impact and value for money

- By enabling people to switch from high-interest doorstep lending to local credit unions, Shop a Shark has saved residents an estimated £166,000 in loan charges.
- One high profile illegal money lender who charged interest at rates varying 886% to 131,000% has been convicted, leading to loans to more than 150 Knowsley tenants being written off.
- The Housing Trust has invested £40,000 directly into local credit unions and staff salary deductions to credit union savings now total more than £80,000 per year.
- The number of tenants evicted for rent arrears by Knowsley Housing Trust fell to its lowest level in six years in 2010, with 35 evictions compared to 44-48 each year since 2004.
- Shop a Shark held its first 'action month' in September 2011 - targeting awareness and support to 2000 homes in areas with higher than average rent arrears.



### What next

Knowsley's team is now focusing on the impact of welfare reform and is looking to extend its joint funding of local debt and welfare benefits advice through a Big Lottery application with Citizens Advice Bureau and other partners. The Trust is keen for residents to play a greater part in future financial inclusion work as community advocates.

"Shop a Shark shows that we go above and beyond just housing. Tackling exploitative, illegal lending is not only the right thing to do - there's also a strong business case for it."

Darren Reynolds,  
Corporate Social  
Responsibility Manager.

For more information,  
contact Louise Harris,  
Head of Social  
Responsibility on  
0151 290 7097 or  
louise.harris@k-h-t.org



## 3. Basketball Respect

South Yorkshire Housing Association

### Reducing anti-social behaviour and promoting positive lifestyles through school sport

Basketball Respect works with primary schools in neighbourhoods prone to anti-social behaviour - offering professional basketball coaching and competitions and education on health, bullying, crime and safety. Started 2009.

#### Partners and funding

South Yorkshire Housing Association funds One Health Sheffield Sharks Basketball team to run coaching programmes and a summer camp competition. South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue and South Yorkshire Police provide the community education input. The project also works with local residents groups, which are now involved in fundraising to support it.

#### Aims

Basketball Respect allows the housing association to engage with families via their children and promote healthy lifestyles with positive role models at a critical school stage. It aims to build self esteem, confidence and social values that will impact in home communities.

Funded from the association's Neighbourhood Improvement Budget, the project is part of a wider campaign to address problems with youth nuisance, litter, parking and neglected spaces.

#### Impact and value for money

- For an annual investment of just £10,000, the project has already worked with more than 1100 children in ten primary schools across the Sheffield City Region.
- Levels of participation in sport and physical activity at the target schools have greatly increased, with equal take-up by boys and girls.
- Partnerships and working relationships with the schools and Police and Fire services are much improved.
- The project has opened up new opportunities for volunteering and qualifications via the basketball club. Engagement between Sheffield Sharks and the chosen communities has been boosted by free family tickets to professional games.



### What next

Basketball Respect aims to double in size, to work with 20 schools, reaching more communities throughout the City Region. The housing association is seeking funding to add classroom sessions on numeracy and literacy, run by the Sheffield Sharks professionals. Local tenants and residents associations are now raising funds for the project by applications to parish councils and supermarkets to make it self-sustaining.

“This project gives astounding value for money and brings together a powerful mix of organisations to support local communities. What we're doing could be replicated anywhere with any sport.”

Pete Jepson, Team Leader (Neighbourhoods).

For more information, contact Pete Jepson, Team Leader (Neighbourhoods), 01142 702664 or [p.jepson@syha.co.uk](mailto:p.jepson@syha.co.uk)



## 4. Cleanstart

Trafford Housing Trust

### Reducing crime by training and employing prolific offenders

Cleanstart offers people with a long history of offending, the chance to stabilise their lives and develop new skills, attitudes and behaviours to return to sustainable, paid work. Started 2008.

#### Partners and funding

Cleanstart is a self-supporting social enterprise run in partnership with Procure Plus (a buying alliance of northern housing providers) and the local Police, Probation Service and Job Centres.

#### Aims

The project provides essential services such as clearing and cleaning empty homes, gardening and grounds maintenance by employing Priority prolific Offenders after their release from prison on licence.

Through six-month, paid placements, help with housing options and planned moves onto permanent jobs with partner contractors, Cleanstart gives people who may previously have been involved in serious offences such as robbery and burglary a pathway to a crime-free future. This in turn reduces the level of crime and anti-social behaviour in the community.

#### Impact and value for money

- ▶ Police figures estimate that Cleanstart has already saved more than £3 million in public money through savings on the justice system, custody and the costs of crime.
- ▶ From 26 placements, 12 people have got permanent jobs and only three people have been recalled to prison for reoffending.
- ▶ Reported crime in the Trafford area fell by 12% in 2010 - partly due to some key, prolific offenders being engaged in Cleanstart.
- ▶ Trafford Housing Trust has saved £20,000 on its operating costs by employing its own Cleanstart placements rather than outside contractors.



### What next

Trafford Housing Trust aims to develop the Cleanstart social enterprise further by setting up a furniture recycling service and resource centre. Through Procure Plus, similar schemes are now run by other housing providers including Parkway Green Housing Trust and Stockport Homes.

“Cleanstart reduces crime and saves a huge amount of taxpayers’ money. We don’t expect handouts from Government, but we do want the chance to compete for public contracts and show the social value we generate.”

Deborah Elgar, Social Enterprise Manager.

For more information, contact Deborah Elgar, Social Enterprise Manager on 0161 968 0317 or [deborah.elgar@traffordhousingtrust.co.uk](mailto:deborah.elgar@traffordhousingtrust.co.uk)



## 5. LoCAL Homes

Accord Group

### Running a factory to create jobs and build low-cost, energy-efficient homes

LoCAL Homes leases a previously unused factory from Walsall Council to manufacture closed panel timber frame homes that are highly insulated and cheap to run. The factory is set to create up to 30 jobs for local people to build homes across the midlands. Started 2011.

#### Partners and funding

Accord Group set up the factory after its success in importing and using similar Norwegian panels for five years. The project runs as a self-sustaining business unit within Accord without ongoing subsidy or external funding for manufacture. The local authority has played a vital role in extending and leasing the factory building to Accord.

#### Aims

Accord wants to put residents first by creating jobs and training opportunities and mitigating the effects of future fuel bills. This helps to sustain the core housing business by making sure residents can afford to pay their rent and run their homes. Reducing new-build costs by the use of pre-fabricated panels means that Accord can build more high-quality homes with less grant.

Through its ultra-local approach, the project aims to achieve major cuts in carbon emissions and savings that can be passed onto residents.

#### Impact and value for money

- By the end of 2011, the LoCAL Homes factory will employ 16 people - rising up to 30 as demand increases to reach an estimated capacity of around 200 homes per year.
- 60 homes have already been built using the imported panels, achieving a 40% overall carbon saving compared to traditional homes. This equates to a saving of around ten tonnes of embedded carbon in the construction of each home.
- New homes built using the closed panel technology are 47% cheaper to run than traditional homes - one resident's total gas bill for 2010 was just £200.
- At full capacity, the factory will be able to provide around half of Accord's total development programme of around 400 homes per year.
- The project was shortlisted for a Homes and Communities Academy award in 2010.



### What next

The factory plans to develop its timber panel products into complete, modular rooms and pods for sale to other housing providers and developers. It is also looking to acquire an extra site to store materials and possibly create its own erection team to build these new homes. Through its EMAS (EU Eco Management and Audit Scheme) accreditation, Accord aims to cut its total carbon footprint by between 26% and 32% by 2020.

"I was over the moon to be offered a job at the factory. The idea that you can build a house completely out of timber that can be put up in a day is very exciting. Hopefully when I'm 65, I can turn around and say I was here when the company first started and I've been here my whole career."

Martyn, LoCAL factory employee, aged 31.

For more information, contact John Bedford, Head of Project Development, 07912 626260 or [johnb@accordha.org.uk](mailto:johnb@accordha.org.uk)



## 6. Realise Foundation

Aspire Group

### Social enterprise to improve employability, lifelong learning and neighbourhoods

The Realise Foundation is a unique charity that provides apprenticeships, lifelong learning opportunities and environmental initiatives to help regenerate communities in North Staffordshire. Formed 2010.

#### Partners and funding

The Aspire Group's social enterprise arm, Enterprising Futures, includes PM Training, Indigo Training and Furniture Mine. The Foundation gets Gift Aid from PM Training, funding from individuals, contractors and key suppliers. The charity has raised over half a million pounds to deliver its activities.

A permanent endowment fund managed by the Staffordshire Community Foundation attracts Government match funding to pay for student bursaries in partnership with local colleges and universities.

#### Aims

The Realise Foundation aims to help improve quality of life for local people, and the places where they live and work. It aims to reverse problems experienced by communities following the loss of major industries and employers.

Apprenticeships, bursary awards and environmental improvements are open to the whole community, not just

Aspire residents. The social enterprise aims to deliver Aspire's objective to 'do more and go further' with its resources.

#### Impact and value for money

- 247 apprenticeships supported with more than 50 supply chain partners for 16-19 year olds not previously in education, employment or training. Apprentices receive free toolkits and safety equipment and the host organisations get £1000 for each apprenticeship.
- 17 environmental projects completed, worth over £150,000. Apprentices have helped to create artwork and gardens for schools, communities and sheltered housing schemes.
- 28 bursaries awarded to meet the costs of tuition fees, laptops and transport for students. 70 older people have accessed IT resources and training.
- Social return on investment is being used to monitor the charity and evaluate its impact.
- Winner of the 2011 regional National Housing Federation 'What we are proud of' award for Best Partnership Working.



### What next

The charity plans to continue expanding its work under the three core themes of employability, lifelong learning and environmental uplift - using its flexibility to meet unmet needs and improve prospects and quality of life.

"The Realise Foundation embodies our ambition to go beyond a traditional housing service. It has transformed our thinking about regeneration and created a wider platform to deliver better outcomes for communities, with the support and commitment of our partners."

Tim Edwards, Group Head of Regeneration.

For more information, please contact Tim Edwards, Group Head of Regeneration, 01782 854741 or [tedwards@aspirehousing.co.uk](mailto:tedwards@aspirehousing.co.uk)



## 7. Improved services for older people

Bournville Village Trust

### Extra support to promote health and wellbeing in an ageing population

Bournville Village Trust has developed shopping trips, IT training, a handy person service and a Volunteer Bureau to help meet the needs of older residents in this unique community based around the former Cadbury's works. Started 2008.

#### Partners and funding

The extra services are funded by The Trust's Community Development Budget, Residents Project Funding allocated by residents and payments from users. The shopping trips are run in partnership with local voluntary transport provider, Shencare.

#### Aims

The services respond directly to needs identified in a customer survey and census. Together, they aim to increase social interaction for older people, promote health and wellbeing, enable people to keep living independently and reduce hospital/care home admissions and tenancy turnover.

Part of the Trust's Community Development Strategy, the extra services reflect its holistic approach to care and support for an ageing local population.

#### Impact and value for money

- The handy person service, which employs a local person has helped more than 200 residents. The handy person visits people's homes to undertake requested work and look out for any requirements for aids and adaptations or other personal support.
- The Trust's Volunteer Bureau has 42 registered volunteers, one of whom runs the beginners IT classes free of charge. Volunteers also work at the Trust's community centres and local care home.
- An average of twelve residents take part in twice weekly shopping trips plus a monthly social outing – costing just £2.50-£3.00 each. An average of eight residents take part in lifelong learning IT classes two days a week, enabling them to link with families and friends using email and Skype.
- 81% of the people taking part in shopping trips say it makes them feel more part of the community and 65% say that the trips improve their quality of life. Residents also report increased confidence and feeling safer.



### What next

The Trust now plans to develop a gardening service, building on an existing tool-share scheme to offer grass and shrub cutting and basic maintenance. Volunteers are being sought via the Volunteer Bureau to progress this. It is also considering enhanced home support for befriending and help with medical appointments.

"I want to express my gratitude for the service taking the elderly residents to shopping malls and garden centres. My mother is widowed and unable to drive, so her life has been so enriched by these trips. Hearing her talk about who she has met and where she has been has really made me happy. I'm so grateful that this service exists... thank you!"

Daughter of a service user.

For more information, contact Tessa Mitchell, Head of Community Services, 0121 415 6492 or [tessamitchell@bvt.org.uk](mailto:tessamitchell@bvt.org.uk)



## 8. Futures Greenscape

Futures Housing Group

### Helping people back to work through a grounds maintenance social enterprise

Futures Greenscape provides six-month, paid placements for unemployed people to work and train in grounds maintenance and develop their job search skills. It maintains gardens and footpaths for all of Futures Homescape (formerly Amber Valley Housing Limited) estates. Started 2011.

#### Partners and funding

The housing association works closely with local Job Centres to recruit long-term unemployed people for placements. The service also employs five permanent staff. Futures Greenscape runs as a self-sustaining social enterprise without any outside subsidy.

#### Aims

The project brings together a core business need to maintain shared, open spaces with the strategic objective to encourage and develop social enterprises that benefit local communities. It also aims to invest in the local economy by using nearby equipment and materials suppliers whenever possible.

Futures Greenscape delivers on the group's values to reach its potential and embrace innovation by delivering higher standards of service that improve satisfaction and build reputation. At the end of

their placements, employees get advice and support to find long-term work.

#### Impact and value for money

- Complaints about grounds maintenance have dropped and the service now receives regular compliments.
- Each year, the group of five placements saves the public purse around £20,000 in JobSeekers Allowance and makes positive contributions through Income Tax and National Insurance. Over £33,000 per year is paid in wages, to support the local economy.
- Futures Greenscape cuts an area of grass equivalent to 50 football pitches every ten days during the growing season and maintains 13,000 square metres of hedges and 92,000 square metres of footpaths.
- 200 older and vulnerable residents use the subsidised individual gardening service. Placements also work on the 'Dream Scheme' programme to transform neglected and unused areas.
- The health, self-esteem and confidence of people on work placements has dramatically improved.



### What next

Futures Greenscape is now diversifying into clearing empty homes, decorating, hard landscaping, drain rodding and other minor repairs. It hopes to offer accredited qualifications and apprenticeships in the future and sell its services to other local housing providers and the wider public.

"I was on benefits for the first time in my life, which I hated. I saw the advertisement for Futures Greenscape, went for it, and was delighted when I got the job. Working outdoors is a welcome change and I'm enjoying meeting people in the community, who seem to really appreciate the work we're doing."

Neil, Futures Greenscape employee.

**For more information, contact Antony Baines, Head of Business Improvement & Integration, 0845 0948300 or [antony.baines@futureshg.co.uk](mailto:antony.baines@futureshg.co.uk)**



## 9. Grow Cook Share

Shropshire Housing Group

### Engaging communities to grow, cook and eat healthy, local, seasonal food

Grow Cook Share offers free help, advice and training on cookery, gardening and healthy eating through a network of paid staff and local volunteers. The project runs in Ludlow and Craven Arms - two areas with pockets of deprivation in an otherwise prosperous county. It links to Homegrown - a sister project providing work tasters for young people aged 14-24. Started 2010.

#### Partners and funding

Grow Cook Share is a partnership between Ludlow 21, Craven Arms Community Food and Shropshire Housing Group. It's funded by the Big Lottery local food programme and the European Union's Rural Development LEADER budget.

The project has developed strong links with the Ludlow Foyer, Shropshire Adult Education Service, local schools, community centres and farmers' markets, where surplus produce is sold.

#### Aims

The project supports communities by boosting skills, confidence, local networks and access to sustainable, affordable, seasonal fresh food. It also tackles a specific housing

problem - properties being vacated because tenants struggle to look after large gardens. Growing fruit and vegetables helps people to use and maintain their gardens productively and reconnect with the area's farming heritage.

#### Impact and value for money

- 70 people are already growing vegetables at home or in community gardens - against a three-year target of 150.
- 47 people from a wide mix of ages, cultures and backgrounds have completed the four-session cookery training.
- 8 regular volunteers are involved in supporting the cookery courses, helping with growing, selling at farmers' markets and cooking for events.
- Grow Cook Share has been engaged to run cookery training for the whole of Shropshire as part of the 'New You' adult education course.
- Working with Shropshire Housing Group's Homegrown skills and employment project, young people from the Ludlow Foyer organised and provided catering for the Ludlow Food Festival.



### What next

The project aims to set up a catering social business and catering training company to provide meals on wheels, school meals and community cafes. This will help to re-engage people farthest from the labour market with economic activity. Grow Cook Share also wants to acquire land to scale up its growing activity to a more commercial level.

"Grow Cook Share is all about engaging and working with communities, not preaching to them about obesity and healthy eating. We help people remember that fresh, local, seasonal produce tastes great and can be quick, easy to prepare and good value."

Valerie Meehan,  
Coordinator.

For more information, please contact Valerie Meehan, Grow Cook Share Coordinator on 01584 878642 or [valerie.meehan@ss-ha.org.uk](mailto:valerie.meehan@ss-ha.org.uk)



## 10. Parkside Community Hub

CHP



### Multi-agency advice and support to build skills, confidence and job prospects

The Parkside Community Hub in North West Chelmsford is part of a £10 million regeneration programme. A former Primary Care Trust clinic is being refurbished to provide space for local agencies to run courses, drop-in and advice sessions. Started 2009.

#### Partners and funding

The project is funded by the Government's Investing in Communities programme, through the East of England Development Agency and Essex Regional Development Agency. Partners working with the Hub include Citizens Advice Bureau, JobCentre Plus, Women's Aid, Relate, the Police and Chelmsford Borough Council.

#### Aims

To help regenerate an area that formerly had a poor reputation, with high levels of unemployment and anti-social behaviour, the Hub aims to increase levels of engagement and build local people's skills, self-esteem, opportunities and quality of life.

The Hub provides a focal point for community volunteering and work placements - fulfilling CHP's focus on 'communities, homes and people'. The ethos is to bring services to people's doorsteps, in ways they can trust.

#### Impact and value for money

- ▶ In 2010/11 - even before the refurbished premises were open - the Hub worked with more than 450 people.
- ▶ 47 people gained level 1 and 2 qualifications, including numeracy, literacy and IT. 62 others undertook learning on topics like cookery, CVs and interviews. Four people got permanent, paid jobs in 2010/11.
- ▶ The Hub supported 57 community events in 2010/11 and offered 16 free childcare places for people taking part in training and guidance sessions.
- ▶ Five people have taken part in work experience with CHP. The Hub has a service level agreement with JobCentre Plus to match volunteers and placements with other local employers.
- ▶ Levels of engagement and volunteering have significantly increased - two volunteers run training and support in the Hub's IT suite. 15 young people are involved in an inter-generational cookery project with 90 older people living in sheltered housing.

#### What next

Young women taking part in the numeracy and literacy classes have set up a dance and fitness class with funding from Sports Essex. Local people are involved in a community mosaic project for the garden of the Hub building. By introducing nominal charges for some activities and seeking funding from other sources, the aim is to make as much of the Hub's work as possible self-sustaining.

"The Community Hub services have brought real stability and back-up to this area - local people know that if they have any problem, they can come here. It's helped to make North West Chelmsford a nicer place to live and made a massive difference to people's confidence and self-worth."

Debbie Willson,  
Community Hub Manager.

For more information, contact Debbie Willson, Community Hub Manager, 0300 555 0500 or [debbie.willson@chp.org.uk](mailto:debbie.willson@chp.org.uk)



# 11. Keys to Health

Cross Keys Homes

## Community-based advice and support for healthy living

Keys to Health offers holistic help and advice on health issues such as weight loss and stopping smoking. It complements the Working 4 U employment project, which provides tailored education, training, advice and support to help people get jobs or move closer to work. Started 2009.

### Partners and funding

Cross Keys Homes contributed £25,000 through its Community Strategy and the Peterborough NHS Primary Care Trust initially provided free management and specialist training for two health trainers. The project now has one trainer based one day a week at Cross Keys Homes' community hub.

### Aims

Cross Keys Homes and NHS Peterborough identified acute health inequalities in some neighbourhoods, where life expectancy is up to ten years less than more affluent areas. The project sought to tackle these inequalities by offering expert health advice and support in accessible local venues.

The trainers helped people tackle the health issues like obesity, diet, physical activity, smoking and alcohol problems. By promoting healthier lifestyles, Keys to Health aims to reduce the

need for GP treatments and hospital admissions.

The project was launched through a series of community events. Housing staff referred residents to the service and helped the trainers to pinpoint people most needing help.

### Impact and value for money

- ▶ The health trainers worked with 20 people between January and June 2010. Since February 2011, the health trainer has supported a further 15 clients from the community hub.
- ▶ Seven people have been helped to quit smoking, and seven people have taken part in sustained weight loss programmes.
- ▶ 22 people have been referred to other health trainers and many others have been offered advice on other support services.
- ▶ Attendance at the health trainer clinics was greater than expected because of the local approach, offering support in the neighbourhood.
- ▶ One of the Keys to Health NHS trainers (a Cross Keys Homes resident) now works as a supervisor at a local care home.



## What next

The project has led to a number of other projects, including an outdoor gym to provide free, accessible exercise. Cross Keys Homes continues to refer residents for support from NHS health trainers across Peterborough. Residents are being encouraged to undertake Level 2 qualifications to become health champions and lead healthy community walks.

“It’s good to know that you can go to see the Health Advisor and talk to her about any health issues. The Health Advisor got me onto a Desmond Programme course to help me manage my Diabetes. She can also help with things like losing weight and exercise classes.”

Helene, service user and volunteer.

**For more information, contact Ruth Mingay, Community Programme Manager, 01733 396441 or [Ruth.Mingay@crosskeyshomes.co.uk](mailto:Ruth.Mingay@crosskeyshomes.co.uk)**



## 12. 4-Kix football

Origin Housing

### Engaging young people in community volunteering through football

4-Kix football supports 12 teams in the London boroughs of Camden and Enfield catering for players aged 16-25 with equipment, coaching, qualifications and facilities. In return, the players have to volunteer to help with community projects and events. Started 2009.

#### Partners and funding

4-Kix is funded by a three-year, £156,000 grant from the Football Foundation, which is match-funded by Origin Housing. The project works in partnership with national charities the Duke of Edinburgh's Awards and UK Youth.

#### Aims

The areas targeted by 4-Kix have large numbers of young people, and high rates of anti-social behaviour, unemployment and teenage pregnancies. Origin's Sports Development Worker identified a clear need to connect with disengaged young people and involve them in positive skills development that could lead to jobs and training.

The project particularly supports two core themes within Origin's community development strategy - providing tailored support to diverse neighbourhoods and empowering young people as leaders. 4-Kix also aims to generate positive media coverage, role models and personal discipline.

#### Impact and value for money

- 180-200 young people per year volunteer in a wide variety of community activities and events, including inter-generational gardening and IT training work with older residents at sheltered housing schemes.
- 16 adults have qualified as coaches, with three becoming employed by Origin's lunchtime schools programme.
- Eight young people have completed Duke of Edinburgh's and Youth Achievement Awards, with another eight about to finish.
- Levels of anti-social behaviour associated with young people have fallen in the areas covered by the project.



### What next

The disturbances in Enfield and other areas during summer 2011 show that the need for the sort of engagement and personal development provided by 4-Kix has never been greater. A new medical research institute in Camden has agreed to take over support for one of the clubs and Origin plan to keep developing the teams with other community partners after the Football Foundation funding comes to an end in 2012.

"I'm really glad I joined my football team. We've been able to train on astro turf and got new equipment. Our team has got better and more people are turning up. We've also been offered many projects and courses to do, which will help us in the future."

Jayden, Raynham Doorstep Green FC player.

For more information, contact Esther Archer, Head of Community Development on 020 7209 9334 or [esther.archer@originhousing.org.uk](mailto:esther.archer@originhousing.org.uk)



## 13. St Paul's Bow Common

Poplar HARCA

### Re-invigorating local groups and networks by refurbishing a church hall

The St Paul's Bow Common project has transformed a run-down, Grade II\* listed church building into a vibrant neighbourhood hub, which provides a new home for a much-expanded mix of community groups and services. Started 2009.

#### Partners and funding

The project extended Poplar HARCA's technical, engagement and financial resources and expertise to support the local church, school and community groups. In partnership with St Paul's Bow Common Vicar, Rev. Duncan Ross, the Diocese of London and Tower Hamlets Deanery, Poplar HARCA contributed £30,000 to the refurbishment, plus £15,000 worth of free technical input, contract and project management. This in turn levered in a further £20,000 from other stakeholders, including the Church Urban Fund.

#### Aims

After getting the go-ahead to demolish and replace an existing community centre building and to build 120 new homes, Poplar HARCA, urgently needed to relocate some established local groups. The St Paul's church congregation was also keen to build closer links with

other organisations in the area and have modern, upgraded facilities for its own activities.

#### Impact and value for money

- ▶ Use of the new facility has swelled from four regular groups to 16, providing valuable bookings income to the church.
- ▶ A local girls group has seen its membership increase fourfold because of the improved, more welcoming venue.
- ▶ The decision to refurbish the church hall rather than provide temporary, portakabin accommodation for community groups saved Poplar HARCA an estimated £80,000 and has secured the heritage of a prominent listed building.
- ▶ Blue Skies, a charity supporting young adults aged 18-25 with learning difficulties has become the anchor tenant - bringing a much-needed new disability agency into the area and leveraging in further capital and revenue assets.



### What next

The trust and relationships generated through this project have already led to Poplar HARCA and the London Diocese working together on another community development project, and facilitated links on another initiative with Trees for Cities. The experience at St Paul's Bow Common has created new potential to work with faith organisations who have capital assets, but may lack the skills and capacity to maximise their community benefit.

"This project achieved outstanding value for money and has brought in investment and services to the area that just wouldn't have otherwise happened. It has enabled us to blend strategic local interests and networks in a completely new way."

Mat Sheldon, Special Projects Manager.

For more information, contact Mat Sheldon, Special Projects Manager on 07850 661146 or [mat.sheldon@poplarharca.co.uk](mailto:mat.sheldon@poplarharca.co.uk)



# 14. InComE (Independence acCommodation Employment)

Shepherds Bush Housing Association

## Reducing overcrowding and welfare dependency for young adults

InComE links temporary social housing tenancies to jobs and training for young adults from overcrowded homes with high levels of unemployment and reliance on benefits. Started 2009.

### Partners and funding

The Department of Communities and Local Government funded the two-year InComE pilot, with further funding from seven West London councils and project management and administration support from Shepherds Bush HA. Nineteen housing associations made studio and one-bedroom flats available on fixed term tenancies. The Young Foundation has independently verified and evaluated the project.

### Aims

The project targets overcrowded families, offering adult non-dependants a housing association tenancy for up to three years in return for a commitment to study, training or employment. Caseworkers help young people to find and sustain college courses and jobs.

InComE also aims to improve family relationships, reduce health problems and boost the educational achievement of siblings. By breaking cycles of worklessness and welfare

dependency, it enables people to get private sector housing and jobs with rising prospects and incomes.

### Impact and value for money

- In the two-year pilot, the project supported 70 clients, with only a 10% drop-out. Four young people have already moved-on successfully.
- From a starting point of 40%, the proportion of young adults not in education, training or employment, has dropped to 10%.
- 63% of the households involved are no longer overcrowded, reducing family tension and improving quality of life for younger siblings.
- The Young Foundation's analysis showed a 40% saving in public expenditure for people housed through the project, compared to the same client group where there is no, or unsuccessful intervention.
- The project has been particularly positive for young black people. Eighty six percent of black InComE clients are working and/or studying.



## What next

InComE hopes to expand to cover the whole of London. It is seeking support via Social Impact Bonds from the Department of Work and Pension's Innovation Fund and ultimately aims to become self funding.

"The InComE project has been a lifeline. Our relationships in the house have improved and there are far fewer arguments. My son is now a lot more confident since moving out and starting college."

Mother of family taking part in the InComE project.

**For more information, contact Amanda Morrison, Director of Housing Services, 020 8996 4201 or [amanda.morrison@sbhg.co.uk](mailto:amanda.morrison@sbhg.co.uk)**



# 15. Berinsfield Community Business

Soha Housing

## Transforming an isolated neighbourhood through community-led housing management and services

The Berinsfield Community Business (BCB) provides intensive, local housing, cleaning and grounds maintenance services to a village of 1000 homes. The village is affected by high rates of unemployment and deprivation, low aspirations and poor transport links. Started 2002.

### Partners and funding

The redevelopment and refurbishment of Berinsfield's homes and community facilities was originally funded by South Oxfordshire District Council. BCB was set up with Housing Corporation Innovation and Good Practice funding.

The key partners are the Parish and District Councils, the local residents' association, Parents and Children Together, Age UK and the Berinsfield Action Group, which provides a link to the Local Strategic Partnership.

### Aims

The Community Business aims to provide capacity building, sustainable jobs and training and local business opportunities to complement the physical regeneration of the area. BCB directly manages Soha Housing's 320 homes in Berinsfield, but all village residents can get help and advice.

BCB is part of a range of structures to help local people and groups work together, access funding and find the best ways to meet needs.

### Impact and value for money

- ▶ BCB has levered in other funding, including £100,000 for IT from the New Opportunities Fund and £500,000 from South Oxfordshire District Council.
- ▶ 51% of BCB's income now comes from contracts with other housing associations and parish councils.
- ▶ The majority of the eight permanent jobs created and places on the BCB board are held by Berinsfield residents.
- ▶ Overall satisfaction with BCB's services rose from 67% in 2002 to 73% in 2009. In 2009, 90% were satisfied with the grass cutting service.
- ▶ Criminal damage, anti-social behaviour and complaints have reduced because of the intensive local management and effective partnerships.
- ▶ In 2009, 79% of residents rated Berinsfield as a good place to live - up from 66% in 2002.



## What next

BCB has proved that it's viable and sustainable. It now plans to develop wider training and employment support, including apprenticeships with contractors. To make Berinsfield greener, it is also exploring community recycling and improvements to open spaces.

"With its intensive approach, Berinsfield Community Business shows that localism works. It has promoted the idea of 'sticky money' - money earned in the village stays there and helps to attract more money from outside."

Mark Williams, Business Director, Berinsfield Community Business.

For more information, contact Maureen Adams, Director of Customer Services on 01235 515935 or madams@soha.co.uk



## 16. Neighbourhood Charters

West Kent Housing Association

### Building community cohesion and pride through multi-agency agreements

Neighbourhood Charters have removed barriers and mobilised residents and local agencies to improve services, amenities and the environment in two areas with poor reputations and low levels of engagement. Using social media helps to keep up energy, interest and commitment. Started 2007.

#### Partners and funding

The neighbourhood charters bring residents together with the County, District and Town Councils, Fire and Rescue and Police Services. Keep Britain Tidy facilitated and project managed the first two charters, at St Mary's in Swanley and Spitals Cross in Edenbridge.

#### Aims

By consulting and engaging people to agree the charter over several months, the project aims to bring the community and service providers closer together, to provide a stronger response to problems.

Increased trust and better relationships provide a platform for other community action, including work by the association's charitable arm, West Kent Extra. The long-term objective is to make areas safer, cleaner and greener.

#### Impact and value for money

- ▶ St Mary's has its first residents' association running independently. Residents in both areas have revamped local parks and gardens. Children in St Mary's have benefited from new play equipment.
- ▶ St Mary's residents are more satisfied with the area - 72% now say it's a good place to live (up from 68% in 2006). 54% of residents say they feel the area has improved in the last two years.
- ▶ Residents have noticed increased participation from partners and service providers. Graffiti, anti-social behaviour and criminal damage have reduced in both areas.
- ▶ External and media perceptions of the two areas have improved. Social media campaigns based around litter picking mascots 'Doug and Bella' have attracted more than a thousand followers.
- ▶ Problems with litter, fly-tipping and dog fouling have reduced. The Spitals Cross neighbourhood charter is a Keep Britain Tidy good practice model.



#### What next

More volunteer litter pickers are being recruited to work alongside Community Wardens to sustain environmental improvements. Young people in St Mary's have won Heritage Lottery funding to make a film about their personal histories. A third neighbourhood charter launches in another part of Swanley in early 2012.

"The consultation and work to agree neighbourhood charters really gets people talking to each other and brings them together to have a say in their area. Greater resident involvement has opened up new channels for everyone to communicate and provide support."

Suzanne Smith,  
Communications and  
Marketing Manager.

For more information,  
contact Suzanne Smith,  
Communications and  
Marketing Manager on  
01732 749409 or  
suzanne.smith@  
wkha.org.uk

# PlaceShapers housing associations tackling worklessness

**The fact that more than two thirds of the case study projects focus on jobs and skills in some way, illustrates the extent to which tackling worklessness has become part of the mainstream footprint of housing associations' activity.**

The link between homes and employment is another long-standing part of our heritage - with a number of PlaceShapers organisations tracing their origins back to Victorian era industrial philanthropists.

Results from a recent survey of PlaceShapers' work with people not in employment, education or training (NEET) show that 36 associations are involved in 170 projects helping nearly 10,000 young people into or towards employment. The survey shows how the most successful schemes for this group are delivered by organisations with local knowledge and understanding of community dynamics.

Some of the NEET projects operate through the Government's Work Programme, with housing associations acting as sub-contractors to the regional prime providers.

Many though are run by in-house training organisations or charitable foundations and in partnership with contractors, other housing providers, local authorities, private businesses and charities. Housing associations are also increasingly seeking out alternative funding sources, such as the European Social Fund.

Tellingly, only one of the organisations responding to the survey said that it intended to reduce its involvement in addressing worklessness. All the others indicated that they plan to do more to help address the current record levels of UK youth unemployment.

Table below: Results of PlaceShapers NEET survey, November 2011.

Worklessness projects and number of clients supported	Project type	Work experience / volunteering placements	Apprenticeships	Careers advice and skills training	Paid employment	Total
	Number of projects	37	20	83	29	169
	Number of clients (To nearest 10)	800	930	6,690	1,320	9,740
Likely future activity on worklessness	Likely to participate more: 35 respondents (97%)			Likely to participate less: 1 respondent		

## Value for money

### The case studies show how carefully targeted, well-managed social investment can produce a powerful multiplier effect that levers in other resources and makes every pound go further.

Shepherd's Bush Housing Association's InComE project (see page 22) illustrates this added value perfectly. The Young Foundation's independent assessment showed that the short-term cost of non-intervention for a cohort of 450 people is £5.3 million. InComE provides long-term social and financial benefits costing just £3 million, for the same number of people - a saving of £2.3 million (43%) in public spending.

Another PlaceShapers member, Octavia Housing, got the University of Manchester's Institute for Political and Economic Governance to review the impact of its charitable foundation. The Octavia Foundation supports young people, the elderly, jobs, training and debt advice. It raised £150,000 in charitable and other funding during 2010/11.

A £10,000 Big Lottery grant to support heritage film making projects for young people has had far-reaching effects. One young resident, 19-year-old Moktar Alatas, recently won a London Peace Award for the social enterprise he set up, using the skills gained from the film project.

Moktar's 'Aspire 2 Inspire' enterprise builds the self-belief and aspirations of diverse and

marginalised young people who are often disillusioned and disengaged. The organisation has already inspired 50 young people to improve their lives and attracted funding and support from a range of local and national agencies. Three more pilots are underway to support another 30 young people. See [www.a2i-youth.co.uk](http://www.a2i-youth.co.uk)

Primary Care Trust funding for the Foundation's befriending project for older and vulnerable people has been just as effective. £30,000 trained and resourced a team of nearly 40 volunteers to visit carefully matched people at home, to reduce social isolation and reconnect them with their local communities.

#### An expert view

PlaceShapers asked leading housing auditors Grant Thornton to review the 16 case studies and give an independent oversight of their achievements.

Grant Thornton's Head of Housing, Arthur Merchant, said:

"The case studies are an impressive collection of projects that have clearly made a positive impact on communities and people's lives. Where organisations have used outside agencies to

independently verify results, allied with providing a service user perspective, the evidence is particularly compelling.

The broad range of projects shows the ability of PlaceShapers members to deliver significant cash savings and other benefits to those residing in their communities. They demonstrate that "localism" works in practice, that housing associations have the ability to play a leading role in the localism agenda and that real value can be achieved, particularly if such initiatives can be replicated across the country."

#### The PlaceShapers perspective

"Invest to save is now a well-established principle in providing services to local communities. It's not always easy to quantify impacts. What price do we put on a saved life? Or an inspired young person?"

It's clear though from these case studies and other inspirational work by PlaceShapers associations across the country that the savings run into millions of pounds. That's real value for money."

Tony Stacey, Chief Executive South Yorkshire Housing Association and Chair of PlaceShapers Group

# The PlaceShapers manifesto

## The lessons from the case studies in this report lend weight to our campaign for:

- › Government and public support for an independent, diverse, not-for-profit sector that provides a range of housing options to meet local needs and responds to local influence.
- › Real regulatory freedom and flexibility to determine arrangements locally to suit our customers' needs and give them choice.
- › The value of community based services to be a key influencing factor when assessing value for money and selecting preferred investment and management partners.
- › Housing associations to be recognised as primary influencers and partners, integrated into local service provision and investment planning.
- › Simpler mechanisms for achieving stock rationalisation and asset sales, to support the delivery of more homes and improved local services.
- › A rent regime for social housing that gives stability and control of income so that associations can plan and make the best use of their resources.
- › Protection of the most vulnerable in welfare reform, and a Housing Benefit system that balances the interests of residents and providers.
- › A strong commitment in funding and regulatory regimes to the local management of housing association homes.
- › Sustained, effective tools and support for local and statutory agencies to tackle anti-social behaviour across all tenures.
- › Easier access to public contracts for social enterprises and other community-based suppliers supported by housing associations.

To join us or find out more about PlaceShapers, please contact:

- › Tony Stacey, Chair, PlaceShapers Group and Chief Executive, South Yorkshire HA: 0114 290 0235 or [t.stacey@syha.co.uk](mailto:t.stacey@syha.co.uk)
- › Lucy Ferman, 07974 371808 or [lucy.ferman@placeshapers.org](mailto:lucy.ferman@placeshapers.org)

The case studies in this report show that localism can transform communities, lives and opportunities. PlaceShapers housing associations are at the spearhead of delivering localism that works.

Inspired to do the same in your neighbourhood?

To join us or find out more about PlaceShapers, please contact:

- ▶ Tony Stacey, Chair, PlaceShapers Group and Chief Executive, South Yorkshire HA: 0114 290 0235 or [t.stacey@syha.co.uk](mailto:t.stacey@syha.co.uk)
- ▶ Lucy Ferman, 07974 371808 or [lucy.ferman@placeshapers.org](mailto:lucy.ferman@placeshapers.org)

[www.placeshapers.org](http://www.placeshapers.org)

