

THE BEST THING

An Overview of Research on Impact of Empty Homes Community Grants Programme in the North East and Yorkshire and Humberside

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The Best Thing.....

 The best thing is seeing when the house is finished. You know, seeing when it's all finished and somebody moves into that property and you know that all the volunteers have done a bit to help.....'

Volunteer, Canopy, Leeds



Redcar and Cleveland MIND

- Kitchen at Lazenby, Cleveland

Empty Homes Community Grants Programme (EHCGP)

'a bold departure from large scale procurement of affordable housing...worthy of detailed evaluation'



2011-15 Funding Programme

- £50 million capital funding
- Non-registered providers (i.e. Community-led)
- 110 successful projects lease or buy and improve
- Over half groups not involved before the programme
- Filled in gaps in the map
- Peer support network through Self-help housing.org.

EHCGP LEGACY?

– Outputs or Outcomes?

EHCGP OUTPUTS BY REGION

Region	Grant (Rounds 1&2)	Underspend Re-allocated into region	Bedrooms	Properties
London	£10.1 million		603	246
Midlands	£5.9 million	£600k	684	289
North West	£6.1 million	£550k	796	454
South East/East	£3.7 million	£350k	556	124
South West	£3.8 million	£220k	401	165
North East/Yorkshire & Humberside	£19.5 million	£3.1 million	1084	481
TOTALS	49.1 million	£4.8 million	4124	1759

Provisional outputs pending Tribal Final Monitoring 2015

EHCGP Yorkshire and Humberside Regions

- Yorkshire and Humberside awarded largest share of grant any region (£13 million).
- 15 Yorkshire and Humberside projects received Round 1 funding.
- 8 of these also received Round 2 allocations.
- 7 organisations received underspend funding.



Cluster of well established projects in Leeds (e.g. LATCH, Canopy), Hull (e.g.Giroscope, PROBE) added to by new projects across region.

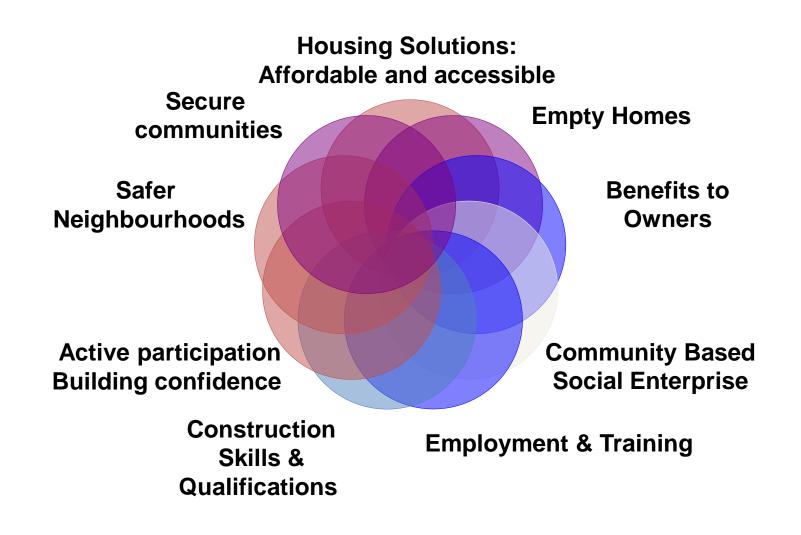
EHCGP North East Region

- North East grant allocation just over £9 million.
- 13 participating organisations
- Round 1: 10 successful bids
- Round 2: 6 existing EHCGP recipients and 3 new bidders received funding.
- 7 organisations received underspend funding.



Some well established groups (e.g. Community Campus), networked with new entrants. Interesting mix of homelessness, community finance, mental health organisations

Self-help housing: Multiple Outcomes





What is Government and Society Looking for Today?

- 1. Value for Money
- 2. Localism
- 3. Tackling skills gap and youth unemployment
- 4. Rewarding volunteering
- 5. Solutions to wicked problems

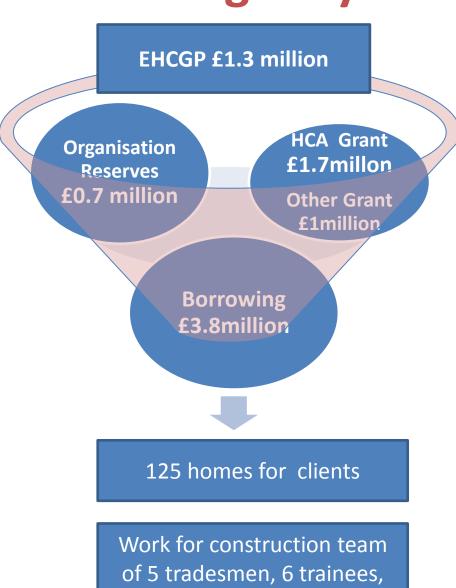
6. Building Strong and Independent
Organisations and a vibrant
community-led sector

- ✓ Making the Grant go a long way
- ✓ Inputs and Returns
- ✓ Doing things differently by being local
- ✓ Genuine pathways into work
- ✓ Mature construction workforce
- **✓** Volunteering to Homes
- √ Volunteering to Work
- ✓ Decent Homes for clients
- √ Offender resettlement
- ✓ Diverse volunteers and good landlord
- ✓ Self-help that fits needs of vulnerable
- ✓ Tackling Blight and Anti-social behaviour
- ✓ Assets, balance sheet and cashflow
- √ Vibrant Sector, Going viral, networking
- ✓ Local Authority partners

1. Making the Grant Go a Long Way

2.5 properties will be delivered for every one funded from EHCGP and total funding secured for empty homes work is equivalent to 4.5 times the original EHCGP grant.

Changing Lives, Gateshead



and 1 apprentice

Wide range of Inputs & Returns

INPUTS

- ✓ Grant recycling (charge owners for works)
- Management fees for leased properties
- ✓ 'unrestricted' Rental income for purchased properties (LHA level)
- ✓ Construction Training Board (for training completed)
- ✓ Community Right To Build & Locality (for feasibility and support)
- ✓ Jobs Fund (for trainees)
- ✓ Some Supporting People (for residents)
- ✓ Charitable donations and volunteer time
- ✓ Furnishing Grants
- ✓ Soft loans and grants
- ✓ Commercial Loans

Financial and social returns

- Social Value: Canopy CBA calculation £4.28 social value for each £ of external investment
- Benefits to volunteers (selfesteem, skills and motivation)
- Benefits to tenants (home and friends)
- Benefits to community (less derelict property)
- Third party benefits (savings to public services)

Plus Impacts on organisational viability (assets, unrestricted income, cash flow & influence)

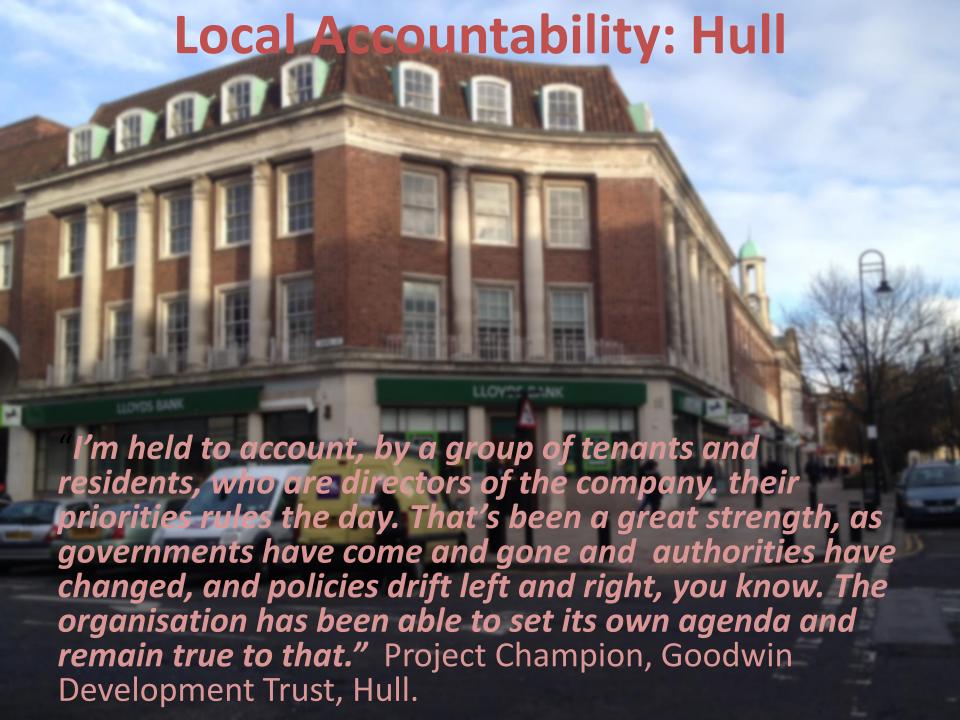
2. Doing Things Differently by Being Local



THE BENEFITS OF BEING LOCAL

Fresh Horizons has a strong local community focus leading to local regeneration impact, local jobs, local economic impact and a unique advantage in negotiating with local property owners





3. Making a DifferenceGenuine pathways into work and workforce development

'the approach makes a major difference to these kids' lives...they have a sense of self-worth and feel they have achieved something. Spending the grants and hitting the targets are less important than the guys on the sites'.



Pathways into Work From Training Hub to Mature Workforce

2010 Future Jobs Fund. 10 trainees for 6 months, one construction manager.

2015 EHCGP. 3 levels of staff, 5 apprenticeships with college day release, 10 trainees beyond NVQ2 several skilled tradesmen and two site supervisors and construction manager.

"I started on a trainee course for the government. Now I'm doing an apprenticeship. .. I'm doing a plastering course which I'd never done beforeIts brought me from the streets into work which I like'.

Apprentice Fresh Horizons (in workforce 18 months and previously a volunteer, always lived in Deighton)

TRANSFORMATION in FRESH HORIZIONS BETWEEN 2010 AND 2015

DUE TO EHCGP WORKFLOW

4. Rewarding Volunteering

"everyone works together, we have a laugh and it's a good vibe. It's a good vibe between us all..." Volunteer, (Canopy tenants must do at least 12 days work on their future home to be eligible to move in)

"A lot of us did itwe did it for the provisional (driving licence). I did the presbytery garden.. that was all right that was an experience as well." Former Volunteer, Fresh Horizons, who then moved on to trainee and apprentice roles



Volunteer painters, Canopy, Leeds

5. Real Solutions to 'wicked problems'



Mental health and ex-offenders, Redcar

"none of the landlords would give me a chance being from prison...then these guys said we've got somewhere but it's not ideal. But I said look anywhere is good for me, just let me have my own space. I've never been happier"

Ex-offender and former volunteer now living and working for Redcar and Cleveland Mind

"we were getting more and more people through the door who were in poor private rented ...people with a mental health difficulty are less likely to be able to maintain a tenancy."

Project Champion, Redcar and Cleveland Mind

Refurbishment in Progress, Redcar

Decent homes in PRS for groups without homelessness priority

- Secure decent housing for housing advice clients in Keighley & Scarborough
- Move-on from supported housing
- Expand PRS management stock but improve quality
- Acquire assets

Key House, Keighley, York, Scarborough and Calderdale







Diverse Volunteers & Good Landlord: Hull

volunteering, "we've got a mixture of exoffenders; people living in hostels; people that have been out of work for a long period of time; young people looking for experience; older people with slight mental health difficulties.... wanting to pass on their skills, and it's about not being so isolated, whereas others are really trying to get back into work."

housing "we do house some of those volunteers, or other people, local people, looking for accommodation. We get quite a few phone calls every day asking for housing. So we're well-known round here as a good landlord."



Caroline, Project Manager, Giroscope, Hull

Adapting 'self-help' model to meet the needs of more vulnerable people

LATCH evolved from 'self-help' organisation in which residents were directly involved in building work to a 'housing first' model

- referrals from Leeds Addiction Unit, Leeds Women's Aid, exoffenders
- Intensive support from support worker in first year
- Then take active steps to move forward in life
- Move to independent household finances and training/work

LATCH gives people a stable & secure base to address challenges and live independently, EHCGP has underpinned this model.



LATCH, Leeds 25 Years of adaption to social need

Tackling Abandonment, Blight and ASB



6. Building Strong and Independent Organisations

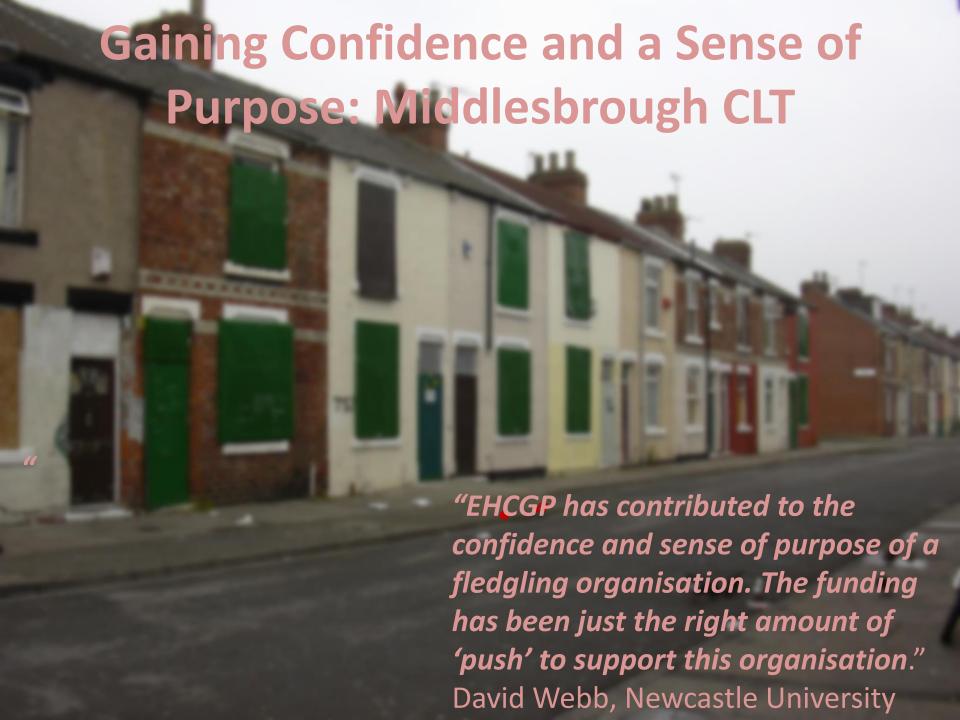
Canopy's had a good year – a good two years really, largely thanks to the Empty Homes Community Grant programme.

.....the staff team has doubled as a result of the increased activity and income, so we've doubled from eight staff up to 16 staff currently.

We've been able to buy 13 properties. That's massively improved our balance sheet, giving us much better assets and more sustainability going forward.







Building a vibrant community-led sector

Strong organisations have actively fostered wider sector, Leeds and Tees Valley: 'we've worked with these organisations to help build the infrastructure and look at things like bidding for grants and meeting each other and going to visit schemes; good old-fashioned community building' Community Campus Project Champion

Local authorities a key partner – Hull, Birmingham, Leeds - LATCH 25 years celebration speech "like a love letter to the council".

Some positive links with housing associations – e.g. Coast and Country trustees at Redcar MIND 'really important to success, because they've had a lot more knowledge and experience'.











EHCGP contributed to spaces for vibrant community-led sector

After EHCGP?

"For Self-help housing to grow and develop there needs to be further community grants funding to bring empty private properties into use."

2011-15 **grant** programme was **ring fenced** to non-registered providers and led to **wider social value** and community impact.

Looking to the future:

- Why is public funding needed?
- Why did ring fencing work?
- How can wider community impacts be encouraged?
- What is the appetite for more?

Other opportunities

- Meanwhile Use Development pipeline
- Managing Hard to let social housing
- Asset transfers

"The potential for additional activities to manage hard to let properties for registered providers, development pipeline properties and asset transfers should also be explored."

Why Public Funding has to be part of the mix

- Continuing to attract smaller locally focused groups
- Without it other funding not attracted or doesn't stack up
- Mix of grant, soft loans and interest bearing loans makes things happen
- Without the Grant the sector was clustered in certain places with fewer than 50 active organisations – now well over 100 and active in every region



Why ring-fencing to non registered housing providers worked

- Without ring fencing grant unlikely to reach street level
- Mainstream providers not interested in street properties
- Barriers to new entrants to sector substantial
- Some have built up track record & registered with HCA
- Most would not meet new stringent financial viability and governance standards



How can wider social and community impacts be encouraged?

'everybody likes collaborative working but nobody wants to accept responsibility.....'

'When you say, 'Oh, it's going to take a bit longer,' they'll go, 'Oh, is it worth it?......'

The impact for apprentices and clients is massive, but sometimes that gets lost in the ether'.



Project Champion, Community Campus

An Appetite for More

2014 Self-Help-Housing & Hact survey indicated an appetite for further growth:

- £52m grant required over the next three years
- Confirmed benefits of a small scale locally focused approach
- And potential for leverage
- Scope for viral expansion!

'The success of our project has inspired us to want to do more. We would seek a mix of property types and community areas'

(Goodwin Development Trust, Hull)

