

Meeting To Review Position Following The 9th June Event In Middlesbrough Looking At The Prospects For Growth & Asset Development Among Community Housing Organisations Across Teesside

@ Community Campus Stockton 25.10.16

Present :	
Paul Catterall	Open Door NE
Lesley Conroy	Coast & Country HA
Graeme Oram	Five Lamps
Helen Pritchard	Stocton BC Homelessness and Housing
Martin Waters	Tees Valley Combined Authority
Julia Heslop	Durham University
Stuart Drummond	Hartlepool NDC Trust
Carl Ditchburn	Community Campus
Jon Fitzmaurice	Self Help Housing
Meghan Butt	HACT
Mike Milen	RCVDA
Ann Bayley	North Ormesby Development Trust
Alan Mackay	North Ormesby Development Trust
Malcolm Walker	Hartlepool NDC Trust
Ashley Marron	Middlesbrough CLT
Gordon Mitchell	Middlesbrough CLT
Ken Sargent	Middlesbrough CLT
Veronica Harnett	Redcar & Cleveland Mind
Victoria Keen	HCA
Jez Ince	Charity Bank
Jen McKevitt	Back On The Map

Apologies:

Andy Pettersen		East Cleveland Youth Housing Trust
Sade Sangowawa		Cultures CIC
Brian Jones		Moses Project
Dot Turton		Hope North East

Rationale: Exploring the case for a Teesside area-based initiative

The meeting was intended to gauge the appetite for some sort of collaboration between organisations that could be used to raise the profile of community housing across Teesside and attract more resources into Teesside for both individual and collective benefit – perhaps in a similar way to Leeds Community Homes where a number of community housing organisations are currently working together to attract more resources and raise finance across Leeds

The Impact Of The Empty Homes Community Grants Programme.

Since the end of the EHCGP in March 2015 there has been an absence of new funding, however the increase in asset ownership means that a number of organisations are now able to raise further funding via loans etc.

- **Community Campus:** £1.2m from EHCGP. 2-3 homes currently undergoing renovation with charitable money.
- **Middlesbrough CLT:** £213k (allocated) from EHCGP. Potential for further work on vacant stock/shop conversions. Content to sell on once renovated in order to revitalise the area
- **Five Lamps:** £1.2m (49 homes) from EHCGP, but all leased; 3 have been sold, aiming to raise additional funding to refurbish 8-10 for next year; lease and repair
- **Hartlepool NDC Trust:** £350k from EHCGP for Methodist church was project which also received support from LA via asset transfer in exchange for a car park. Now in discussion with Joseph Rowntree HA re further development.
- **R&C Mind:** £313k from EHCGP successful project overall; acquired two more houses from the local authority; strong appetite but currently lack of finance
- **North Ormesby CLT:** purchasing six vacant houses at a 50% discount from Accent HA with funding from Big Local. Possibility for further purchases
- **Back on the Map Sunderland** currently manage 69 homes, going to take on a further 130 from Thirteen HA

Martin Waters the Housing Lead, gave an update on the Tees Valley Combined Authority

Martin reported that the Combined Authority would become a legal entity from 1st April 2017 and that thereafter a mayoral election was scheduled for early May. He went on to describe the current position on Teesside:

- Housing growth: current projections (22,000 over the next ten years) are not enough, there is a need to accelerate
- Planning regulators give favour to development, family, and executive housing in urban centres
- 40% of Tees Valley housing rented, 1/5 in social housing, 1/5 private rental, 60% in ownership
- Need for affordable housing and varying types of tenure.
- Difficult to get development on brownfield sites because mainstream developers choose where to develop
- There is an aspiration to increase rental accommodation as the population is choosing this tenure type, yet social housing is not being built in the absence of government funding
- Issues with private rental market: absent landlords and investors buy low cost housing with no interest in the value of the property, see it purely as a revenue stream; changes with the welfare reform combined with unregulated rents increase risk of tenants not being able to pay rent
- Deprivation in city centres is hidden; renewal and regeneration in urban areas is fundamental

- Registered providers are disposing difficult stock and offloading it to the private sector, providing more choice but on the bad end of private rental resulting in lack of community stewardship

Martin explained that prior to the meeting he had not fully appreciated the extent of the work being undertaken by community housing organisations and confirmed that the Combined Authority would be happy to work with them collectively.

Julie Heslop from Durham University: presented research from her PhD, which focused on the Crisis self-build Segal Protohome project for homeless single people. For more information on her work click [here](#).

Victoria Keen, Area Manager from the HCA North East and Community Led Development Network Lead explained the current position vis a vis HCA funding since the launch of their new Programme in April 2016, which is now primarily focussed on shared ownership/starter homes at the expense of housing for rent. She flagged up that there would be an announcement in the autumn statement of £60m for CLH, but this is aimed at coastal & rural areas adversely affected by second home ownership – she thought that if there were difficulties in committing it, then the restrictions might be eased. She encouraged organisations to get involved with the CLD Network and mentioned that Rose Seagrief from Power To Change would be attending the next meeting on 18th January ([see below for details](#))

Jon Fitzmaurice Self-Help Housing provided an update on trust/foundation funding.

- **Virgin Money** have a new Director in Nancy Doyle (previously from Aquila Way in Gateshead which was in receipt of EHCGP funding). He had a recent meeting with her and they are very interested in initiatives involving creating housing via empty properties and she's been charged with working out how best to do this.
- **Power to Change:** ongoing dialogue concerning their definition of a community business and SHH organisations not having enough local control to qualify. Concern that their funding is directed to poorly resources urban areas where needed most and not towards more affluent/articulate areas.
Dedicated housing program c£1m expected to be announced in early 2017. Plan to provide technical support via hubs in 10 selected areas to create a pipeline of community led housing. Still very focussed on new build projects, but Middlesbrough likely to be one of 10 areas.
- **Land Aid & Nationwide Foundation:** Both are continuing with their commitment to funding projects involving bringing empty properties back into use, but no further funding as present. Nationwide keen to see a Teesside initiative following their support for David Mullins's research and the event on 9th June .

Next Steps In Developing Teesside- Wide Collaboration :

A willingness to establish a Teesside-wide self-help housing coalition was expressed throughout the meeting and the interest of the Combined Authority was noted. It was felt that the benefits could be numerous, as collaboration will serve as an impetus to maintain momentum from the EHCGP; enable the sharing of local intelligence; provide clout when engaging with the local and combined authorities and also hopefully attract additional funding (as suggested by Jon Fitzmaurice in his report above)

On the basis of the mandate provided by the meeting to explore the proposal further it was agreed that Carl Ditchburn should continue to move things forward and report back at a subsequent meeting to be arranged.

October 2016

HCA NE Community Led Development Network: Next meeting: **Wednesday 18 January 2017** 10.30am – 1.00pm

Venue: ISOS hosting at Prudhoe Community Partnership, Spetchells Centre, 58 Front Street, Prudhoe, Northumberland NE42 5AA. Car parking is free opposite, behind front street or turn left pass old bakery site now under construction at traffic lights from Gateshead and up the hill and car parking is on right.

Speaker: *Rose Seagrief from Power to Change* will be discussing her work and the new community led housing fund that will be launched in 2017. RSVP: Lucy.Gaffney@hca.gsi.gov.uk to attend