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Tackling housing injustice through social enterprise?

– the role of 'self-help housing' in England

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Housing and Communities Week 8 Lecture November 16th 2016



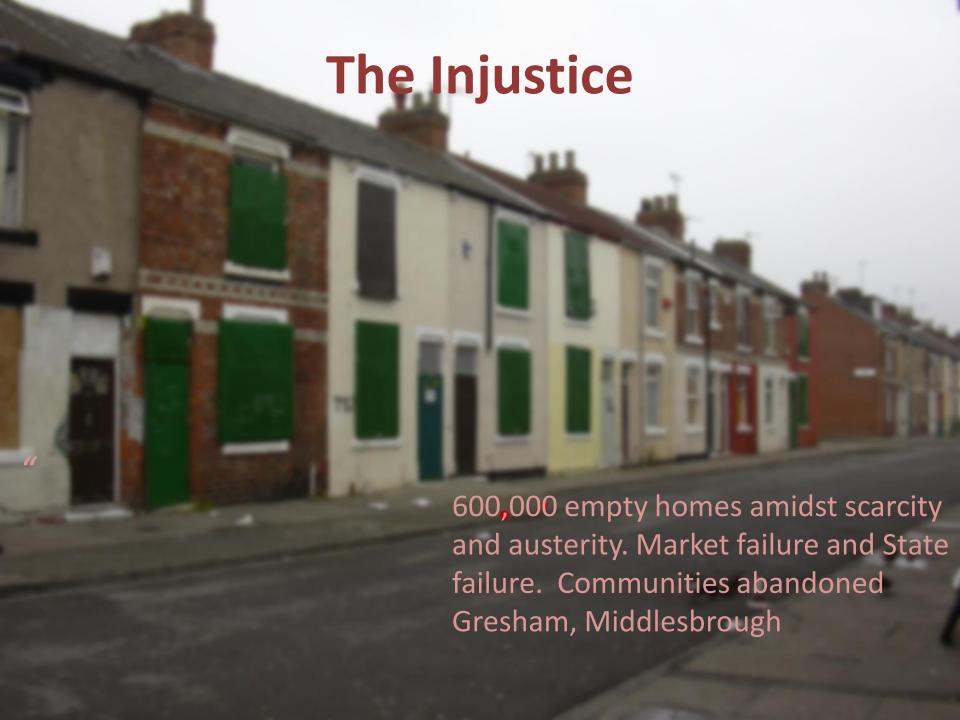
Winners of World Habitat Award Quito 2016

SELF-HELP HOUSING IN THE NORTH OF ENGLAND

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-NFiOWFbC6Y

Summary

- The Injustice: 600,000 empty homes amidst scarcity and austerity
- **The 'Solution':** 'self-help housing' civil society movement in decline since 1980s
- The Policy Window: GFC, Austerity and Big Society
- Policy Games: Bridging State and Civil Society: Changing the Game and Mobilising the Actors
- Empty Homes Community Grants Programme: £50million public funding leveraging social investment and voluntarism (110 'self-help' housing groups mobilised)
- Outcomes: substantial achievements and legacy
- Limitations: scope and sustainability, 'entrepreneurial boost' insufficient without continued State support
- International Relevance: new logics filling the cracks in 'splintering urbanism'. Civil society organisations can do things state and market can't



Abandonment, Blight and ASB



Empties in hot markets too!







South London property empty 20 years. HAs could not make repairs stack up. Social enterprise working with ex-offenders could. Part funded by loan from Big Issue invest. Property owner on board now adding empty flats above shop.



What is self-help housing?

"involves local organisations procuring housing by means of bringing back into use empty properties to live in, organising whatever repairs are necessary to make them habitable"

(http://self-helphousing.org/)



What is self-help housing? 5 Essential inputs

'Five Essential Ingredients'











Evolution of self-help housing

- Local Initiatives
- Clustering through peer support
- Heyday in 1970s from formalised squatting
- Some resilient organisations have survived
- Gradual decline from 1980
- Key role of self-help housing umbrella
- Absence of Supportive Policy Environment

Self-help Housing Evolution

Long History from C19

- Re-surfaced in housing post World Wars
- 70s and 80s Short-life housing students & squatting movement
- 2000s Social Enterprises, Training & Employment projects

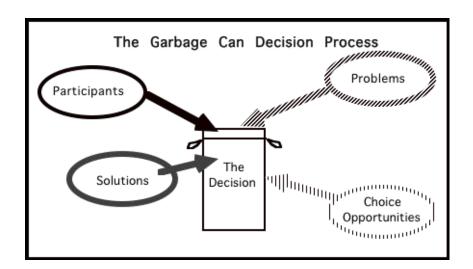
2009, Self-help housing.org list 50 projects including:

Housing Co-ops, Housing and Training Projects, Refugee
 Housing Projects, Community Training and Enterprise Projects



1980s Bonnington Square, London

POLICY FIT



Solution owners seek alignment with problems and policy agendas

Cohen et al (1972) Garbage Can Kingdon (1984) Policy Streams and Windows



POLICY FIT – New Labour and Conservative/Lib-Dem coalition

- NEW LABOUR (1997-2010)
 - Social Exclusion Unit
 - National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal
 - Policy Action Teams Social Enterprise, Self-Help

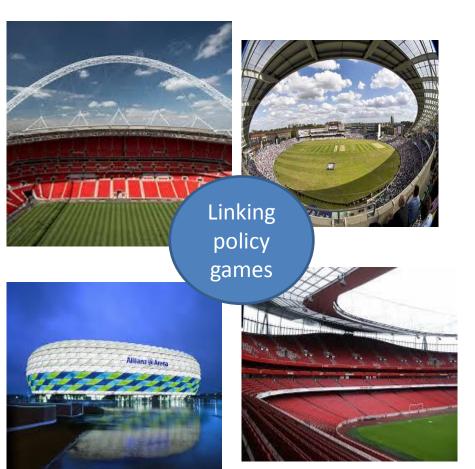
But Continued Decline

- CONSERVATIVE/LIB
 DEM COALITION (2010-2015)
 - Responding to GFC
 - Austerity & Deficit Reduction
 - End of Big Regeneration
 - Localism and Big Society

Renewed Growth 2011-15



POLICY GAMES



 'problem solving takes place in a fragmented context, where decisions about problems and solutions are of often made in different locations'.

Koppenjan and Klijn 2004

- problem owners, solution owners and decision makers are often separated and problem solving may occur at the crossroads of several different arenas and games
- Solution owners entrepreneurial in linking actors, games and arenas

Policy games to secure policy fit

- 1. Windsor **linking the actors** (civil society, government & funders)
- 2. After Windsor **changing the rules** (Public funds for non-registered groups)
- 3. **Mobilising the Sector** (activating bids for the funding)
- 4. **More Money Please** (budget grew £30-50 million)
- 5. Broadening the Community-Led **Coalition**
- 6. **Demonstrating Success**
- 7. Attracting **Resources- Beyond the State** (Charitable foundations and social investors)
- 8. Election All Change? (public funding ends) **new network building phase**



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?

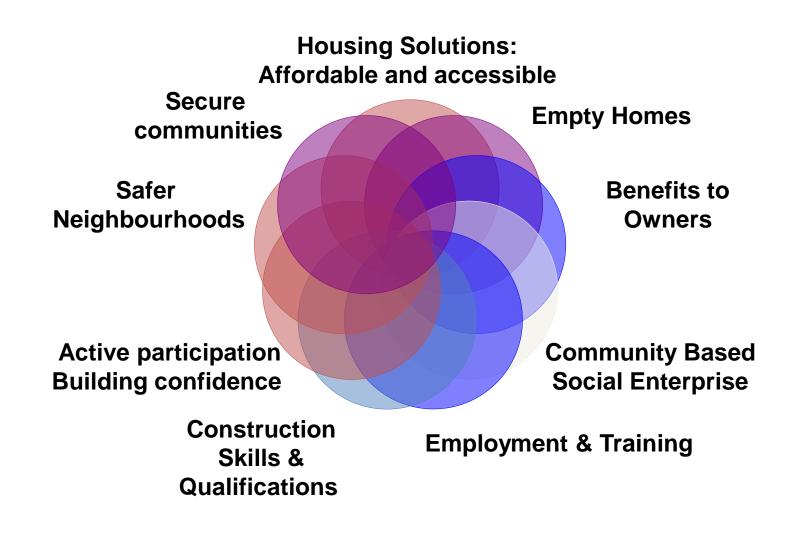
– Outputs or Outcomes?

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

Self-help housing: Multiple Outcomes



Outcomes Achievements and Legacy

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

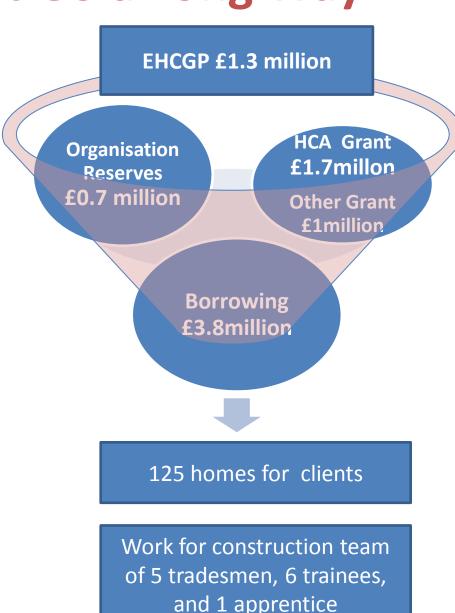
6. Building Strong and Independent
Organisations and a vibrant
community-led sector

- ✓ Making the Grant go a long way
- ✓ Doing things differently by being local
- ✓ Genuine pathways into work
- ✓ Mature construction workforce
- √ Volunteering impacts
- √ Taking responsibility
- ✓ Housing for clients
- ✓ Offender resettlement
- ✓ Live/work off benefits
- ✓ Assets, balance sheet and cashflow
- Partners and Influence
- ✓ Going viral
- ✓ Regional 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



Asset Transfers



Middlesbrough

First new homes in Gresham (Middlesbrough) since HMRA

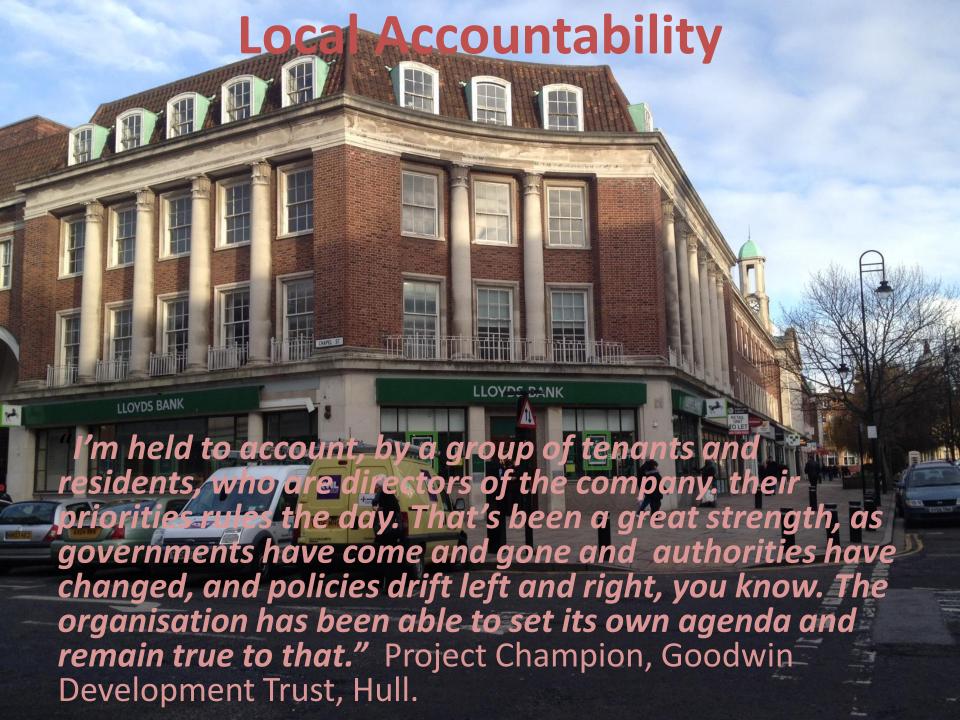
2. Doing Things Differently by Being Local



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)

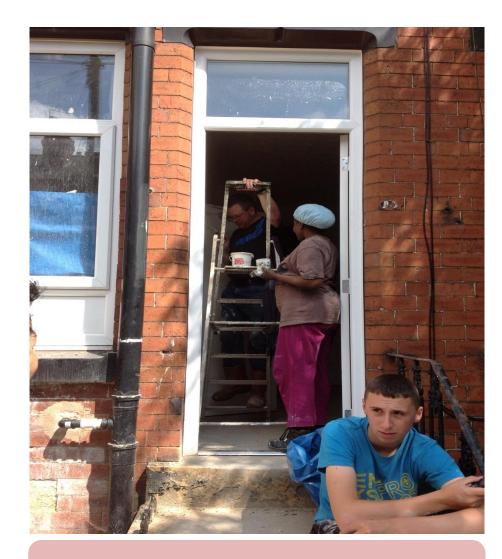
TRANSFORMATION in FRESH HORIZIONS BETWEEN 2010 AND 2015

DUE TO EHCGP WORKFLOW

4. Real Volunteering

"everyone works together, we have a laugh and it's a good vibe. It's a good vibe between us all..." Volunteer, Canopy

"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.



5. Real Solutions to 'wicked problems'



"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

Live and Work Scheme for Young People

- Live-work option for 27 young people in Sandwell
- Empty Health Trust properties
- EHCGP funds refurbishment
- Health Trust provides apprenticeships
- Rent deducted from wage no benefit required
- St Basils provides support and manages homes



"This 'Live and Work' scheme really help(s) young people find their independence ..to take up an apprenticeship and live in safe, affordable accommodation without recourse to benefits."

St Basils CEO – 24dash.com Nov 24 2014



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. [Yeah]

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.



Attracting New Groups into Housing

- housing advice and homelessness support agencies seeking good quality housing for clients
- employment and training projects seeking construction skills training for their participants.
- Social enterprises seeking local streams of activity to support communities through employment and services

Some Midlands examples:

- A small community interest company set up by a former footballer to support young people
- A local mental health charity
- A homeless intentional community
- A voluntary organisation for ex-offenders
- An educational charity for sustainable woodland
- A Sikh civic association

How did this happen?

- Effective networking by umbrella organisation
- Peer networking and support by more established groups
- Similar initiatives by some local authorities
- Regional workshop events at key stages
- Expressions of Interest exercise
- Support with bids process
- Website Guidance : How to do it



Home

What is self help housing?

How Does Self Help Housing Work?

How Much Empty Property Exists? Is Self Help Housing A New Idea?

How to do it

Setting up a Project

etting Hold of Property

Funding Repairs & Project Costs

Organising Repairs to Properties

areements With Owners and Occupants

On-Site Training Opportunities Outline Project Proposal

Case studies

Canopy Housing Project - Leeds

East Cleveland Youth Housing Trust

Phoenix Community Housing Co-operative (Phoenix) - London

St Mark's Housing Co-operative London

Brent Community Housing (BCH)

Partnership Project Between Community Campus and Coast & Country HA

BOW ARTS Live/Work Scheme - A social enterprise for artists and communities

Southwark Habitat for Humanity, London

The Restore Trust: Bristol.

Methodist Action

Middlesbrough CLT Asset Transfer

St Basils Birmingham Live Work

Redcar & Cleveland Mind

Somerset Care & Repair – Securing Funding From LAs

Training & Employment Case Studies x4

Latch Housing Project – Leeds

Westminster Housing Co-operative – London

Mace Housing Co-operative - London

Community Campus '87 – Middlesborough

Tamil Community Housing Association - London

Giroscope - Hull

Directory: Existing projects

Grants: Empty Homes Grants

The Empty Homes Grants Programme - Introduction

The Community Grants Programme – Introduction

The Capacity Building Programm Information & Document Bank

Useful Links

News

About us



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'.
- In Midlands EHCGP brought many new groups into housing - only one self-help housing group in 2009 now 19 funded groups.











EHCGP contributed to making spaces in which a vibrant communityled sector can flourish

Why the Programme Succeeded

Effective Umbrella body

- Pro-active approach to engage community-led groups
- Good lobbying and networking across policy fields
- Peer support networks in sector

Public Funding

- Ring-fenced
- Flexible
- Purchase option
- Supported borrowing and leverage

Some very supportive local authorities

- Another option for Empty Property Officers
- Enabling approach to community-led groups

Limitations of 'social entrepreneurialism' without state support

- Public Funding needed to Continue 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



Other Limitations

- Scale and scope of self-help housing quite limited
- Scaling up could threaten distinctiveness (Frankenstein scenario!)
- Programme limited to empty private properties
- Large housing associations now disposing of poorer assets to market – self-help could provide alternative options for social stewardship
- Dangers of institutionalisation example of rents at 80% market undermining advantages of a lower rent self-help sector (St Basils Live:Work scheme challenged this)





International Relevance: New logics filling the cracks in 'splintering urbanism'. What are Government & Society looking for today?

Filling the Cracks: Why important to engage less institutionalised actors

- Without ring fencing grant unlikely to reach street level
- Mainstream providers not interested in street properties
- Barriers to new entrants to housing sector substantial
- Local knowledge a significant advantage in locating empties and engaging owners
- Outcomes for residents and trainees also enhanced



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

Some Future Scenarios

1. Viral Expansion

2. Consolidation

3. Social Value Growth

New public funding drives sector

- New entrants local charities and SEs diversify to fill the gap
- Where from? Big Local, faith sector, Generation Rent?
- Partnership approach
- Vibrant sector

Asset strength and leverage drives sector

- Existing strong SHHOs
- Regional and local clusters
- Asset transfers and purchases
- Leasing and Management contracts
- Social Lettings Agencies
- Mainstream HCA Programme?

Social Value and community benefit drives sector

- Charitable Foundations & social investors Power to Change?
- Grants and Soft Loans
- Demonstrating social value
- Getting paid for social return
- Strengthening sector recognition and reward