

Commission builds case for bigger co-op role in empowerment

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Community membership housing organisations in England should be given a greater role in empowerment, the government has been told.

The Commission on Cooperative and Mutual Housing (CCMH) has called for a group to be set up within the new Tenants Services Authority to support the spread of cooperative housing and for the tenant empowerment grant to be extended to allow for the training and development of housing cooperative legislation.

The proposals are part of CCMH's response to the empowerment white paper, *Communities in control*. Initial results from a research project commissioned by CCMH and carried out by the Human City Institute and Birmingham University reveal the many benefits that community membership housing organisations bring.

As well as playing a role in the provision of affordable homes, they can also be important anchors for communities, provide mutual support networks and help with community cohesion.

The research revealed that the general principles and benefits of community membership are not well known. It makes ten proposals as part of the more specific approach it believes is needed to implement the white paper's

aspiration to expand the provision of cooperative housing.

It recommended the new Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) helps develop cooperative and community membership housing organisations, particularly by including them as part of its quality standards for the approval of new housing. CCMH would like to see an appropriate system set up to develop partnerships for sustainable cooperative housing developments.

It called for the government to review the progress of the Community Gateway model to see how it could be used more widely. The model is designed to involve tenants in the early stages of decision making.

It also wants the Department for Work and Pensions to explore ways to use the local knowledge of cooperative housing organisations to help with employment.

CCMH commissioner Nic Bliss said: 'CCMH's research is clearly showing the wide range of benefits community membership housing organisations bring to communities and individuals. We see our policy paper starting a discussion with government and others about how cooperative and mutual housing could become part of a more balanced and empowering national housing strategy.'

CCMH response to the *Communities in control white paper*, www.ccmh.coop



Seven derelict garage sites across Leicester are to be demolished to create affordable family homes. The £5.5m scheme is due to be completed within 12 months, with funding coming from East Midlands Housing (EMH), Leicester Council and the Housing Corporation. Developer William Davis will build 43 homes on the sites, which are overgrown and blighted by flytipping. The properties will be managed by EMH subsidiary, Foundation Housing Association. Pictured (l-r) are Leicester councillor Hanif Aqbany; Chan Kataria, chief executive of East Midlands Housing; William Davis MD Guy Higgins; and Denny Wehner, Foundation Housing Association board member, at the Dillon Way site.

Government launches policy centre to promote female entrepreneurship

A new centre to promote female entrepreneurship has been launched by the government to help boost the number of firms owned by women.

Prowess National Policy Centre (PNPC) claims to be the first organisation of its type in Europe.

It will provide a focal point for

women's enterprise-related research and policy best practice and be a source of expertise for government, regional development agencies and the private and third sectors.

Women are currently half as likely as men to start a business and just 16% of UK businesses are female-owned.

Director Jackie Brierton said the centre's mission was to 'influence policy, attitudes, delivery of business support and provision of finance to help more women start and grow sustainable businesses'.

The establishment of the policy centre was announced earlier this

year in the government's enterprise strategy. The PNPC is funded by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform and managed by Prowess – a UK voice for women's enterprise.

Details: www.prowesspolicycentre.org.uk

People

Tenant Services Authority has announced a new leadership team. **Peter Marsh**, previously deputy chief executive at the Housing Corporation, becomes chief executive; **Richard Moriarty**, previously deputy chief executive of Postcomm, is executive director of market development; and **Phil Morgan**, currently chief executive of Tenant Participation Advisory Service, will become executive director of tenant services. **Claer Lloyd Jones**, currently a partner at Rockpools, will

become executive director of corporate services; **Clare Miller**, director of regulation at the Housing Corporation, becomes executive director of governance and viability.

Ewan Brown has been named chair of Creative Scotland, a new cultural development body. He is currently vice chair of Edinburgh International Festival and was formerly chair of Lloyds TSB Scotland.

Choose Suffolk (formerly

Suffolk Development Agency) has appointed a new chief executive. **Celia Hodson** joins from the Social Enterprise Coalition in London where she was deputy chief executive.

John Markham has been named chair of West Northamptonshire Development Corporation, where he will serve an initial term of three years from next month. He has been a senior executive in the chemical industry, and has regeneration experience as chair

of Whitehaven Development Company.

Jyoti Odedra has joined housing group LHA-Asra's development and regeneration team as a graduate trainee in programme delivery. She was previously assistant company secretary.

Joining Bura this week are... The Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Lifelong Learning Network; Alexander White; Richard Wilson; and John Newby.

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