



Courtesy: Jane Tretheway, Shropshire Council

Building Council Homes

13/01/2021

- **Councils have multiple motivations for developing housing, each with a different partner and in different ways.** Councils need to have a strong corporate commitment to delivering homes with the approach clear in the local plan and other documents. Link firmly with other parts of the council and build on cross council evidence looking at needs of the range of groups – you can also make use of wellbeing powers. Councils need to be really strong on the 'why' of providing council homes - this makes it much more difficult to pick apart the 'how'.
- **Councils need experienced staff to deliver, with combined teams of planning and housing staff to enable collaboration.** Consider indicating type of use as well as number when setting out site allocations. The benefits of Housing Companies are that they sit outside of public sector regulation, are able to act commercially, can mix tenures, provide commercial returns and stimulate the market – however don't assume funding can be found from cross-subsidy from market sale development.
- **Nearly all councils are building on their own land, with approx. one in seven also using land from other sources and the same proportion also using other public land.** Around 40% are purchasing sites to develop and a similar percentage are purchasing existing residential buildings. However if you don't control the land, ensure you develop a shared vision.
- **A key challenge is the aspiration to move to net zero homes – councils need to work together and share learning.** Good Homes Alliance's Vanguard Network is a group of 18 councils with a sizeable programme and their work will influence the wider sector, with a sister Pathfinder Network for housing associations due for launch. They provide model Employers Requirements, model planning policies, case studies and procurement frameworks for Zero Carbon homes. The network supports councils right across the spectrum of development activity. Think about building to net zero now, not waiting and having expensive retrofits – GHA has information on supporting you with this.
- **When the focus is on the development, it is unfocussed on other things.** Residents can experience 'accumulative dispossession' – due to estate renewal/gentrification, changes to housing and benefits policy and the precariousness of low income work. Councils need to really understand the values that drive them, and the extent to which residents have a genuine role in development. We need to think about homes' not 'units', people's individual lives, cumulative harms, and the effects of power and control.



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- **In developing large scale developments, there is a moral imperative to work closely with the community – proactivity and positivity pay dividends.** And projects led by the local community overcome local opposition and succeed more quickly and easily. There are a number of community led housing hubs to link to council house building partners as well as support individual schemes and growing numbers of community led housing schemes are being developed in partnership with councils.
- **Councils are enablers, holding the ring.** Think AVID - Ambition, Vision, Imagination, Development, defined as keenness and willingness to make things happen. There is a need for strong leadership and to hold onto the vision and deliverables as these will be challenged at all stages of the process. Find common ground – value is in the developer’s long term interest, and ensure you think about management – it is never too early!

Useful Links:

Guidance Note for delivery of council housing on small sites

<https://publicpractice.org.uk/resources/before-the-brief>

Year one Community Housing Fund allocations

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/60-million-boost-for-communities-affected-by-second-homeownership>

CCIN report – Community led housing: a key role for local authorities

<https://www.communityledhomes.org.uk/resource/community-led-housing-key-role-local-authorities>

East Cambs Supplementary Planning Document for community led development

<https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Com%20Led%20Dev%20SPD%20as%20adopted%2025%20Feb%202016.pdf>

Cornwall Council’s revolving loan fund

[https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/housing/affordable-housing/community-led-housing/community-land-trust-revolving-loan-fund/#:~:text=Cornwall%20Council%20has%20re%20launched,Community%20Land%20Trusts%20\(CLTs\).&text=Loans%20can%20support%20the%20development,inte](https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/housing/affordable-housing/community-led-housing/community-land-trust-revolving-loan-fund/#:~:text=Cornwall%20Council%20has%20re%20launched,Community%20Land%20Trusts%20(CLTs).&text=Loans%20can%20support%20the%20development,inte)

Find your local community led housing hub <https://www.communityledhomes.org.uk/find-your-local-hub>



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Net Zero and costs - <https://kb.goodhomes.org.uk/net-zero/>

Speakers:

Attendees: 92

Janice Morphet, Bartlett School of Planning, UCL

Julian Brooks, Good Homes Alliance

Beth Boorman, National Community Land Trust Network

Chris Blundell, Consultant advising on the delivery of large scale housing developments

Cllr Lewis Herbert, Cambridge City Council

Jane Tretheway, Shropshire Council

Clare Slaney, Resident at Wornington Green/Portobello Square