

# TIME FOR CHANGE



The Confederation of Co-operative Housing together with The National Federation of Tenant Management Organisations and the Co-operative Housing Group are currently in the process developing an agenda for change.

Community controlled housing works and is making a real difference to the lives of tens of thousands of households. Since the early 1990's we have seen a massive expansion in community owned and controlled affordable housing. This housing has brought many benefits to the communities that enjoy the ability to determine for themselves their housing issues these include...

- Making sure things get done that are important for the community that meet the communities real needs and are not being done by others.
- Bringing local people together and helping create a sense of identity which may have been absent before. It can focus people's minds as well as their efforts on tackling issues collectively.
- Encouraging people to develop a sense

of local pride, community spirit and togetherness that may have been absent for many years,

- Offering new opportunities for the non joiners in local communities to get involved and feel included, rather than excluded.
- Making sure local housing services really do meet community needs, by relying less on outside bodies.
- Empowering individuals, enabling them to use skills they never knew they had, or develop new ones.
- Producing a great feeling a satisfaction in people who are doing things for themselves and achieving things, perhaps for the first time.
- Adding to the wealth of often extremely marginalised communities.

#### We believe...

- Community controlled housing (such as housing Co-operatives and tenant management organisations) have a proven track record and represent the most appropriate model of housing provision for the future.

- That localised community control of housing on a human scale is essential for effective accountability, sustainability, community cohesion and regeneration.
- That the co-operative values and principles provide an effective framework for the delivery of housing and other essential services.
- That tenants should be in the driving seat when assessing and deciding upon future housing options.

In order to promote and support the development of Community Controlled Housing we are currently developing an agenda for change. Now is your chance to influence the future direction of Co-operative Housing in this country. If you have any thoughts as to what we should include in our agenda for change then please let us know.

**Why not visit the CCH website at <http://www.cch.coop>**

# Starley Housing Co-Operative REGENERATING COVENTRY CITY CENTRE



Coventry City Council, Accord Housing Association and Starley Housing Co-operative are celebrating the start of work to create 56 new homes on the old Queen Victoria Road car park site in Coventry City Centre.

The site, which extends to almost an acre and backs on to Starley Road will be transformed over the next 15 months to create an exciting new inner-city development which will include large family homes as well as apartments for singles, couples and families. It will also include a children's play area, communal garden and a communal meeting room.

The £5.2 million project will be jointly funded by the Housing Corporation and Accord Housing Association, and will provide much needed housing for rent in the inner city.

Architects Roger Dudley and Associates have designed the project working with Accord Housing Association and Starley Housing Co-operative, who will manage the completed development and will benefit from being able to share the children's play facility and communal meeting room. Proposals are also being considered to incorporate other features such as an IT suite and car club into the development.

The development will be built by Kendrick Construction in a modern courtyard style with the houses and apartments overlooking the children's play area and the car parking

space. This will help to improve safety by day and by night and will help to create a real sense of community.

A walkway will connect the new development with Starley Road to enable the two communities to feel more like one and to ensure that children have safe access to the play area.

Councillor David Arrowsmith is cabinet member for urban regeneration and regional planning. He said, "I am delighted that work is now underway on this important city centre housing development. We are trying to create a mix of homes in the city centre to ensure that we cater for everyone who fancies the new trend for city living. The buildings will be both modern and innovative which means that they will look good as well as function well."

*This new development will complement the Victoria Road streetscape. In terms of who will live there we have agreed that 50% of the new homes will be let to tenants from the city council's register and 50% from Starley Housing Co-operative."*

Accord's Director of Regeneration, Alan Yates, said: "This is the largest inner city housing project ever funded by the Housing Corporation in Coventry. We think that the design of this building is of award-winning standard and will only complement the excellent standard of regeneration that is already underway in the city."

## A VIEW FROM LONDON

London's TMO's and Co-op's working together.



At the recent NFTMO/Confederation of Co-operative Housing Annual Conference, it was agreed to organise a joint Forum with the London Federation of Housing Co-operatives and London TMO's. The meeting is intended to see how Co-ops and TMO's can work together for mutual benefit and to discuss key issues such as:

- Networking – how we can help each other to manage our organisations better.
- Promoting the concept of tenant and resident controlled housing.
- How we can influence the housing policies of the Mayor and the GLA.

The more representatives who can come to this meeting the merrier.

The Forum will be held at the: Kings College London, Waterloo Campus, Room G80 (Ground Floor), Franklin Wilkins Building, 150 Stamford Street, Waterloo, London, SE1 9NH on Saturday 22nd October starting at 10:30am.

Invitations are being sent to as many TMO's, resident organisations as possible. But if your organisation doesn't get one come along anyway.

## COMMUNITY GATEWAY UPDATE

In the last CCH Bulletin, we told you about Community Gateway – a model of large scale tenant membership housing organisation which will offer devolution options to local communities. We also told you about the work done by tenants and staff in Preston, where they plan to set up the first Gateway, following an 81% vote by Preston City Council tenants in favour of transferring their homes to the Preston Community Gateway Association.

Work progresses well on setting up the Preston Gateway, with transfer planned for 10th October. Rose Kinsella, a tenant from the Ribbleton area of Preston has been elected as chair of the Board, and Karen Sarratt, a tenant from Brookfield in Preston, has been elected as chair of the Gateway Tenant Committee. Karen said that "the Community Gateway will give us the support we need to rebuild our communities and make them places we can be proud of. We will ensure that the people who know best, us the tenants, can influence the decisions made about our homes."

Diane Bellinger, formerly Chief Executive at Eastland Homes in Manchester, has been recruited as the first Gateway Chief Executive, and currently everyone in Preston is working flat out on registering the Gateway with the Housing Corporation, dealing with last minute tweaks to the business plan, planning the major improvements programme alongside the key work of ensuring that the community empowerment strategy will be successfully implemented from day one. Asked what attracted her to the Chief Executive's post in Preston, Diane said "I like the whole idea about the Gateway model and tenant empowerment. There's loads to be done in

Preston. It's a huge challenge and that's what I like."

Hot on the heels of Preston, Watford Borough Council have now decided to support a recommendation from its tenants group STAG to propose a Community Gateway transfer for their 5,000 homes to their tenants. Lindsay South, a tenant members of STAG, said: "STAG has done a lot of hard work in coming up with our Community Gateway recommendation, listening carefully to what Watford tenants told us. A Gateway transfer proposal will be about tenants making decisions about the future of our homes and neighbourhoods, building pride and dignity into our local communities. We are pleased that the Council has supported us in our recommendation." Marion Harris, Watford's Head of Housing, added that she was delighted that Watford "will be in the forefront of the development of exciting new ways to give tenants control over their own destinies." Following consultation over the next year, Watford plan to ballot their tenants on transfer late in 2006.

As well as this, we are aware of three other Councils in the country currently exploring the Community Gateway option (one in the Midlands, and two in the South), although none of these three have yet formally decided on Community Gateway. Watch this space for further news!

To cater for this growing interest in Community Gateway, the CCH is hosting a training course at the National Tenants Resource Centre at Trafford Hall in November 2005. Contact us for further details.

## NEW CO-OPERATORS MOVE INTO STALLARD CLOSE



New members of Pioneer Housing Co-operative celebrated moving into their new homes recently. Stallard Close part of the Redditch Co-operative Homes alliance of Co-operatives is a development of 6 Bungalows on a former derelict garage site.

The development provides tenant controlled housing in an area of extreme housing need shows how tenants combining together can produce effective solutions. The development forms part of Pioneer Housing Co-operative. The first of five co-operatives to be developed in Redditch.

Pioneer Co-operative now manages 74 properties in Redditch and is currently looking for further development opportunities in their neighbourhood. Redditch Co-operative Homes currently have another 40 properties on site with plans for more.

## Management Services

We have been providing advice and management services to small housing organisations in London and the South East for nearly 20 years. The services we provide include financial planning, administration, housing management, finance and maintenance.

Organisations receiving services from Co-op Homes remain independent and in control of their own affairs. Support can be provided if you have no staff, or if you have existing staff, but need to fill in the gaps to provide a complete service. Our services will help you ease the burden on committee members, achieve high levels of tenant satisfaction and ensure regulatory compliance.

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