



CEO Forum
Partnering for Housing Delivery and Diversifying Supply
Hosted by NHBC 9 May 2018



Key words: Partnering, Housing Supply, Joint Ventures, Council Housebuilding, Unlocking Housing Sites

The subject matter and discussion was partnership and the discussions opened with Graham Sibley providing an NHBC perspective on the current state of play in terms of new starts and registrations. Long term trends indicate continued growth with the second highest level of registrations in a decade, although there has been some decline in numbers of registrations in London.

There followed a discussion of the challenges faced by the local authorities using traditional models of regeneration within the current political landscape in London. Examples were provided where the capacity was not yet developed, but also where due to the appetite of the local authority to deliver their own programme, capacity had been built and homes were being delivered, for example in Newham and Barking and Dagenham.

This was not limited to London and both John East and Brian Horton were able to point to rural and suburban councils that had a drive to produce their own homes.

Tom Titherington of Catalyst spoke about the financial capacity Housing Associations already have for development and how this provides an opportunity for local authorities to work in partnership to deliver new homes. Increasingly, some local authorities are using land value to support income generating projects so partners will need to be clear on objectives. He also spoke about partnership with the private sector, particularly how joint-ventures to deliver new homes by utilising the competences of all organisations involved. These can be long term arrangements with the supply chain which will become necessary as development becomes more challenging but also provide the basis for much wider regeneration schemes, including some commercial and town centre regeneration

He also identified the need to develop sufficient capacity within both housing association and local authorities to become better clients. In particular to understand the challenges faced by partners such as the challenges of particular site or construction for building contractors.

Ben Denton from Sovereign gave examples of where partnership was working in the South East.

It is clear that there is sometimes a disconnect between the housing need in an area and the appetite of a local administration for development of new homes and for partnership working. However it is also evident that the desire to develop is not limited to one or other of political parties.

At the same time it was noted that much of the development by local housing companies for local authorities has been designed to dispose of homes as private sale and to deliver revenue for use elsewhere within the council rather than to provide social or affordable housing.

Caroline Compton-James gave the perspective of the regional contractor. In particular it was evident that where there is early engagement of the contractor where there is true partnership working in collaboration then there can be better benefits delivered than sometimes under traditional design and build contract. This was backed out by other contractors in the room.

Another consideration when seeking to increase delivery was to deliver best value rather than best price. And when projects consider how to get the 'best' value' out of constrained resources - this must be thought of, not just in terms of the number of homes we build, but also by adding social value - enhancing the social, economic and environmental benefits by working in a local area.

Isobel Stephen asked for any questions as to how government could help increase housing supply.

The Forum put forward four key areas. Firstly, give local authorities the opportunity to

demonstrate on a “deal “basis how lifting the borrowing cap would make a difference in housing numbers and financial viability. Secondly, the need for more resources to be directed to planning departments. If government really wishes to speed up the development process and a number of homes built then an investment in planning departments would make a significant difference. There was a strong sense that housebuilders and developers would rather pay more for an adequately resourced service than face the current logjams. Thirdly, partnerships between government agencies and local authorities acting as land facilitators unlocking sites in multiple ownership would boost delivery. Finally a suggestion that using government land to deliver genuine affordable housing rather than using it to increase revenue by disposal would make a significant difference to the housing shortage

Hosts

- Graham Sibley, Market Development Manager, NHBC
- Shelagh Grant, Chief Executive, The Housing Forum
- Michael Cleaver, Director, The Housing Forum

Guests attending:

- Alan Benson, Head of Housing Strategy and Commissioning, LB Haringey
- Ian Burnett, Chief Executive, United Living
- Caroline Compton-James, Director, Strategy and Communication, Construction, Osborne Ltd
- Bjorn Conway, Chief Executive Officer, ilke Homes
- Ben Denton, Executive Director, Development & Commercial, Sovereign
- John East, Interim Regeneration & Housing Director, Melton Borough Council
- Brian Horton, Director, Horton Strategic
- Camille Maison, Regeneration, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
- Paul Miller, Managing Partner, calfordseaden
- Tricia Patel, Partner, Pollard Thomas Edwards
- Shaun Sheldrake, Managing Director, J Murphy & Sons Ltd
- Isobel Stephen, Housing Supply Director, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
- Tom Titherington, Executive Director, Business Development, Catalyst Housing
- Jon Wardle, Chief Executive Officer, AMCM Group
- Stephen Wickes, Chief Executive Officer, Inland Homes

The Housing Forum is grateful to NHBC for hosting this CEO Forum