



IPSM E-BULLETIN **NO.15 (E-TOPICS) 2007** **SPECIAL EDITION**

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25th ANNIVERSARY



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(The photograph on the front cover of this special edition of E-Topics shows Simon Pomfret of the IPSM’s strategic learning and development partners (Spirals Ltd) making a point in relation to the Government White Paper “Strong and Prosperous Communities” at the Institute’s Seminar in Taunton. The Seminar was hosted by Knightstone Housing Association at its offices on the Blackbrook Business Park on Friday 20th April. Seated in the front row, on the left-hand side of the photo, is IPSM President Derek Wolfe. Also in the front row, but on the right hand side, is Council member Maurice Condie.)

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to this special edition of E-Topics, the official (usually quarterly) magazine for all Institute members. This edition is being published to publicise the IPSM's Annual General Meeting in September (**the AGM Notice and Proxy Form are set out on pages 5 & 6**) in conjunction with a special seminar being hosted by the Institute, on Local Area Agreements and Local Strategic Partnerships. **Background information on the Seminar is set out on page 7**, contained in a copy of a letter sent to the Chief Executives of all Local Authorities, Primary Care Trusts, Local Strategic Partnerships and the principal housing associations and other voluntary organisations in the West Midlands. As you may be aware, the Institute's AGM normally takes place in October or November. However, at its most recent meeting in York on 10th July, the IPSM's Council decided to combine its intended seminar with the AGM on 19th September, in an attempt to maximise the number of members attending. It had already been decided to combine the autumn seminar with the National Housing Federation's main event of the year, its AGM and three-day conference. We had hoped to be able to host a fringe meeting comprising our seminar in the ICC at Birmingham, especially to encourage housing managers to attend, but in the event, accommodation constraints mean that this particular innovation will have to be put on hold for another few months at least.

The IPSM has just completed running a series of advertisements in Opportunities, the source of more new members during 2005, 2006 and 2007 (so far) than any other publication, web site or other miscellaneous means of publicising the Institute's virtues! If you think (and I hope you do!) that the IPSM is a worthwhile organisation, providing a range of services for its members, and doing so for a very reasonable subscription when compared with the three-figure sums typically paid in respect of other professional organisations (for example, CIPFA) then I hope you will bring its many benefits to the attention of your colleagues (e.g. other managers within your organisation) and encourage them to join. As this is our "silver jubilee", IPSM Council has decided to waive the £25 joining fee in 2007, reducing the cost of membership for a new member from £88 to just £63 in this calendar year! At its most recent meeting on 10th July, Council decided to implement an incentive scheme aimed at existing members, to encourage all members to invite their eligible colleagues to join the Institute. Further details of the scheme are set out in a separate article in this special edition of E-Topics.

In response to enquiries from IPSM members, Spirals Ltd were asked to investigate the provision of a Diploma or Advanced Diploma (or similar) in Public Administration / Management, by way of a formal qualification available via the IPSM. The results of Simon Pomfret's researches were looked at by Council at its most recent meeting on 10th July, and it has been agreed to implement a level 4 NVQ Diploma, run by Spirals Ltd, with effect from September. Spirals have also been asked to investigate the possible provision of an Advanced Diploma (NVQ level 5) and report back to Council. In the meantime, if any members are interested in either qualification, please either e-mail IPSM HQ on info@ipsm.org.uk or telephone me on 01297-35423.

Edition No.15 includes all the information you need in advance of the Institute's AGM and seminar. If you are unable to attend our flagship event in Birmingham on Wednesday 19th September (commencing with a free buffet at 12.30pm) please make use of the proxy form set out below, to let the AGM know how you wish to vote in respect of the various issues set out in the agenda (also set out below!)

Finally, can I please issue a plea via E-Topics to those 28 members who have yet to pay their subscriptions for 2007, to do so with all speed? Please note that any member who has not paid their 2007 subscription will not be eligible to vote at the AGM. Corporate subscriptions are £210, whereas Fellows pay £80, Students and Retired Members pay £31.50, and everyone else (except for Honorary Fellows) pays £63 for membership in 2007. Cheques and postal orders should be made payable to the "Institute of Public Sector Management". If subscriptions are not received by the end of September, I regret that the Institute may exercise its right to terminate the membership of those students, full members, fellow and corporate members whose subscriptions remain outstanding, as well as requiring former members to return their membership certificates to IPSM HQ.

Thank you.

Derek Wolfe, FIPSM,
President and Hon. Secretary

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

I am delighted to formally welcome the IPSM's five newest members to the Institute. They are Corporate member Hostland Staffing Solutions, plus full members Michelle Jagger (University of Exeter), Gordon Shears (London Borough of Newham), Chux Onwusah (London Borough of Lambeth) and Robert Harris (Vale of Glamorgan Council). Robert is the first new member to have joined via the Institute's "Recruit a Friend" scheme, his "recruiter" being the IPSM's Regional / National Co-Ordinator for Wales, Jeremy Morgan. Details of the "Recruit a Friend" scheme are set out below.

25th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS – "RECRUIT A FRIEND" SCHEME

In 2007, the Institute celebrates 25 years of providing services for public sector managers. At its most recent meeting, the IPSM's Council took a view on ways in which we can all participate in those celebrations. In future, all existing members who introduce a new member to the Institute will be awarded a £15 gift token – so if you manage to introduce four of your colleagues / friends to the IPSM as new members, you stand to gain £60 in gift vouchers – almost equivalent to the £63 you paid in 2007 for your own membership of the Institute! Incidentally, approximately two-thirds of the Institute's membership comprises full members, as opposed to those who are fellows, retired, student, corporate or honorary members.

Your colleague, as a new member of the IPSM, not only gets to join for just £48 (a £15 discount off the usual annual subscription) but, because this is 2007 and therefore the Institute's "Silver Jubilee", does not need to pay the standard £25 joining fee – provided of course that he or she joins before 31st December this year!

Lynette Wolfe,
Administrator.



The Institute of Public Sector Management

*- Serving managers in the public, not-for-profit
and voluntary sectors.*

45 Cherry Tree Road, Axminster, Devon EX13 5GG, Tel: 01297 35423
E-Mail: info@ipsm.org.uk

NOTICE OF AGM

Notice is hereby given that the twenty-third Annual General Meeting of the Institute of Public Sector Management will be held in the William Penn Room at The Priory Rooms, Quakers Meeting House, 40 Bull Street, Birmingham, B4 6AF, on Wednesday 19th September 2007 at **1.15 p.m.** for the transaction of the following business:

Ordinary Business

- a) To receive the Report of the Council (to follow) and the Annual Accounts (to follow) for the 12 months ended 31 March 2007.
- b) To authorise Council to appoint the Auditor and determine the remuneration, if considered necessary.
- c) To confirm Derek Wolfe as the President of the Institute in accordance with Article 47 of the Articles of Association.
- d) To confirm Adrian Waite as the Vice-President of the Institute in accordance with Article 48(A) of the Articles of Association.
- e) To confirm Maurice Condie as Honorary Treasurer of the Institute in accordance with Article 48(B) of the Articles of Association.
- f) To confirm Derek Wolfe as Honorary Secretary of the Institute in accordance with Article 48(C) of the Articles of Association.
- g) To confirm Stephen Guile as the Immediate Past President of the Institute in accordance with the Articles of Association.
- h) To re-elect Julie Price, Martin Harvey, Peter Nourse and Rodger Lawrence as members of the Council.
- i) To elect four members of the Institute to fill the outstanding vacancies on the Institute's Council.

Derek Wolfe
Honorary Secretary
45, Cherry Tree Road
Axminster
Devon, EX13 5GG

20th August 2007

Please Note:

- 1 Full and Student members, as well a representative of each Corporate member, plus Honorary Fellows and Fellows of the Institute, may attend and vote at General Meetings, subject to any subscriptions that may be due for 2007 having been paid.
- 2 A member entitled to attend and vote at a meeting, is entitled to appoint another member or the duly appointed Chairman of the meeting as a proxy to attend and vote instead of him/her, according to the relevant Articles of Association (Nos. 42-46), the necessary instrument to arrive at the above mentioned office not later than Friday 14th September 2007. A form of proxy is attached.

(NB: Under the Institute's Articles of Association, a proxy has the right to speak and vote on a poll, but cannot vote on a show of hands. A proxy can, however, request or join in the request for a poll).
- 3 Full Members, Students and Fellows have a right to attend the Annual General Meeting and, as such, do not need to give prior notification of their intention to attend the AGM. However, it would be helpful if all those members intending to be present for both the AGM

✂.....

**INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC SECTOR MANAGEMENT – PROXY
AUTHORITY**

Annual General Meeting, Wednesday 19th September 2007

I (name).....

of (address)

.....

being a paid-up Fellow, Full or Student Member (in respect of my subscription for 2007) of the Institute of Public Sector Management, hereby appoint

.....

(a paid-up member of the Institute) or failing him / her the duly appointed Chair of the meeting, as my proxy to vote for me on my behalf at the AGM of the Institute to be held on 19th September 2007 and at any reconvened meeting of the 2007 AGM, following an adjournment for whatever reason.

I instruct my proxy to vote in accordance with my wishes, which I have indicated below. On procedural resolutions or where I have given no such indication, the proxy may vote at his / her own discretion.

DatedSigned

Name in Full (Please print)

IPSM SEMINAR ON LOCAL AREA AGREEMENTS & LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS – LEARNING FROM GOOD PRACTICE



The Institute of Public Sector Management

- serving managers in the public, not-for-profit and voluntary sectors

45 Cherry Tree Road, Axminster, Devon EX13 5GG, Tel: 01297 35423
E-Mail: info@ipsm.org.uk Web-Site: www.ipsm.org.uk

Your Ref:

Our Ref: LMW/CELA

Date: 11th August 2007

Dear Chief Executive,

'Local Area Agreements and Local Strategic Partnerships – Learning from Good Practice' - Wednesday 19th September – Birmingham – 2 Free Places

Local Area Agreements and Local Strategic Partnerships have been around for a while. They represent an excellent opportunity for voluntary, not-for-profit and key public sector agencies to work together, contributing to the formulation of a joint approach to delivering essential front-line services, in response to needs identified by the local community. Yet reports suggest that in many areas, neither LAAs nor LSPs have fulfilled their potential, leaving local communities at a disadvantage compared to those where local authorities and other statutory, voluntary and not-for-profit organisations have embraced agreements wholeheartedly and have created strategic partnerships intending to maximise their potential for joined-up thinking, planning and service provision in their areas. Now is the time for all partners to take stock of the current situation in their own localities, to examine good practice elsewhere, to hear the latest thinking on these topics from the Government Office for the West Midlands and to decide whether such initiatives should be looked at afresh, perhaps relaunching them with their partners.

The IPSM is pleased to offer 2 free places to you / your staff to attend a seminar at The Priory Rooms in Birmingham on Wednesday 19th September. We are delighted that the Deputy Regional Director for the Government Office of the West Midlands, Mrs Philippa Holland, has accepted our invitation to attend and speak on "Local Area Agreements and Local Strategic Partnerships – Learning from Good Practice". The Institute of Public Sector Management focuses on topical issues of common interest across the public, voluntary and not-for-profit sectors. The IPSM is the only professional body dedicated exclusively to assisting and improving managers working in the public, voluntary and not-for-profit-sectors. We offer a comprehensive range of membership services and benefits, including training seminars, newsletters and an e-forum where managers can share ideas.

Invitations have been sent to all local authorities, primary care trusts and local strategic partnerships plus the principal housing associations and voluntary organisations operating in the West Midlands. You are invited to join IPSM members for an **informal buffet lunch at 12.30 pm. The seminar will commence at 1.30pm and finish at or around 3.30pm.** There will be ample opportunity for questions and networking – we look forward to a lively debate involving local partners.

To book either one or two free places please send representatives name(s), position(s), organisation name and contact email address(es) to Mrs L Wolfe, Administrator, IPSM, 45 Cherry

Tree Road, Axminster, Devon, EX13 5GG (info@ipsm.org.uk) by no later than **Wednesday 12th September.** Booking confirmations and venue details are normally sent direct to those attending.

I do hope that you or representatives of your organisation will be able to join us.

Yours Faithfully

Derek Wolfe, FIPSM,
President

SPIRALS' TRAINING COURSES – NEWS OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Spirals, the Institute's strategic learning & development partners, have drastically revamped its open programme to make it a lot more comprehensive. The following are the courses we are running in the autumn and in the coming weeks I will be able to send the winter programme to IPSM members, via E-Topics.

All of the courses will be held in the Cambridge area and IPSM members are obviously entitled to the same discount as before (20%). However, prices have come down to £245 for a one day course, so IPSM members can attend for just £196.

The autumn programme is as follows:

Minute Taking Made Easy	9 th October
Delivering Successful Projects	11 th /12 th October
Managing Poor Performance and Conduct	16 th October
Getting Organised – Making the Most of Your Time	8 th November
Process Mapping	15 th November
Powerful Presentations	23 rd November
Going the Extra Mile – Achieving Excellence in Customer Service	27 th November
Confident Recruitment	6 th /7 th December
Developing Assertiveness and Confidence	11 th December

IPSM members interested in any of the above courses should contact us for further details. In a fortnight's time we will have a brochure describing all of the courses, available as a pdf document for displaying on the IPSM website, if that would be helpful.

David Elverson, MSc MCIM, Commercial Director, Spirals Ltd.

Tel : 01953 602505 Fax : 01953 605800

Email : david@spiralsplus.com

.....take a look at our new website www.spiralsplus.com

ARMS LENGTH MANAGEMENT ORGANISATIONS – FREEDOMS, FLEXIBILITIES AND THE FUTURE

AWICS will be holding a series of seminars on 'Arms Length Management Organisations - Freedoms, Flexibilities and the Future'. This will be held at venues around England during October to December 2007 and will provide delegates with comprehensive information about the future of arms length management organisations and the freedoms and flexibilities that they can expect to enjoy.

Some Arms Length Management Organisations are managing significant Decent Homes Programmes; others are completing theirs, while other authorities are awaiting the government's decision on their Arms Length Management bids. The Government has pledged to create more affordable homes and Councils with Arms Length Management Organisations can now bid in the National Affordable Housing Programme and some have already pre-qualified for bidding. Yvette Cooper, the Housing Minister has said that the government wants councils to become involved in the building of new homes through arms length management organisations.

The Housing Green Paper of July 2007 proposes that there be more flexibility for councils and arms length management organisations to be able to build homes where it delivers sufficient value for money, either alone or in partnership. This includes through receipt of housing corporation funds, retention of rent and capital receipts and extension of eligibility for social housing grant to two star arms length management organisations. It also proposes that Councils establish Local Housing Companies to develop new affordable housing and that existing homes should be made 'greener'.

Government has promised 'freedoms and flexibilities' for Arms Length Management Organisations. There have been studies on the implications of leaving the Housing Subsidy system. The Efficiency Agenda will be developed further as part of the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review. Partnership and Collaboration are favoured. Arms Length Management Organisations that have completed decent homes work are down-sizing and diversifying. So - What does the future hold for Arms Length Management Organisations?

Whether you are in an Arms Length Management Organisation, Local Authority with an Arms Length Management Organisation or a Government Office; whether you are a Board Member, Housing Manager, Tenant Representative, Elected Member, a member of the Housing Finance Team, or anyone else with an interest in Arms Length Management Organisations you could benefit from one of our courses. The course is accompanied by a very useful book entitled: "Arms Length Management Organisations - Freedoms, Flexibilities and the Future"

Venues and Dates:-

St. Helens: Haydock Race Course - 3rd October 2007
London : Thistle Hotel Euston - 10th October 2007
Nottingham: Westminster Hotel - 18th October 2007
Wakefield : Cedar Court Hotel - 14th November 2007
London: Thistle Hotel, Euston - 13th December 2007

If you would like more information or would like to make a booking, please visit our website at: www.awics.co.uk/services/almocourse.asp , or contact us directly by replying to this email or telephoning 01768-352347.

Other courses that we are currently running include:

All You Want to Know about Local Authority Housing Finance - Wakefield 11th September, London 26th September, London 21st November 2007.
All You Want to Know about Local Authority Finance - London 9th October 2007.

Details of all our courses can be viewed at:

www.awics.co.uk/services/trainingandlectures.asp

Adrian Waite,
Managing Director,
AWICS Ltd.

Tel: 01768-352347 or 52165. Fax: 01768-354005. E-mail: Adrian.waite@awics.co.uk

FROM THE ARCHIVES – THE IPSA YEARS, 1992 TO 1997

The Institute celebrates its 25th year of existence this year. Looking back through the annual reports we get a feel for how the Institute developed in the 1990s.

Between **1992 and 1997** the Institute was known as the Institute of Public Service Administrators. It had severed its links with the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators' (ICSA) and the rewards of becoming independent were high. **1992** saw a record level of interest in membership with 1,700 enquiries about membership and 108 new members.

The Institute used its accumulated fund to set up the new organisation at the home of our part time administrator, Lesley Brown. It purchased a new computer, printer, fax, telephone and company seal. New membership certificates were issued.

Our quarterly publication, IPSA Topics was launched and every member received the weekly journal, Local Government Chronicle.

In April the Institute, in association with Interactive Skills Ltd, hosted a mid-year seminar on managing change. The September annual conference held at Birmingham's International Convention Centre was the most successful yet, with over 100 delegates. The conference looked at Quality and Customer Care in the Public Services from an almost purely practical viewpoint. Speakers from British Airways, York City Council and Oxfordshire County had direct experience in developing a customer oriented culture and their aims were linked to the Government's Citizens' Charter initiative. A speaker from the Charter Unit gave an insight into the government's latest thinking on the subject.

The Institute's profile was maintained through advertisements and the publication of press releases on our activities.

Local Government Chronicle January 1992

Name change for administrative staff body



The Association of Public Service Administrative Staff has changed its name to the Institute of Public Service Administrators. The change, effective from 1 January, was made because it was felt people misinterpreted the old name, taking the organisation for a trade union rather than a professional body. IPSA has around 500 members of whom roughly 80% are in local government. The body is open to anyone holding an administrative post in any department in a public sector organisation. In practice most members tend to be middle managers. From left: Lesley Brown, secretary; Steven Lake, president; Martin Harvey, vice president; Rodger Lawrence, treasurer

January 1992

The Council met five times during the year and set up four committees: the Executive Committee consisting of the President, Vice President, Treasurer and Honorary Secretary; the Promotions Committee, chaired by Rodger Lawrence; the Education & Training Committee under the chairmanship of Peter Wilson and the Professional Aspects Committee chaired by Albert Chapman.

Martin Harvey took over as president.

In **1993** our energies were focused on expanding our portfolio of services to members. The aspiration was to provide a pro-active, flexible institute able to support members through the changes taking place in the public sector. Members continued to receive IPSA Topics and, on a weekly basis, Local Government Chronicle. An Institute tie was designed and marketed to members. We arranged for members to attend seminars provided by the Library Association on aspects of career development such as applying for jobs, writing a CV and interview techniques.

The annual conference tackled the theme of "Business Skills in the Competitive '90's", it brought together experts and practitioners from the public and private sectors to discuss the skills and knowledge vital for public sector administrators to both forge partnerships and compete with the private sector. Presentations were given by Tony Allen, former Chief Executive of Berkshire, Pat Oakley from North West Thames Regional Health Authority, Derek Lawrence, Head of Personnel, Croydon, Michael Jeffries of W S Atkins Ltd and Mike Croston from CSL Group Ltd. During the year there were also smaller regional seminars on topics such as "Managing Change"

Peter Nourse took over the Education and Training Committee, Julie Price the Professional Aspects Committee and Jack Brierley became President.

Unfortunately, though interest in the Institute remained high with 1,564 membership enquiries only 86 became members. This brought membership to 542 with 16 student members.

The Company Secretary had increased her working hours in anticipation of a larger membership and when this failed to materialise, the Institute made a financial loss. Consequently in **1994** the working hours were reduced and Council Members took a more active role in the day to day running of the Institute. This resulted in a surplus after taxation reducing the deficit.

There was only one recruitment campaign run during the year attracting 44 new members. Membership reduced to 529 members and 10 students.

The Professional Aspects and the Education and Training Committees merged into the Professional Development Committee and was jointly chaired by Peter Nourse and Julie Price. The committee identified a distance learning package – NVQ Level V in Management – for members. It responded on the Institute's behalf to the Nolan Committee on Standards in Public Life and endorsed a Diploma in Public Administration to be run by Cavendish College for overseas students. The committee also used Topics to keep members updated on the developments of the Local Government Review.

The Promotions Committee produced a professionally designed publicity leaflet entitled "raising the profile of the public administrator" and a members' handbook. It also started work on a series of guidance booklets entitled "Desk Topics". Inside Housing and Care Weekly were available on free subscription to eligible members. The Committee reviewed the viability of direct marketing and organised a campaign for 1995. Members were encouraged to introduce colleagues to the institute through a £15 discount per new member from their next year's subscription.

Following a membership questionnaire it was decided to have a flexible subscription policy whereby members could opt separately for subscriptions to Local Government Chronicle and Municipal Journal.

The annual conference, entitled "All Change! Challenges and Opportunities in the Public Services", again took place at the International Convention Centre, Birmingham. Margaret Hodge MP, Jon Vaughn of the Audit Commission, Mike Shillingford from Reigate and Banstead and Professor John Stewart of the Institute of Local Government Studies spoke on the changes that were having a direct impact on the working lives and careers of public sector administrators. Peter Wilson became President.

During **1995** the Institute made a number of organisational changes. It changed the accounting year end from January to March so that the annual report tied in more closely with the AGM in the autumn. The Council also decided that a one year term was too short for the President to lead important developments. It therefore agreed that future presidents would serve for two years. It also disbanded the committees to avoid repetition of discussion. The annual report contained a list of members together with their job title, employing authority and work telephone number. Julie Price became president.

During 1995/6 there were 223 enquiries about membership from 3 advertisements. A direct marketing campaign asked existing members to introduce new members. Administrators in Grant Maintained Schools were directly mailed and past members were encouraged to rejoin. In all 67 new members and 1 student joined, bringing membership to 538 with 8 students.

The Institute, in conjunction with the Strategic Planning Society, played an active role in the development of the public management forum to enhance the role of public sector representation. It also responded to various consultative papers: The House of

Commons Select Committee on Relations between Central and Local Government; Deregulating Local Government; The Nolan Committee's Standards in Public Life; and Local Public Spending Bodies.

Four years of development work on a distance learning package came to fruition. An NVQ level 4 or 5, tailor made for public sector managers and administrators was provided by the Open College.

In March the Institute held a joint event with the Strategic Planning Society. Professor John Stewart spoke on the issues challenging local government officers. The annual conference was "Doing it Better: A Practical Approach to Business Process Re-Engineering". Colin Porter from HMSO and Professor Colin Carnall of Henley Management College set the background while Hardial Bhogal from Walsall, Beryl Evans, Association of County Councils and Paul Millac from Leicester Royal Infirmary gave practical experiences of re-engineering and advice on overcoming resistance to change.

The Institute purchased a modem and access to the internet. Members still had the choice of receiving Local Government Chronicle and Municipal Journal at discounted prices, together with the monthly journal Business Age. It also launched the Help Desk in Topics.

Julie Price's second year in office saw strengthening links with The Strategic Planning Society and the Public Management Forum, aimed at filling the gap left by the demise of the Royal Institute of Public Administration. The Institute responded to various consultation papers including Nolan 3; Aspects of Conduct in Local Government and Rebuilding Trust. In August **1996** IPSA launched its own web site and offered members the chance to link to the internet at a discounted rate. Members were soon being recruited through this medium. From February 1997 Topics was produced every two months.

The conference in 1996 had ten speakers from housing, social services, health and the voluntary sector discussing practical partnerships and lessons which could be learnt. The mid year seminar, "Unlocking your Potential in today's NHS" was held at Manchester.

In order to increase membership in the health sector, a discount on subscription the Health Service Journal was arranged and a direct marketing campaign was started to health trusts in the midlands.

By the end of March **1997** membership stood at 510 members and 3 students, a decrease of 6% during the year with only 38 members and 1 student joining during the year.

During the year Council discussed whether the present day administrator was in reality a manager and therefore if a change of name for the Institute was appropriate. The AGM in 1997 was therefore asked to agree to the change of name to Institute of Public Sector Management.

(Article by Rodger Lawrence,
Hon. Treasurer and Council Member)

HOMES FOR THE FUTURE: MORE AFFORDABLE, MORE SUSTAINABLE

Following Gordon Brown's announcement that housing has become a major priority of the government, 'Communities and Local Government' published the Housing Green Paper 'Homes for the Future: More Affordable, More Sustainable' on 23rd July 2007. In her ministerial foreword, Yvette Cooper MP, the Minister for Housing said that:

"This Housing Green Paper outlines our plans for delivering these homes. More homes – backed by more ambitious building targets, increased investment, and new ways of identifying and using land for development. More social housing – ensuring that a decent home at an affordable price is for the many, not the few. Building homes more quickly – by unblocking the planning system and releasing land for development. More affordable homes – by increasing the options for low cost home ownership and more long term and affordable mortgage products. And greener homes – with high environmental standards and flagship developments leading the way."

The Housing Green Paper has been welcomed as the most comprehensive review of housing policy since the 1970s, and covers the full range of housing issues faced in England:

- Progress and Challenges
- More Homes to meet Growing Demand
 - Delivering homes where they are needed
 - Delivery without needless delay – continuing planning reform
 - Public sector land use
 - Recycling homes and land
- How we can create Places and Homes that People want to live in
 - Infrastructure
 - Well designed Homes and Places
 - Greener Homes
- Making Housing More Affordable
 - More Social Housing
 - Helping first time buyers
 - Improving the way the mortgage market works
- Delivery: How we will make it happen
 - Skills and construction
 - Implementation: A shared endeavour

The Green paper describes the government's vision for housing as follows:

"We want everyone to have access to a decent home at a price they can afford, in a place where they want to live and work. Good quality, affordable housing enables stable and secure family lives: we are all healthier, happier and wealthier when we have decent homes close to schools, healthcare and transport links.

"But this is not just an issue for families. Good housing can improve our social, environmental and economic well-being. It helps create better communities that can attract investment and skilled workers. And getting the design right can also improve the environment and reduce our carbon footprint."

The government proposes to deliver two million new homes by 2016 and three million new homes by 2020. This projection is based on house construction rising to 240,000 a

year by 2016 and then being sustained at that level. The two million new homes that will be delivered by 2016 will include:

- 1.6million homes that are already in regional spatial strategies including 650,000 homes in growth areas
- Between 150,000 and 200,000 additional homes in the new round of regional spatial strategies
- 100,000 extra homes in the 45 towns and cities in the 29 growth points
- 50,000 new homes in additional growth points
- 25,000 to 100,000 new homes in the five new eco-towns

The Green Paper is clearly linked to the 2006 White Paper on Local Government that proposes an important role for local government in 'place shaping' based on the conclusions of the Lyons enquiry. The Green Paper states:

"Local authorities have a critical role to play in achieving a major increase in new homes and their strategic housing role is at the heart of achieving our ambitions for housing supply. We want to see local authorities step up to play a stronger role in addressing the housing needs of all their residents, as part of their strategic housing role."

One of the aspects of the Green Paper that has attracted most comment has been the proposal to give local authorities an enhanced role in housing including the provision of 'new build'. The Green Paper refers to a wider delivery of affordable housing in mixed communities and states that:

"We also want councils to play a greater role in facilitating the supply of affordable housing through:

- Enabling new affordable supply to be built
- Influencing the decisions that are made
- Having a direct role in the building of new homes where it provides value for money

"The first ten arms length management organisations and other local authority companies have pre-qualified to bid for social housing grant, and more will have an opportunity to pre-qualify next year. We are setting out new ways for councils to use their land and resources to build homes, and are seeking views on changes to the treatment of rents and capital receipts from additional homes which would incentivise this."

The government sees the achievement of its housing objectives as requiring a 'shared endeavour' stating that:

"Everyone needs to take responsibility and account for the part they play in delivery... If we are to build these much needed homes we must join in a shared endeavour – with political leadership and delivery support shared between national, regional and local levels; with private, public and third sector providers all playing full roles; and involving local communities."

The Housing Green Paper refers only to England. However, in Scotland and Wales, housing is also considered an important priority and statements on housing policy are anticipated from the Scottish Government and the Welsh Assembly Government.

Copies of the Green Paper can be downloaded from the 'Communities and Local Government' website at:

http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/967/HomesforthefuturemoreaffordablemoresustainableHousingGreenPaper_id1511967.pdf .

Briefing papers on housing, including the Green Paper are available on the 'AWICS' website at: www.awics.co.uk/briefing/housing.asp .

The Housing Green Paper seeks views on the Government's proposals. Responses are invited by 15th October 2007 which should be sent, if possible by e-mail to: housinggreenpaper@communities.gsi.gov.uk or by post to: Graham Knapper, 2nd floor, Communities and Local Government, Eland House, Bressenden Place, London. SW1E 5DU.

(Article by Adrian Waite,
Honorary Fellow and Council Member)