

# AWICS Housing News

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## Adrian Waite Becomes Chair of the Board at Impact Housing

AWICS Ltd Managing Director Adrian Waite has been made Chair of the Board of Impact Housing Association. Adrian Waite has been a member of the Board of Impact Housing Association since 2009 and became Chair in June 2011.



*Adrian Waite (centre) welcomes David Orr (right) Chief Executive of the National Housing Federation to Impact Housing Association's foyer in Penrith. Mike Muir, Chief Executive (left)*

Impact Housing is a housing association that was set up in 1975 with a strong tenant and community emphasis that currently employs over 200 people throughout Cumbria. The housing association has over 3,000 properties covering the whole of Cumbria and Impact has just completed its first scheme in Lancaster. The stock is in high demand and is in good condition.

As well as the stock of general needs rented housing, Impact owns the student halls of residence in Carlisle, various schemes for first time buyers and many schemes for people who need extra support. Impact Housing is Cumbria's biggest landlord of supported housing, with over 500 properties and bed spaces.

Impact's biggest concentration of housing is in Workington, where Impact owns 800 properties at Salterbeck that were taken on as a stock transfer from the local authority. Impact Housing also runs both of Cumbria's Foyers; in Penrith and Kendal; and owns three extra care elderly schemes, all in South Lakeland.

Impact also offers a wide range of other services including a recycling and second hand furniture operation that has been going since 2000 and is still going strong with a near £1million turnover. Impact have various support projects for particular groups, for example for single homeless men. Impact Housing have various youth groups and run a Domestic Violence counselling service.

Find out more about Impact Housing on : [www.impacthousing.org.uk](http://www.impacthousing.org.uk)

## AWICS helps LATMOS Transfer to WATMOS

Three tenant management organisations in Lambeth (Ethelred, Magdalen and Thorlands) came together to form LATMOS (Lambeth Alliance of Tenant Management Organisations) as a way of transferring ownership of the estates to a Housing Association. Their main reasons for doing this were to access funding to achieve the decent homes standard and other improvements and to safeguard and develop the role of tenants and leaseholders in the management of the estates.

AWICS were appointed as Independent Residents' Advisors.

The financial analysis suggested that LATMOS would be better able to achieve their objectives if they worked in partnership with an existing housing association with a strong commitment to tenant management.

After a thorough selection process, LATMOS selected WATMOS Community Homes (Walsall Alliance of Tenant Management Organisations) as the partner landlord for the housing stock transfer.

In 2001, Walsall Borough Council proposed a large scale voluntary transfer to the Walsall Housing Group. This caused concern among the tenant management organisations in Walsall that they would lose identity, community and investment. After looking at options it was decided to set up WATMOS (Walsall Alliance of Tenant Management Organisations) as an independent housing association.

In 2003, 1,828 homes transferred from Walsall Borough Council. The mission of WATMOS is to work with others to provide sustainable community housing and to provide social and personal development opportunities. The objectives of WATMOS are to provide high quality social housing in a safe and stable community; and to be a vehicle for other TMOs.

WATMOS operates according to four principles:

- Tenants and Residents are in the driving seat
- Local Housing services are provided from offices within walking distance of all residents
- Estates are attractive and offer a high level of services
- Communities are built, not just houses rented

Following a visit to WATMOS, Adrian Waite said:

***"The commitment of WATMOS to Tenant Management Organisations was especially impressive and the standard of works that has been achieved also appeared good."***

After the partner landlord was identified, LATMOS put together a detailed proposal – called a 'Formal Consultation Document' – for tenants and residents to consider. This gave details of all the things tenants and residents needed to know before making up their minds whether or not to support the transfer. It included information on rents, repairs, maintenance

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and improvements, tenants' and residents' rights, housing services as well as information for leaseholders. Tenants and residents were able to compare what transfer would mean compared to staying with the Council.

The formal consultation document was issued in May 2011. There were plenty of opportunities for questions to be asked and answered. In October 2011 there was a ballot to find out whether or not tenants support the transfer. For the transfer to go ahead more than half of those eligible to vote must do so (a Lambeth Borough Council requirement) and of those, over half of tenants must be in favour of the transfer (a statutory requirement).

The ballot has now taken place with a turn out of 65.5% and 51.1% of those taking part voting in favour of a transfer. The transfer is expected to take place on 31st March 2012.

The role of AWCS was:

- Arranging and structuring meetings of representative groups to discuss proposals, ensuring that representatives from often-excluded are encouraged and enabled to participate.
- Procuring expert advice on major issues should they arise. This included:
  - legal advice on tenancy matters
  - expert advice on financial matters
- Representing and supporting residents in negotiations and discussions with other key stakeholders in the process, including Lambeth housing staff and any proposed new landlord.
- Assisting with identifying additional benefits for residents
- Ensuring that as many residents as possible are well informed of any proposals
- Giving advice to individual residents on issues as they arise. This included visiting residents in their homes, setting up a free phone service and attending meetings
- Designing and publishing independent newsletters and information leaflets, providing translations where necessary
- Servicing meetings as required
- Providing to the council a clear demonstration of resident support for the chosen option through carrying out surveys of residents' opinions.
- Advising on the selection of the partner Housing Association
- Manning the polling stations during the ballot.
- Providing a website

The website can be viewed at:

[http://www.awics.co.uk/View/Page/ita\\_lambeth\\_latmos/](http://www.awics.co.uk/View/Page/ita_lambeth_latmos/)

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## Homes In Havering: Consulting On The Future Of Housing Management

In 2006 the Council appointed Homes in Havering (HiH) as an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) to manage its homes. At the time, all councils had to pass the management of their homes over to 'Arms Length Management Organisations' - or ALMOs, like HiH, to qualify for extra Government money to fund the Decent Homes Standard. Following the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review funding for the Decent Homes Standard was reduced and is now distributed to Councils on the same basis regardless of whether or not they have an ALMO. Havering Borough Council was recently awarded £62million of this 'Decent Homes' money – that is now being spent on council homes across the Borough.

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*One of the important achievements of HiH has been that more and more tenants have become involved in the running of the services they receive*

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Havering Borough Council consulted tenants and leaseholders about whether Homes in Havering should continue to manage and maintain council homes, or whether the Council itself should be responsible for managing and maintaining council homes directly as it was before 2006.

Havering Borough Council did this because the rules about housing have changed. There is no longer a need to have a separate organisation to get 'Decent Homes' money from the Government.

The consultation ran over the winter and the Council will make the final decision in April 2012. They wanted everyone to have their say. All residents were sent a questionnaire in January 2012 asking them for their views.

HiH staff worked with the Council to make sure tenants and leaseholders had all the information they needed about the options. They went round the borough and attended tenant / leaseholder meetings with all the details. Independent advice for residents wanted to talk to someone outside the Council or HiH was provided by AWICS.

AWICS provided this support through a email and freephone helpline, attending meetings and providing a website. The website can be viewed at: [http://awics.co.uk/View/Page/havering\\_ita/](http://awics.co.uk/View/Page/havering_ita/)

One of the important achievements of HiH has been that more and more tenants have become involved in the running of the services they receive. The Council wants this to continue, whichever way the decision went. If the service comes back into the Council, there will be a new Borough-wide resident body to give residents a direct say in the decisions taken by the Council's Cabinet Member for Housing – currently Councillor Lesley Kelly. Councillor Kelly said:

*“Given the changes in the way the Government allocates money for housing, it's right that tenants and leaseholders are now asked who they want to manage their homes. We want to hear from as many tenants and leaseholders as possible, to make sure the final decision is the*

*right one for them."*

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A total of 48.3% of responding tenants and leaseholders expressed the view that they would prefer the management of Council houses and flats to move back in-house to Havering Council. The results were collated by the independent Electoral Reform Services following a test of opinion survey into tenants' and leaseholders' preferences for the future management of their homes. The survey concluded that 32.1% believed that it should remain with Homes in Havering and 19.6% indicated they did not have a preference. Overall 5,832 people sent in a valid questionnaire - 39.4% of all tenants and leaseholders. The opinions expressed by residents will form the basis of a report to Havering Borough Council's Cabinet that will make the decision on the future management of the housing service.

When the result of the test of opinion was announced, Councillor Lesley Kelly, Cabinet Member for Housing, said:

*"I'd like to thank all of the tenants and leaseholders who have taken the time to provide their views and let us know who they would like to manage their homes in the future."*

*"Residents have indicated that they want the housing service to be provided by Havering Council. This is not a criticism of the work that Homes in Havering has done but we simply no longer need a separate organisation to access the funds from the decent homes programme."*

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*It is anticipated by the Council that £300,000 per year can be saved by moving the management of the housing service back in house*

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It is anticipated by the Council that £300,000 per year can be saved by moving the management of the housing service back in house - all of that will be reinvested in Council homes. A report will now be presented to Havering's Cabinet on 21st March 2012.

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*There will also be a new £400million funding pot to kick-start construction where it has stalled. Cash rewards will incentivise councils to bring empty homes back into use*

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## Housing Strategy for England 2012

The Government in their new Housing Strategy for England states that 'one of the most important things each generation can do for the next is to build high quality homes that will stand the test of time'. They go on to tell us that for decades in Britain we have under-built.

By the time the current Government came to office, house building rates had reached lows not seen in peace-time since the 1920s. The government believes that the economic and social consequences of this failure have affected millions: costing jobs; forcing growing families to live in cramped conditions; leaving young people without much hope that they will ever own a home of their own.

These problems that have been entrenched over decades, have deepened over the past few years. The housing market is one of the biggest victims of the credit crunch: lenders won't lend, so builders can't build and buyers can't buy. That lack of confidence is visible in derelict building sites and endless 'For Sale' signs. It is doing huge damage to the United Kingdom economy and our society. The government states that it intends to take bold action to unblock the market.

The government's mortgage indemnity scheme is intended to give help to tens of thousands of buyers currently frozen out of the market. Local authorities will be invited to come forward with proposals for locally planned large scale development. There will also be a new £400million funding pot to kick-start construction where it has stalled. Cash rewards will incentivise councils to bring empty homes back into use. A new deal on housing for older people will help them to adapt their homes and stay independent should they wish to. The new strategy hopes to provide help to people and communities who want to design and build their own homes. The government considers that it will improve fairness in council housing by increasing rents for the most well-off, recycling the income into new housing.

The strategy paper states that 'this is a radical and unashamedly ambitious strategy' with two main aims:

- First, to help drive local economies and create jobs. Unblocking the market will provide a much-needed boost to employment.
- Second, these plans are designed to spread opportunity in society. For too long, millions have been locked out of home ownership.

The government say that they want to build an economy that works for everyone, one in that people who work hard and play by the rules can expect to own a decent home of their own.

With this strategy, the government hopes to unlock the housing market, get Britain building again, and give many more people the satisfaction and security that comes from stepping over their own threshold.

The government considers that a fair society is an open society: one in that every individual is free to succeed. Improving social mobility; helping



everyone to enjoy that freedom to succeed; is the principal aim of the Government's social policy and to achieve this aim, they say it is important that they recognise the fundamentally important role that housing can play in supporting social mobility.

People will want and need different things from housing throughout their lives. But there are common threads. People need to find housing in the right place, enabling them to find work, to maintain contacts with friends and family, and often to provide care. Housing needs to be suitable for the size and shape of the household – with space for children, or good accessibility in older age. And housing can be a source of wealth – opening opportunities at critical life stages, such as helping children with their education or into home ownership in their own right.

The government says that when these essential elements are not provided, housing can act as a brake on rather than as an engine of social mobility.

The private rented sector has grown rapidly in recent years and there are now 3.4 million households privately renting, and 30% of them have children. 85% of private renters are satisfied with their accommodation, but some poor quality rented housing remains.

At the same time, rents are rising in many areas, making it more difficult to save. Access to ownership for this group has become increasingly difficult: median house prices are now seven times median earnings, compared with three and a half times in the mid-1990s. Home ownership is becoming increasingly restricted to those with high incomes, or those who receive assistance from family or friends. The proportion of first time buyers aged under thirty requiring financial assistance rose from 36% in 2005 to 77% in 2010.

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Younger recent homeowners, many of whom are young families, are finding it harder to 'trade up' as their families grow. Over 800,000 households are currently estimated to be in negative equity. Half of all households in England are older 'established homeowners'. Some 42% are retired and 66% own their own home outright. As life expectancy increases, more of these households will need support to remain in their homes in later life. Limited choice in the housing market makes it difficult for older households to find homes that fully meet their needs.

Some households will remain lifelong renters, often by choice especially in the social rented sector. Demand for social housing has increased significantly, but the government considers that the stock that is available is not being well used: there is widespread overcrowding and under occupation, and tens of thousands of properties are occupied by people who ought not to be there. Moreover the government tell us that, mobility in social housing has become increasingly difficult, and there is evidence to suggest that even after adjusting for other factors such as single parent or disability status social housing tenants are less likely to be in employment than similar individuals in other tenures.

AWICS has prepared a briefing paper on the new housing strategy that can be freely downloaded from:

[http://www.awics.co.uk/documents/briefing\\_papers/housing/A\\_Housing\\_Strategy\\_for\\_England\\_2012\\_23-02-2012.pdf](http://www.awics.co.uk/documents/briefing_papers/housing/A_Housing_Strategy_for_England_2012_23-02-2012.pdf)

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## Council and Community Owned (CoCo) Housing

Council and Community Owned (CoCo) Housing is a new option for social housing that is currently being considered by government, the national federation of ALMOs and by some local authorities. It may become the government's preferred model for future housing stock transfers. The first CoCo has yet to be established but Gloucester City Council has taken a decision in principle to establish a CoCo.

In June 2011 the National Federation of ALMOs published a report 'Building on the potential of ALMOs to invest in local communities'. This report considered three options for the future of ALMOs of that the 'CoCo' was one. The report examined the viability and business case for each model concluding that ALMOs that require significant further investment to develop their communities would be most suited to the 'CoCo' option.

'CoCo' means a Community and Council-owned Organisation that is jointly-owned by the Council, tenants and independents and is set up to receive a transfer of housing stock from the Council. With this option, the Arms Length Management Organisation would become a 'CoCo' and would take over the ownership of the Council's homes. The 'CoCo' would be jointly owned by the community (two thirds) and the Council (one third) so the Council would retain ownership of a third of the housing stock.

The Council would retain the housing debt that was agreed under the reform of the council housing funding system. The 'CoCo' would make payments from its income to cover that debt. This would mean that the new CoCo would still have strong financial ties with the Council. Therefore, the 'CoCo' would not be a conventional stock transfer because the new body would retain a financial relationship with the Council. It would do this through a covenant to meet the council's interest and repayment obligations on its HRA loans.

The 'CoCo' model is intended to provide a much greater role for tenants in the running of their estates whilst being attractive to private lenders. However this option would require government approval before it could take place as under the current financial regime, ALMOs are unable to access private finance.

Rents would increase at the same rate as they would if the Council continued to manage the homes. Tenants would still be able to claim housing benefit from the Council in the same way. Because the homes would no longer be owned by the Council, this option would allow the 'CoCo' to borrow more, outside the rules that restrict public sector borrowing. But - unlike a traditional stock transfer to a housing association - the Council and the 'CoCo' would have strong ongoing financial ties.

This option would represent significant change for the ALMO - but would potentially bring in additional funding especially for capital

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investment. This is a new concept that, unlike traditional stock transfer has not yet been implemented anywhere in the country.

The key features of the 'CoCo' model include:

- The Council transfers its stock to the ALMO, that would be restructured into a Community and Council-owned Organisation (CoCo).
- The CoCo covenants (i.e. makes a binding agreement) to service the Council's housing debt (pay off the loans and interest as it falls due) that the Council retains after the stock transfer. This enables the CoCo to take advantage of the Council's borrowing rates and avoids the need for it to raise the money to repay that debt. Of course, the need to service the debt reduces the opportunity for the 'CoCo' to raise additional money itself.
- The 'CoCo' would service the Council's housing debt (pay off the loans and interest as it falls due), from its rental income.
- Unlike Council borrowing, the 'CoCo' borrowing would be classified as private sector borrowing, so it would not be subject to public sector borrowing restrictions imposed by the Government.
- In its business plan the 'CoCo' would aim through efficiencies to generate enough surplus rental income to borrow from a private lender to invest in the stock.
- The Council would have a financial relationship with the 'CoCo' through the covenant. It would retain an interest in the stock although it would not be able to interfere in the 'CoCo' operational work.
- The 'CoCo' would have the 'standard' ALMO current board composition (i.e. onethird Council board membership).
- General membership (i.e. ownership) of the 'CoCo' would change to include tenants and independents from the community with relevant expertise. There would be a one-third Council, two-thirds community (i.e. tenants and independents) split in ownership – or an even greater proportion of tenant board and general membership if this is preferred.
- The change in landlord (from Council to 'CoCo') means a tenant ballot would be required to demonstrate tenant support. Assuming the ALMO has been a successful organisation, tenants may feel reassured that the proposed transfer is to an organisation that they are familiar with (albeit with a change in its general membership).
- No (or very few) staff would transfer from the Council to the 'CoCo' because most, if not all, of the housing staff required to run the housing service were transferred to the ALMO when it was set up. Changing the governance structure of the ALMO into the 'CoCo' does not require a transfer of staff.

A Full briefing paper and analysis is available at:

[http://www.awics.co.uk/documents/briefing\\_papers/housing/Council\\_and\\_Community\\_Owned\\_\(CoCo\)\\_Housing\\_24-10-2011.pdf](http://www.awics.co.uk/documents/briefing_papers/housing/Council_and_Community_Owned_(CoCo)_Housing_24-10-2011.pdf)

## Right to Buy Consultation Paper

Communities and Local Government issued its consultation paper on the right to buy in November 2011, announcing proposals to increase the cap on discounts to £50,000. The new cap would double the maximum discount available in much of the country, while trebling it in most parts of London.

The revival of the right to buy, first announced during autumn's Conservative Party conference, has been met with concern from some local authorities among fears that they would not be allowed to retain receipts from sales locally. The consultation considered the different methods in that the receipts could be used to deliver replacement affordable rent homes on a one-for-one basis, as pledged by the government.

Housing minister Grant Shapps said the government was 'determined to maintain the number of affordable homes for rent', repeating the commitment that 'every additional home that is sold will be replaced by a new affordable home on a one-for-one basis'. The Local Government Association has called for receipts to be retained in full by local councils and for councils to be allowed to decide on discount rates.

*'If the receipts are pooled nationally, not only will this lead to money being wasted on bidding processes and Whitehall bureaucracy, but it could hit families hard who are desperately waiting for an affordable home in their local area,' said David Parsons, chairman of the Local Government Association's environment and housing board.*

*'It is paramount that councils are given the ability to decide the discount tenants receive, to ensure that there is enough money from right to buy sales to build enough new homes. Any flat national rate would be arbitrary and could produce unexpected results due to house price variations across the country.*

*'In respect to the receipts from right to buy sales, it is vital that all of the money raised is kept by councils, to enable them to quickly invest in affordable housing locally. Councils are trusted by local people to ensure that housing meets their needs and must be given the means to do so.'*

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Selected Consultation Questions follow:

**Q2:** Do you agree that information currently provided to prospective Right to Buy purchasers is sufficient? If not, what else should be included

**Q3:** Are there further steps that could be taken to ensure that tenants who purchase under Right to Buy know about and understand the implications of home ownership, including their obligations on becoming a leaseholder?

**Q4:** We would welcome evidenced assessments of the impact on rural affordable housing of the proposed changes to Right to Buy discount

**Q6:** What proportion of Right to Buy applications are subsequently withdrawn in your area?

**Q7:** What costs are incurred in managing aborted applications?

**Q8:** What sources of funding have you used for improvement works in your area?

**Q9:** We would welcome views on the proposed approach to projected receipts.

**Q10:** We would welcome any information councils can provide on the use of Buyback properties. We would also welcome views on this proposal.

**Q12:** We would welcome views on the calculation of allowable deductions

**Q13:** Which model for delivery of replacement housing do you consider the most appropriate, and why?

**Q14:** How can housing associations and councils be further encouraged to use receipts from Preserved Right to Buy sales to support provision of replacement homes?

‘Right to Buy’ was originally introduced by the Conservative government in 1980 following a commitment made during the 1979 election. It achieved its stated intention of allowing council tenants to become owner-occupiers and led to an increase in owner-occupation and a reduction in the social housing stock. This reduction in the social housing stock subsequently caused concern leading to the New Labour government restricting the ‘Right to Buy’.

The current coalition government’s proposals on extending the ‘right to buy’ are widely seen as an attempt to build on the policy started by the previous Conservative government and to extend owner-occupation at a time when market forces are making it difficult for first time buyers to enter the market. However, the government states that its policy will not lead to further reductions in the social housing stock as it will use the right to buy receipts to fund new build social housing on a one-for-one replacement basis.

Sceptics have questioned whether the policy will actually generate more right to buy sales in view of market conditions and in view of the fact that more prosperous tenants have already bought the most desirable homes. They have also questioned whether, given increased discounts, the proceeds of any increased sales would be sufficient to finance the building of an equivalent number of new social homes.

This consultation paper sets out the financial mechanisms that the government is proposing. It is suggested that the first call on receipts will be to meet administration costs, then to repay a proportion of the Council’s debt and then to provide the Treasury with the receipts that it assumed as part of the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review. Any capital receipt remaining would then be used to support new affordable housing. However, the consultation paper puts forward options for achieving this including an option of retaining receipts locally and an option of pooling receipts nationally and distributing them on the basis of need. Most respondents in the sector favour the localist approach.

The government responded to the consultation in March 2012.

A Full briefing paper with analysis & responses to the consultation paper is available at: <http://www.awics.co.uk/BriefingPapers/ViewCategory/housing/>

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## National Housing Federation Board Members Conference

The National Housing Federation (North) held a conference for Board Members in Liverpool on 19th October 2011. Adrian Waite attended the conference as a representative of Impact Housing. Various presentations were made:

### **Raising the Sector's Political Profile**

This presentation was made by Derek Long, Assistant Director (North) of the National Housing Federation.

The role of the National Housing Federation is to make representations to politicians for the benefit of housing associations and their tenants, to support and promote the work of housing associations and to campaign for better housing and neighbourhoods.

There is legislation on the 'big society', energy, welfare and localism. The legislation will be followed by regulations. Benefit reforms will hit housing association 'bottom lines'. There are 700,000 housing association tenants with the preserved right to buy but the short-term effects of government announcements are not expected to be significant. Housing has become more political and politicians (including local politicians) are interested in housing. Housing was not a big issue during the general election but is now a big issue. It is interesting that David Cameron talks of building more homes while Ed Miliband talks about making choices and giving homes to those who show responsibility.

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### **The Economic Climate and its Impact on the Sector**

This presentation was made by Brian Cronin, Chief Executive of the Arena Housing Group.

Housing Associations usually come out of recessions stronger than they went into them. The economics of recessions work in favour of housing associations as long as risk management is addressed.

There is a world financial crisis but the private sector has more cash and more profits than five years ago – for example, the energy companies. It is the financial system rather than the economic system that has collapsed. The financial system has collapsed due to excessive private and public borrowing. Since 2008 the public sector has been paying the money back especially through the bank bailouts. This is paid for by taxpayers and so suppresses the financial system. All the banks are now re-capitalising. The Bank of England reports that all United Kingdom banks have higher capitalisation than they had in 2006. However, they have kept the cash rather than lending it.

### **Worklessness – How can Housing Associations actively encourage customers back to work?**

This session was presented by Marcus Johnstone of Regenda, Leala Irvine of St Vincent's Housing Association and Mark Jory of Helena Partnerships.

The workless are defined as the registered unemployed and those of working age who are not actively seeking work. The causes of worklessness are many and include: young people raised in workless households, the inter-generational workless, those with low aspirations, lack of financial incentive, lack of

information advice and support, and those with 'hectic' lifestyles (health, mental health, drugs or alcohol). Many workless people have been found to be 'borderline agoraphobic'.

### **Delivering the Affordable Homes Programme 2011-15**

This presentation was given by Adam Morton, Investment Policy Officer, National Housing Federation and Claire Griffiths, Plus Dane Group.

Before 2007 the United Kingdom economy had tended to grow at between 2% and 3% a year. However, since then growth has declined and in the second quarter of 2008 the economy began to contract. In 2008/09 the economy contracted by 6.5%. and growth only returned in the last quarter of 2009/10. In the last quarter of 2010/11 the economy contracted again - a fact that the government attributed to cold weather. However, winters come every year and in Germany, where the weather was even colder, the economy grew by 1%. In the second quarter of 2011/12 growth was only 0.2% and the International Monetary Fund downgraded its growth forecasts for the United Kingdom.

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### **The Big Picture**

This presentation was given by Yvonne Davies, Director of Scrutiny & Empowerment Partners.

Housing associations are inventive, strong and resilient and are asking whether there are options other than cuts. £11billion is to be saved from the welfare budget by 2014/15. The affordable housing programme is down from £8billion to £4.5billion. In local government there is a trend towards shared services, merged services and deleting the post of Chief Executive Officer.

The Scottish government has already produced a new housing strategy and the new housing strategy for England is expected in November 2011. It will address housing, homelessness and support. It will consider the financing of new housing supply. It will address value for money that is a 'big issue' with the regulator. It will seek to encourage home ownership and mobility. It will seek to deliver high quality sustainable homes and to protect the vulnerable.

**Full Briefing Paper with analysis of all presentations available at**  
[http://www.awics.co.uk/documents/briefing\\_papers/housing/National\\_Housing\\_Federation\\_Board\\_Members\\_Conference\\_26-10-2011.pdf](http://www.awics.co.uk/documents/briefing_papers/housing/National_Housing_Federation_Board_Members_Conference_26-10-2011.pdf)

## Upcoming AWICS Courses

### **All You Want To Know About Local Authority Housing Finance 2012**

We are running our 2012 series of 'All You Want to Know about Local Authority Housing Finance' at venues in all parts of England from February to November. This course is designed to give an introduction and overview to this important subject and is fully up to date with all developments including the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review and Self-Financing.

Do you think that a working knowledge of local authority housing finance, acquired at our fully up to date seminar, would put you and your colleagues in a position of advantage?

The course is accompanied by a very useful 100 page book entitled: "All You Want To Know About Local Authority Housing Finance 2012"

Many people - officers, elected members, tenants and others with an interest in local authority housing have already benefited from this course.

The cost of this seminar is £250 plus VAT in London and £220 plus VAT at the other venues, making a total of £300.00 in London and £264.00 at the other venues. The fee includes lunch.

#### **Event Locations**

- London – 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2012
- North: Leeds – 26<sup>th</sup> June 2012
- London – 14<sup>th</sup> November 2012

A booking form and full description of the course is available at; [http://www.awics.co.uk/documents/regionalcourses/all\\_you\\_want\\_to\\_know\\_about\\_local\\_authority\\_housing\\_finance.pdf](http://www.awics.co.uk/documents/regionalcourses/all_you_want_to_know_about_local_authority_housing_finance.pdf)

### **All You Want To Know About Housing Association Finance 2012**

Housing Association Finance is going through a period of change and uncertainty with reductions in Social Housing Grant and Supporting People Grant, Intermediate Rents, Reform of Housing Benefits and the abolition of the Tenant Services Authority and Audit Commission.

In this situation, do you think that a working knowledge of housing association finance would put you and your colleagues in a position of advantage?

Delegates will gain an overview of the finances of registered providers and will keep up to date with developments in housing association finance.

The cost of this seminar is £240 plus VAT making a total of £288.

The course is accompanied by a very useful book entitled: "All You Want To Know About Housing Association Finance 2012"

#### **Event Location**

- London: Novotel Hotel, Waterloo – 24<sup>th</sup> April 2012

A booking form and full description of the course is available at; [http://www.awics.co.uk/documents/regionalcourses/housing\\_association\\_finance.pdf](http://www.awics.co.uk/documents/regionalcourses/housing_association_finance.pdf)



### **All You Want To Know About Scottish Social Housing Finance**

Do you think that a working knowledge of social housing finance in Scotland would put you or your colleagues in a position of advantage at a time of change such as this?

Social housing is becoming increasingly important in Scotland at a time of rising demand for affordable housing and constrained resources. Scottish local authorities and housing associations face the challenges of building new affordable homes and achieving the 'Scottish Housing Quality Standard' while continuing to set affordable rents. The United Kingdom government has proposals to 'reform' housing benefits that are opposed by the Scottish Government.

The course is accompanied by a very useful book entitled: "All You Want To Know About Scottish Social Housing Finance 2012"

The cost of this seminar is £220 plus VAT making a total of £264. The fee includes lunch and the book that accompanies the seminar.

#### **Event Location**

- Falkirk: Best Western Park Hotel – 9<sup>th</sup> May 2012

A booking form and full description of the course is available at;

[http://www.awics.co.uk/documents/regionalcourses/social\\_housing\\_finance.pdf](http://www.awics.co.uk/documents/regionalcourses/social_housing_finance.pdf)

### **Developments in Local Authority Housing Finance in England**

We are holding our 2012 seminar on 'Developments in Local Authority Housing Finance in England' in London on 3rd July 2012. This seminar is designed to look in depth at current developments in local authority housing finance in England – especially the implications of the introduction of self-financing and the government's other reforms. It comes at a critical time with self financing being introduced in April; a shortage of capital resources for the Decent Homes Standard following the Comprehensive Spending Review; new challenges for Strategic Housing services to deliver new build and other outcomes with minimal funding; government linking the funding of new build with the introduction of new affordable rents at 80% of market levels; reforms to the welfare system; the new initiative of Right to Buy and uncertainty surrounding the future of Stock Transfer and Arms Length Management.

The course is accompanied by a very useful book entitled: "Developments in Local Authority Housing Finance in England 2012"

The cost of this seminar is £250 plus VAT making a total of £300.

#### **Event Location**

- London: Novotel Hotel, Waterloo – 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2012

### **Want a Course In House?**

All AWICS Courses are available In-House, details available at:

[http://www.awics.co.uk/View/Page/in\\_house\\_training\\_courses/](http://www.awics.co.uk/View/Page/in_house_training_courses/)

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