

AWICS Housing News – August 2014

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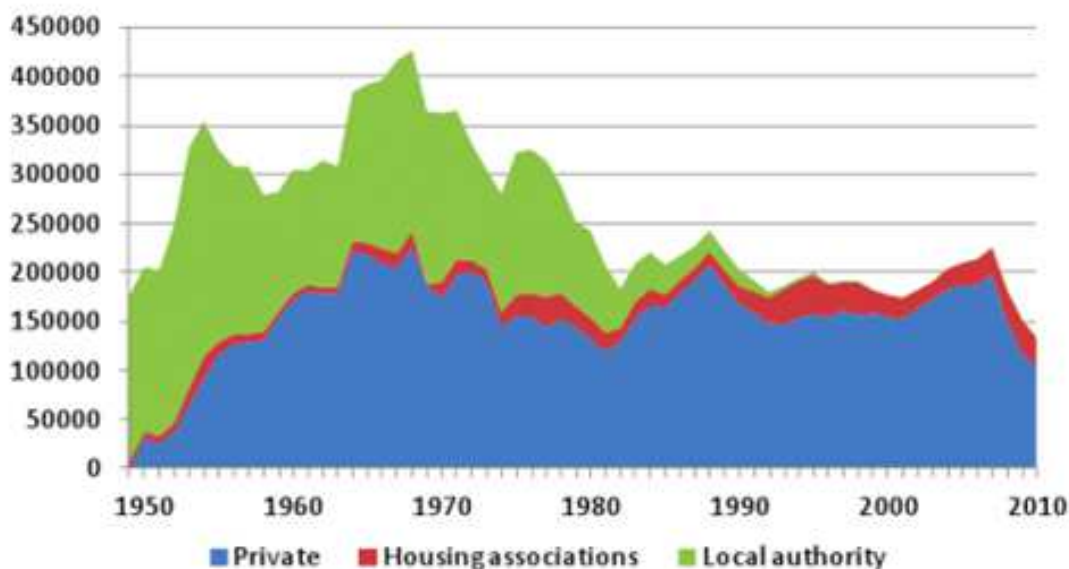


Noble's Place in Kendal. A scheme recently opened by Impact Housing Association.

Local Authorities, Development and the Borrowing Cap

It is generally recognised that there is a serious shortage of affordable housing in England. Consequently, many local authorities are building new council houses and many would like to build more. However, they are constrained in their ability to do this by the government imposed 'borrowing cap' that limits their ability to borrow to fund development.

The following graph shows total house building in England. It will be seen that since local authorities stopped building new council housing in the 1980s the level of construction has fallen with housing associations and the private sector failing to 'fill the gap' left by the reduction in building by councils.



Many people in local authorities argue that the solution to the current housing crisis would be for local authorities to re-start their development programmes. This is occurring but contemporary development programmes by local authorities are very small in relation to those that were seen in the 1960s at their peak.

The relaxation of the local authority housing borrowing cap has been campaigned for by local authorities and housing organisations ever since it was first imposed by the government as part of the self-financing settlement.

The autumn statement included an announcement that the borrowing cap would be lifted by £150million in 2015/16 and a further £150million on 2016/17 with the allocation to be distributed through local enterprise partnerships. All stock owning authorities will be eligible to apply for additional borrowing capacity through a competitive process in partnership with Local Enterprise Partnerships and through local growth deals. George Osborne said the £300million increase would build 10,000 new affordable homes across England. However, councils had argued that the cap should be raised by £7billion or even repealed altogether, so the announcement provided only 4% of what councils had asked for and slightly less than £1million a year for each stock owning local authority.

This allocation will form part of the competitive bidding process the government will run to split the £2billion 'single pot' of government funding to England's 39 Local Enterprise Partnerships. Under the plan, councils will make proposals to build new homes using the borrowing facility as part of their Local Enterprise Partnership when bidding to agree a Local Growth Deal with the Treasury. Ministers will then allocate the funding based on a value-for-money assessment. It is understood there will be flexibility to increase borrowing headroom in areas of particularly acute housing need.

London Councils' Executive member for housing, Mayor Sir Steve Bullock, said:

"By 2021, over 800,000 new homes will need to be built in London, but the government's latest attempt to address this crisis through increasing council borrowing capacity does not go far enough and has too many strings attached."

"In order to qualify for extra borrowing capacity, councils will have to sell off high value vacant housing stock. This unfairly prejudices London, which has both the most acute housing need and the highest value stock in the country."

"London Councils will continue to call for the complete removal of the artificial housing borrowing cap, among a raft of other measures, so that boroughs can properly address London's housing crisis."

In April 2014, the government opened the bidding process to allocate an extra £300million of housing revenue account borrowing to local authorities, intended to fund the construction of 10,000 affordable homes. This is a national scheme that covers London as well as other parts of England. Setting out the requirements for the funding, Communities & Local Government Secretary Eric Pickles and Chief Secretary to the Treasury Danny Alexander said councils would need to have the bids approved by their Local Enterprise Partnership to be successful. The ministers also announced authorities would need to include their own land or capital receipts in projects bidding for funds, to demonstrate best value for money.

The additional borrowing headroom will be split into £150million in both 2015/16 and 2016/17, and allocated as part of local growth deals.

The rules governing council land sales will change to free more redundant land and property to build homes. Local authorities will be able to sell land at below market value to developers who will build affordable housing. Councils applying for extra borrowing powers will need to demonstrate maximum value for money, by including funds from disposal of surplus assets, particularly high-value vacant stock, and by bringing forward their own land for new affordable housing.

Eric Pickles said that:

“(These changes have) untied the hands of councils so they can take more responsibility for housing in their area... Councils have built more homes in the last three years than under the whole of the last government – 170,000 affordable homes have been delivered since 2010, and house building is now at its highest level since 2007... But there is still more to do. Today we are offering extra borrowing powers so councils can build more homes. We are also making it easier for councils to sell surplus and redundant property for new affordable housing, and they should consider what land they can release for the benefit of their local community.”

Bids from councils, that must be agreed with Local Enterprise Partnerships, are to be submitted to the Department for Communities and Local Government by 16th June 2014.

The government considers that the extra funding and flexibilities will enable councils to complement government's affordable housing programme, which is on track to deliver 170,000 homes by 2015, and a further 165,000 between 2015 and 2018.

Danny Alexander said more should be done to empower local communities to deliver more good quality housing now and that the extra borrowing capacity would compliment the government's review of social housing supply announced in January 2014 and said:

“This additional borrowing flexibility, together with funding from the sales of high value social homes and other forms of local investment will deliver 10,000 new affordable housing over the next few years – supporting the construction sector and providing new homes.”

The review is investigating whether councils are using their current powers and flexibilities to deliver new housing, and how they could work with housing associations, house builders, residents and businesses to do more.

A comprehensive briefing paper on local authorities, development and the borrowing cap is available on our website. The purpose of this briefing paper is to provide an update on local authorities, development and the borrowing cap. It includes sections on:

- Let's Get Building
- Autumn Statement 2013 and Development
- Repurchasing
- Arms' Length Management Organisations
- Council Subsidiaries
- Joint Ventures
- Recent Developments
- Autumn Statement 2013 and the Borrowing Cap
- Increased Borrowing Potential
- Trading Borrowing Capacity

It can be freely downloaded from the 'AWICS' website at:
<http://www.awics.co.uk/dynamicdata/data/docs/local%20authorities,%20development%20and%20the%20borrowing%20cap%20-%20briefing%20paper.pdf>

Impact Housing opens 'Nobles Place' in Kendal

Impact Housing Association, of which I am Chair, was lucky to have a sunny day to celebrate the opening of their latest scheme in the centre of Kendal. The scheme consists of eight two-bedroom bungalows designed for the over 55s.

The bungalows are designed to the Code for Sustainable Homes standards and are heated by a high performance gas condensing boiler with a gas saver and have been provided with a mechanical heat recovery and ventilation system to help to save energy.

The bungalows achieve an EOC rating of 82 with estimated running costs for heating and hot water anticipated to be around £5.60 per week.

The site is a former South Lakeland District Council Parks Department Nursery. Originally the site and the adjacent park were donated to the local authority in 1929 by a Mrs. Mary Noble, as a 'sanctuary of rest for the aged and as a playground for small children' in memory of her husband, a local doctor. Following consultation with the Kendal Civic Society it was decided to name the development after Mrs. Noble – hence the name 'Noble's Place'.

The total scheme costs were £1.3million, with £200,000 grant from the Homes & Communities Agency and £161,000 from South Lakeland District Council.

The partners on the scheme were:

- Thomas Armstrong (Construction) Limited – the contractor.
- Alpha Design – the architect.
- RG Parkins – the structural engineer and CDMC.
- Donleys – the employer's agent.

At the opening, tenants, staff, agencies and local people came along to look around the scheme. A bench was placed in the centre of the scheme as a place to get together and chat, and the young people from the South Lakes Foyer made some lovely pots for the tenants' gardens. After the formalities, afternoon tea was held at the scheme.

Further information can be found on the Impact Housing Association website at:
<http://www.impacthousing.org.uk/news/new-scheme-opens-kendal>

Affordable Homes Programme 2015/18

The Homes & Communities Agency's 2015/18 Affordable Homes Programme was announced in July 2014 and aims to increase the supply of new affordable homes in England by contributing to the delivery of 165,000 new homes by March 2018. In that time the Agency will invest £1.7billion in affordable housing. They published initial allocations for £886million of that funding, to support delivery of 43,821 new affordable homes across 2,697 schemes.

The majority of the new programme is being made available as affordable rent (rather than social rent) along with an element of affordable home ownership where that meets local needs. These tenures will include both general needs housing, and other types of specialist housing (for example, supported housing).

In a change from the previous programme all of the available funding will not be allocated from the outset. Instead, the Agency is allocating over half the available funding now, with the remainder being made available via continuous market engagement in due course. This will allow bidders the opportunity to bid for the remaining funding for development opportunities as these arise during the programme, where there is certainty over delivery within the programme timescales.

The advice of the Social Housing Regulator on registered providers' ability to continue to meet the Governance and Viability standard will be key in the Agency's decision on whether to proceed to contract.

Since the prospectus was announced earlier in the year some registered providers warned that grant rates were too low and conditions too onerous to justify bidding. They pointed to the replacement of social rents with higher affordable rents combined with the welfare cuts as not sustainable. The onerous conditions which many refer to have been set by the Homes & Communities Agency and are in stark contrast to the proposed 'cutting of red tape' that many thought would herald this round of funding.

Many landlords in the north warned that the low grant rates did not make sense economically in an area where low market rents mean lower affordable rents. In addition many housing associations are unhappy with the requirement for landlords to carry out expensive retrofitting of existing stock and to provide greater nomination rights for local authorities.

It was hoped that the government's 10-year rent settlement would provide sufficient stability but it seems this has been undermined by landlords' unwillingness to raise rents to levels that are increasingly unaffordable to their tenants.

The news that housing associations could struggle to build sufficient homes after 2015 comes after it was announced that there are real concerns whether landlords will deliver the current 2011/15 affordable homes programme. Government figures show starts onsite had only reached 42,063 by last autumn against a target of 58,000 homes to be completed by March 2015, casting doubt on whether the homes can be finished in time.

Similarly, the Greater London Authority has found difficulty in allocating all its resources for the affordable homes programme in London. In total, £404million has been allocated to schemes - representing 86% of the grant funding available from the Greater London Authority.

In total, 54 providers have received grant with Notting Hill Housing Trust securing the largest allocation of £59.3million to build 2,250 homes. Fifteen boroughs from across the capital will run their own development programmes, among them Waltham Forest Borough Council that will receive £9.7million for 387 homes and Lambeth Borough Council £10.9million for 303.

For the first time, the Greater London Authority has also allocated £5.6million to the Grainger Trust, a significant private landlord active since 1912, to deliver 195 homes.

The remainder of its £1.25billion pot - allocated by the government as part of almost £3billion of grant in the spending review last year - will be used to fund schemes such as the housing bank that provides loans for new homes and housing zones.

Boris Johnson, the Mayor of London, said:

"The only way to address the huge demand for housing and tackle the 30 year backlog of under-supply is to build more homes. We've worked closely with expert housing providers to ensure this funding will deliver much-needed low-cost homes across the capital."

Impact Housing Association, of which I am Chair, bid successfully for eleven units.

However, local authorities are taking up more grant than they did with the previous programme. Forty councils will receive funding from the Homes and Communities Agency under its 2015/18 affordable homes programme, a big increase over the nineteen receiving grant in the 2011/14 programme. For example, Birmingham will get funding for 147 homes, Sheffield for 45 and Epping Forest for 40 grant-aided and 17 nil-grant units.

The largest allocations go to stock-retaining councils Hull, for 634 homes, and Leeds, for 408. These allocations provide further confirmation that councils are planning substantially to increase the number of new homes they are building. They also include two of the councils named by Inside Housing as those with the largest unallocated borrowing power. Barnsley will get £440,000 to provide 37 new homes. Wigan council will get £1.9 million to provide 88 homes, while £560,000 will go to its ALMO, Wigan and Leigh Housing, for a further 24. Whether or not these councils are planning to use their full borrowing power in the immediate future, they cannot be accused of having no plans to build.

The overall pattern of allocations, both by the HCA and the London Mayor, shows a shift away from the largest housing associations to councils and smaller associations. This may be in part because they are now more likely to use their own resources, both because of their current financial strength and, particularly in London and the South East, because of concerns that the affordable rents which are a condition of programme funding are beyond the reach of many tenants.

It is interesting to note that:

- Most providers have bid for 'non-grant' schemes purely so that they can deregulate their earlier Homes & Communities Agency funded stock on a one-for-one basis.
- Providers in high value areas will often not bother with grant as the works required to meet Homes & Communities Agency standards would cost more than the grant. They are often preferring to fund market rent housing to cross subsidise non-Homes & Communities Agency affordable schemes.
- In low value areas, a programme is often viable only if there is significant other subsidy or if providers have some high rent properties as part of that programme.

'AWICS' has provided in-house training to staff of the Homes & Communities Agency especially in local authority finance and local authority housing finance.

Financial Modelling for Housing

AWICS has developed financial models that can be used by local authorities and housing associations in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland; to model self-financed business plans and new build programmes.

The new build model can be used to model a wide range of scenarios for building social, shared ownership and market homes using capital contributions, borrowing, grant and capital expenditure charged to revenue.

The assumed costs of management, maintenance and major repairs can be based on the allowances contained in the housing revenue account subsidy determination, actual costs or assumed future costs.

The model allows the user to establish a strategy for funding the new build in terms of the order in which sources of funding would be accessed. For example, the user can opt to use capital contributions first, social housing grant second, revenue contributions third and prudential borrowing last.

The model allows the user to specify the general level of inflation and real increases in rent, service charges and each item of expenditure in each year of the thirty year projection

The model allows the user to model a range of different archetypes of housing as social, affordable, shared-ownership or market housing; and to calculate separate costs of land, construction and fees.

For each archetype the model calculates the rent and service charges; and the management, maintenance and major repairs costs; and is thus able to calculate the surplus that could be used to fund borrowing.

The model shows the total capital cost of the programme and how it would be financed.

The Business Planning model includes the following pages:

- Summary
- Capital
- Capital Options
- Revenue
- Capital Financing
- Principal Repaid
- New Build

The summary page summarises the financial projections generated by the model over a thirty year period. It shows capital expenditure and its financing; revenue expenditure and income; and movements in balances over a thirty year period.

The capital page provides more detailed information about the capital programme and allows the user to select options for the capital programme. The capital options page provides details of the capital options available, linked to stock condition survey data.

The revenue page allows the user to input data and specify assumptions about revenue costs and income including rents.

The Capital Financing page calculates how the capital programme can be financed bearing in mind the 'borrowing cap'. The Principal repaid page shows the phasing of the taking out of new loans and their repayment.

The New Build page draws data from the new build financial model to include the capital and revenue effects in the business planning model.

There are, of course, numerous options that could be modelled based on numerous assumptions. The models allow the user to modify assumptions and to test risks and sensitivities. The models can also be tailored to the individual requirements of each client.

For further information about either model please contact Adrian Waite at Adrian.waite@awics.co.uk or 017683-52165.

Basildon Council and the Housing Revenue Account Ring-Fence

Basildon Borough Council is a significant 'AWICS' customer having used us to assist with business planning and options appraisals. Recently the Council has received comment following an increase in central charges to the housing revenue account. However, Kieran Carrigan their Commissioning Director for Resourcing and Place Shaping has defended the Council's position in a letter to 'Inside Housing' as follows:

"I read with interest your feature 'Raiding parties', in which you report councils across England have discovered ways to systematically raid ring-fenced housing revenue accounts (HRAs) to prop up other services.

"In Basildon, this is not the case and we feel the article misrepresents the figures we released. There is nothing inappropriate about this increase in general fund recharges. The increase was not a lump sum charge to the HRA, but was calculated in the same manner as in previous years and simply reflects the changes in organisational structure that have happened over the last two to three years Recharges to the HRA from the general fund are calculated as part of the annual resource allocation process and there is, therefore, an audit trail from the headline total recharge to the change made by individual services and from the corporate and democratic core.

"It is correct that the charges made by general fund services to the HRA did increase by around £1.4million from 2012/13 to 2013/14 but this was the product of two main factors, including the return of the housing management function from the arm's-length management organisation to the council and the reorganisation of the council under the transformation process.

"When the ALMO was functioning. It had its own support services and these were charged directly to the HRA via the management fee that was paid to the ALMO. When the housing management functions returned, these support services were merged with the council's existing support services and were charged to the general fund. The resource allocation process then picked up these costs and charged them on to the HRA.

“Direct management costs in the HRA fell but indirect costs (general fund charges) rose. This switch from direct to indirect charging was added to by the transformation programme and, In particular the transfer of staff into customer service centres from housing services.

“We feel strongly that Basildon Council is working in the best interest of residents by seeking alternative models of service delivery that increase efficiency. We can assure you this authority has not returned to the bad old days of insidious neglect, as you report.

“At Basildon, this is far from the truth. With careful financial management means that £18m of revenue resources are being used to supplement the capital programme over the next four years, bringing the total Investment in the stock to £97million in the years 2014/14 to 2017/18.”

Sevenside Housing is a Star Landlord

There were smiles all round recently as Sevenside Housing was presented with the 2014 HomeSwapper Star Landlord Award for the Midlands region. Sevenside is delighted to have been described as one of the most forward thinking landlords with 13% of its 4,000 tenants registered to HomeSwapper. Sevenside tenants have managed to successfully complete ninety house swaps in the last year using this scheme.

Since the 'under-occupation penalty' was introduced in 2013, there has been pressure on social landlords to help tenants to avoid getting into rent arrears. HomeSwapper allows tenants to swap homes with any other social housing resident no matter where they might be within the United Kingdom, provided all parties agree to the swap.

Housing Partners introduced the HomeSwapper Star Landlord Award to recognise and celebrate the efforts of the best Registered Providers of the HomeSwapper service. There are six regional awards covering four major areas of England as well as Scotland and Wales.

Richard Blundell, CEO of Housing Partners, the company behind HomeSwapper, the UK's largest mutual exchange service, said:

“The progress across the board in mutual exchange has been significant this year – with 25 per cent more swaps taking place through HomeSwapper than last year, in a climate significantly affected by welfare reform. Sevenside Housing is one of our most forward thinking landlords. Having held successful tenant events and encouraged 13 per cent of its residents onto HomeSwapper, Sevenside is making the very most of the service.

“With home swapping now a really vital housing option in the wake of welfare reform, it's essential that landlords take it seriously. We know that there is no substitute for hard work when it comes to home swapping, and these six landlords are leading the pack. Their advice and guidance will help other landlords to reach this level – and to stand a chance of winning the award next year.”

On the back of the awards, Housing Partners intend to produce a 'top tips' guide based on the lessons learned from this year's winners.

Information Technology management and innovative security systems company and Information Technology partner Satisnet has announced that it is working with Severnside Housing to deliver its patch management software. The solution will improve Severnside Housing's software patching capabilities, ensuring that sensitive data is secure and all software is up-to-date to allow employees to focus on looking after residents, rather than manually updating systems.

Ian Pritchard, IT manager at Severnside Housing said:

"We selected the Shavlik Protect solution, as our previous solution did not provide us with the granular level of control we required. Thanks to the solution we now have complete confidence that all of our staff are using up-to-date software and our crucial housing data is protected against the latest security threats. This allows our staff to fully focus their time on offering the best service to the Shropshire community ensuring that they can rehouse homeless people, control housing benefits effectively and make quick, timely repairs to properties."

"With this added layer of protection, staff at Severnside Housing can focus on delivering more responsive housing services. Shavlik makes the IT infrastructure and patching more manageable and transparent, which means we can roll out new solutions that provide greater accessibility to housing services without compromising security or employee productivity."

AWICS has recently provided advice to Severnside Housing on Value for Money.

More Innovations at Perth & Kinross

Perth and Kinross Council's Homeless Service has developed an on-line Housing Options Self-Assessment tool which can help people get information about their housing options in Perth & Kinross. This means that anyone experiencing housing difficulties or who requires housing advice can carry out a self-assessment from their own computer at home, or in a library or any other building with public internet access.

The Housing Options Self-Assessment (HOSA) includes information and advice about social housing, private rented housing, home ownership, disabled adaptations, welfare and money advice services as well as many other housing options which may be appropriate to the person's situation. On completion of HOSA the person will be provided with their own personalised Housing Options Action Plan which can be emailed to them automatically.

Council tenants were given the opportunity to discuss local housing issues that affect them at the Perth and Kinross Council Tenants' Conference 2014 in June. The council-organised event at Perth's Salutation Hotel included debate and discussion about housing priorities in Perth and Kinross, and tenants were given feedback about a recent survey carried out on the council's rent setting process. People were also able to have their say on how local community green space can be improved.

A range of stalls provided information about housing, neighbourhood and community services, as well as information on welfare reform support and the new Perth and Kinross Credit Union.

Housing & Health Convener Dave Doogan said:

"Tenants have a very important role to play in shaping the services we provide for them. The Tenants' Conference is a chance for tenants to have a positive input into how local housing services are run. It's also a great opportunity for people to find out more about what services and support are available in their local community, and to meet new friends."

Following the tenants' conference, a series of drop-in events are to be held for Perth & Kinross Council tenants to identify their priorities for council spending. The drop-in events are part of a new approach that aims to involve tenants as much as possible in the rent-setting process and talk to them about how rent revenue is used in their local communities.

Housing and Health Convener, Councillor Dave Doogan said:

"We want as many tenants as possible to have a say on our rent-setting process and how the rent money we collect from them is spent. The drop-in sessions are a great opportunity for tenants around Perth and Kinross to have their voices heard. I would encourage tenants to come along. It's important to us that their opinions help shape how we run services for them."

Renovation work on formerly derelict council homes in east Perthshire is also coming to an end after lying empty for nearly a decade. The fifteen properties on Old Mill Road, Rattray, should be ready for new tenants to move in over the next couple of weeks. Perth and Kinross Council made the decision to renovate the properties after they had been vacant for a number of years and were proving to be difficult to let. The houses had lain empty and boarded up for nearly a decade but were brought back into use in order to fill a housing void in the community. Councillor Ian Miller, leader of Perth and Kinross Council, said:

"Rattray is a fantastic area for families and by upgrading these properties we hope to help the area reach its full potential as an attractive place to live. Providing more housing for residents who require it is a top priority for the council, and when we can complete and deliver homes such as these it takes us a step closer to achieving our goals for ensuring people have a nice, safe place to live."

Energy efficiency works already completed through Perth & Kinross Council's housing and investment programme and other externally funded schemes have helped to counter the effects of fuel poverty across the area. A wide range of energy saving measures have already been carried out as part of the council's ongoing plan to improve the energy efficiency of its housing stock and achieve compliance with the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by March 2015.

In the two year period since March 2012, a total of 1,869 council houses have received upgraded central heating systems, 895 of which were in 2013/14. Most of these systems included high efficiency gas condensing combination boilers with high output radiators and thermostatic controls. Approximately 165 houses located outside the mains gas network have been fitted with new heating that incorporates supplementary energy saving measures like solar-water heating, high efficiency 'quantum' electric heaters or air-sourced heat pumps. New gas connections have been commissioned for 1,110 homes, attracting subsidies of £1,293,851 through the Scottish Gas Network's (SGN) Assisted Connection Scheme.

Since 2012, basic insulation improvements, such as loft top-ups and pipe/tank lagging have been completed in 1,155 Council houses. Detailed insulation checks were completed in a further 2,550 homes, where no additional works were found to be necessary. In addition, 134 flat roofed houses in the Letham area of Perth have also benefitted from insulation upgrades as part of planned re-roofing works.

New triple glazed windows have been fitted in 251 homes, 198 of which were fitted in 2013/14, along with insulated exterior doors. This enclosure of communal stairways and landings in 269 houses has helped to reduce drafts and improve comfort levels within flatted blocks. In addition, new low energy LED light fittings are also helping to reduce energy consumption whilst improving lighting levels in communal areas.

The Home Energy Efficiency Scotland - Area Based Schemes (HEEPS-ABS) programme started in July 2013 and has specifically targeted 'hard to treat' houses of non-traditional construction. The programme is continuing to progress well and more than 300 homes have already benefitted from this work.

By utilising the funding awards from HEEPS-ABS and contributions from the council's Capital Investment Programme, it is anticipated that external wall insulation works will be completed in a further 1,161 'hard to treat' houses during 2014/15. Owner occupiers and private landlords will continue to receive subsidies from HEEP-ABS and ECO which will enable works to be carried out at a very low or even free cost. The plan to continue these works during 2014/15 are already in place and it is hoped that this will continue to bring further improvements to 'hard to treat' homes in Perth and Kinross whilst helping to address fuel poverty.

Vice convener of the council's Housing and Health Committee, Councillor Kate Howie, said:

"To be able to provide these measures to our residents a lot of work has to be done to secure funding from schemes such as HEEP-ABS and ECO, and it is incredibly reassuring that of the 32 Local Authority's across Scotland only three were awarded a higher sum of money than Perth and Kinross. This means that Perth and Kinross is in a very strong position to make a significant difference to our residents. It is great to see the number of households that have been helped through these schemes. The difference that can be made to a property by making a few changes can be staggering; and at a time when energy is such an expensive utility, anything that can help impact this in a positive way will be very welcomed."

AWICS has recently provided training to staff of Perth & Kinross Council on finance and welfare reform.

The AWICS Housing News is published by 'AWICS' Limited. Articles are written by Adrian Waite unless otherwise stated. However, the views expressed in articles are not necessarily those of 'AWICS' or Adrian Waite unless expressly stated.

About 'AWICS'

'AWICS' is a management consultancy and training company. We specialise in providing support in finance and management to clients in local government and housing in England, Scotland and Wales. We are well known for our ability to analyse and explain complex financial and management issues clearly. Our mission statement is 'Independence, Integrity, Value'. We therefore provide support to clients from an independent standpoint that is designed to help the client to achieve their objectives. We are passionate about working with the utmost integrity. We believe that we offer the best value for money that is available today!

For more information about us and our services please visit our website at www.awics.co.uk or contact Adrian Waite at Adrian.waite@awics.co.uk. Services that we offer include:

- Management Consultancy – <http://www.awics.co.uk/ManagementConsultancy.asp>
- Interim Management – <http://www.awics.co.uk/interimmanagement.asp>
- Regional Seminars - <http://www.awics.co.uk/seminars2014.asp>
- In-House Training - <http://www.awics.co.uk/inHouseCourses.asp>
- Independent Residents' Advice – <http://www.awics.co.uk/IndependentTenantAdvice.asp>
- Technical Books - <http://www.awics.co.uk/TechnicalBooks.asp>
- Free Information Service - <http://www.awics.co.uk/informationsservice.asp>

Value for Money and Performance Management in Housing and Local Government 2014

October 2014

This seminar and workshop will look in detail at how Local Authorities and Housing Associations can achieve improved Value for Money and effective Performance Management. It will look at housing and other services provided by local authorities. The presenter will be Adrian Waite, Managing Director of 'AWICS' Limited, Chair of Impact Housing Association and former Strategic Director at Copeland Borough Council. The presentation will be illustrated with practical examples drawn from Impact Housing Association and other housing associations and local authorities.

Who should attend?

All those with an interest in achieving improved Value for Money and effective Performance Management in Housing or Local Government in England, Scotland, Wales or elsewhere; including Managers in Local Authorities, Housing Associations and Arms' Length Management Organisations; Councillors, Housing Association and ALMO Board Members, Accountants, College Lecturers and others.

What the Seminar and Workshop addresses:

- The Political, Economic, Social and Technical Context and the Threats and Opportunities that this creates
- Approaches to achieving improved Value for Money and effective Performance Management
- Value for Money obligations of Local Authorities and Housing Associations
- Service Transformation and Re-Engineering
- Systems thinking and the LEAN approach
- Value for Money and the Customer
- Case Study: Impact Housing Association and 'Transforming Impact'
- Participatory Session and Opportunities for Networking
- Implementing the Performance Management and Value for Money Strategy
- Motivating and Empowering People
- Embedding Value for Money and Performance
- Delivering a 'Step Change'

We are interested in quality rather than quantity and so numbers at this seminar and workshop will be limited to twenty. It includes a participatory session and opportunities for networking and is accompanied by an up-to-date and very useful book for future reference entitled: **"Value for Money and Performance Management in Housing and Local Government"**

Venue and Date: London: Novotel Hotel, Waterloo – 8th October 2014.

For more information or to make a booking please visit our website at:
<http://www.awics.co.uk/vfm2014.asp>

Other AWICS Seminars and Workshops 2014

Our other seminars and workshops for 2014 include the following:

All You Want to Know about Local Authority Finance

- London – 7th October 2014

All You Want to Know about Local Authority Housing Finance

- London – 11th November 2014

All You Want to Know about Service Charges in Social Housing

- London – 12th November 2014

For further information please see: <http://www.awics.co.uk/seminars2014.asp>

All of these seminars and workshops are also available in-house. For more information please contact me at Adrian.waite@awics.co.uk

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- Jane Harrison Deputy Finance Director, Paradigm Housing Group
- Matthew Saye Assistant Director, One Housing Group
- Adrian Waite, Director of AWICS, Chair of Impact Housing Association
- Nicholas Kissen Senior Legal Adviser, The Leasehold Advisory Service
- Jeff Platt Chief Executive, Institute of Residential Property Management (IRPM)

Find out everything you need to know about service charges from designing an effective strategy to collection across leasehold properties and tenancy management. The conference will help you tackle issues raised by welfare reform and the changing regulatory and legal environment.

1. Case study - placing **value for money** at the heart of your service charge strategy with Paradigm Housing Group and HouseMark
2. **Legal update** - including implications of the Phillips and Francis LVT decision from the Leasehold Advisory Service
3. **Universal credit** - how to communicate the impact to your customers
4. Learn what an effective service charge **communications strategy** looks like
5. **Calculating and apportioning service charges** in an accurate and transparent manner
6. Evaluating key methods of **minimising service charges** to drive affordability for your customers

Optional: Introductory workshop How to calculate service charges, best practice and what to avoid

Session highlights
Overcoming the challenges of fixed and variable systems for charging for services
Integrating depreciate costs in to your service charges strategy Building a transparency strategy suitable for both rental and leasehold properties

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Federation members £275
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**NATIONAL
HOUSING
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The voice of housing associations

SORP Roadshows 2014

London 22 September 2014, America Square Conference Centre, London

Understand the key changes being introduced by FRS 102 and put your questions directly to the SORP Working Party #NHFSORP

Speakers include

- Jack Stephen Chair, SORP Working Party
- Jonathan Pryor Partner, Smith & Williamson
- Faye Gordon Senior Manager, PricewaterhouseCoopers
- Phil Cliftlands Partner, Not For Profit Assurance, BDO

In March 2013, the Financial Reporting Council published Financial Reporting Standard 102 (FRS 102) which will be adopted by UK businesses as new UK GAAP for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2015. The roadshows will guide you through this new accounting framework which will radically alter the structure and content of financial statements. By early autumn 2014, the housing SORP will be published and will translate the general accounting requirements of FRS 102 to reflect the nuances of the housing association business models.

Benefits of attending

An engaging way for housing associations to understand the key changes being introduced by FRS 102 Hours of practical advice on how to apply the new framework Clarity on the potential impact of the changes on your organisation

Get your free copy of the new housing SORP

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NATIONAL HOUSING FEDERATION

The voice of housing associations

Treasury Management Conference 2014
8 October 2014, 30 Euston Square, London

Financing treble the homes with one third capacity. Find out how to shape your strategy and become part of the sector wide solution to the housing crisis

Speakers include:

- Danny Finkelstein British Journalist and Politician, Associate Editor, The Times and Chairman, Policy Exchange
- Anthony Hilton Financial Editor, Evening Standard Hilary Blackwell Partner, Real Estate, Capsticks
- Mark Henderson Chief Executive, Home Group
- Roshana Arasaratnam Vice President, Senior Credit Officer, Moody's Investors Service
- Helen Roberts Lead Investment Policy Adviser, NAPF (National Association of Pension Funds)

An ambitious vision has been set for the social housing sector to treble the number of new homes to 120,000 per year and increase turnover to £70bn by 2033.

This year's conference will stress test the viability of financing such a step change and give practical advice on how to ensure you are part of the sector wide solution to the housing crisis.

1. Understand the impact of the **future economic and political environment**
2. Get a **view from a credit rating agency** on how investors perceive the social housing sector
3. Discover the potential **availability of affordable public land** for social housing development
4. Learn about the **diversity of commercial funding sources** that can be utilised to fund social housing
5. Case study – issuing **Retail Charity Bonds** as an additional source of finance with Allia
6. Consider the **valuation of social housing, securitisation process** and

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