

## **Housing Plus Think Tank 3: How can social landlords prioritise energy saving in times of austerity?**

**Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2013**  
**with an informal supper and debate from 7pm on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October**

*Trafford Hall, National Communities Resource Centre, Wimbolds Trafford, Chester CH2 4JP*

LSE Housing and Communities, and the National Communities Resource Centre, are hosting an important Think Tank at Trafford Hall near Chester on the inevitability of energy saving in social housing. Increasingly social landlords are recognising the need to make homes energy efficient to ensure tenants can meet their rising fuel bills, pay their rent, and manage their lives on low incomes. Debt is becoming particularly challenging as welfare reforms bite, real wages fall and funding streams are cut.

This Think Tank is inviting leading social landlords to share experiences on property upgrading and energy saving. The links between energy saving, skills and local jobs, tackling fuel poverty, and combatting arrears and debt are clear. The Think Tank will discuss the potential funding for energy saving, greening local environments, renewable energy generation, the role of new green technologies, and “community energy champions” to promote behaviour change. We will discuss barriers and costs, problems and potential payback with experienced practitioners.

This event is part of LSE Housing and Communities’ Housing Plus programme, looking at the wider role of social landlords in poorer neighbourhoods beyond just providing homes. The project brings together practitioners and policy makers working in social housing to share their knowledge and experience on the complex challenges facing the housing world today. The aim is to develop radical thinking about housing as a foundation stone of family and community life, social capital and self-help.

Our Think Tanks, *Tackling an Uncertain Future* (February, 2013) and *Welfare Reform and Poverty* (June, 2013) focused on how social landlords are tackling welfare reforms, jobs and poverty alleviation in an increasingly unequal society. They showcased innovative and creative examples of how social landlords can help in tackling a myriad of problems: youth unemployment; apprenticeships and job training; family support and childcare; community involvement; debt and financial advice; peer support services; leadership and management; healthy living programmes; community training; local environments and public spaces.

The Housing Plus programme is supported by leading government officials who are keen to hear concrete evidence about how policies are playing out on the ground. We feedback on positive examples of the impact social landlords can have in low income communities, along with real concerns about the knock-on effects of policy at a local and national level.

## Outline programme

### Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October

18.00 – 18.45 Informal reception in the bar

18.45 – 20.45 Dinner and debate

### Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> October

9.00 – 9.15 Registration and refreshments

9.15 – 10.30 **Session 1: How significant is the energy challenge? What is the scope for change?**

- *Climate change* is real, happening and a big cost as well as threat to low-income people
- Food, energy and materials *waste* account for at least one third of our costs
- Homes and offices can be *insulated* so that they save money
- *Tenants* lack incentives, know-how, control, confidence to tackle this problem on their own

10.30 – 11.00 Biomass boiler display and refreshments

11.00– 12.15 **Session 2: What can social landlords do? Why should they do it? How can they pay for it?**

- Anti-fuel poverty, welfare reform and saving energy. *Helping tenants* through basic energy saving measures
- *Funding* energy saving and maximising the value of investment
- *Energy generation* and the link with energy saving
- How *energy companies* can help social landlords
- *Passivhaus* retrofit

12.15 – 12.45 **Session 3: Thinking on our feet**

- a walking discussion on the challenges of resident participation

12.45 – 13.30 Lunch and display of energy projects

13.30 – 14.45 **Session 4: Know-how and skills for the task**

- How can the *supply chain* work better? Getting the savings without being ripped off by builders. Installers and suppliers – confidence in work
- Keeping it simple – helping tenants and staff to use *systems* properly
- New technologies, *behaviour* change, education
- *Building the know-how* – courses, qualifications, practise, exchange
- Community *energy champions* – is there a model?
- Valuing neighbourhood environments – retrofitting, recycling, greening estates and more...

14.45 – 15.45 **Session 5: What can be done**

- Bright ideas
- Overcoming problems
- Finding doable solutions
- Round-up ideas

15.45 End (afternoon tea will be available)