



The Chartered Institute of Housing

# HOUSING 2011 CONFERENCE



## Housing 2011 Session Information

# Becoming the best

**Ambitions to deliver continuous improvement and become the best are widespread in the housing sector. Best at what is a key question – performance and outcomes across housing services and community activity are often considered, as is the overall performance as an employer.**

**As the housing profession, society, policy and the economy change, different pressures for organisational change are exerted. These drivers need to be understood and responded to appropriately within each organisation if the housing sector is to determine its own purpose and direction and take responsibility for excellence.**

### KEY FACTS

- There are 15 housing organisations in the Sunday Times Best 100 Companies list 2010, as well as several other organisations which provide housing-related services.
- Nearly 300 housing organisations entered CIH's UK Housing Awards in 2010.
- The Audit Commission's Key Lines of Enquiry are withdrawn from June 2011.
- The regulator's ability to intervene to protect consumer standards in English social housing will be reduced from April 2012.
- Expectations around tenant panels and other forms of community challenge in England are likely to be part of the Localism Act from 2012.



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### BACKGROUND

Public and not-for-profit housing providers are fairly heavily regulated, with clear expectations around activities and outcomes being set at national level. Until a few years ago, housing organisations were routinely assessed against national standards covering services, strategy, governance and finance, with 'the best' being identified through this process. This assessment undoubtedly helped maintain focus on quality but it did not guarantee it, and there were complaints that local approaches were stifled by prescriptive national expectations.

Recent years have seen moves away from routine inspection and prescriptive standards, towards risk-based interventions and national expectations around outcomes rather than specific process or activity. In England in particular, local determination and assessment of priorities and performance has increased, with the roles of tenants and housing professionals changing in line with this.

For some time it has been common for housing organisations to benchmark their performance against others within and outside the sector, and to seek recognition for their approaches. Housing providers have become quite visible in cross-sector excellence awards, especially around customer service and as employers.

### OTHER INFORMATION

New! CIH-Orbit work on transformational change:  
<http://www.cih.org/policy>

CIH management & leadership training:  
<http://www.cih.org/training/manleader.htm>

HouseMark performance improvement services:  
<http://www.housemark.co.uk>

ConsultCIH governance, strategy and organisational development services:  
<http://www.consultcih.co.uk>

Information on UKHA 2010 finalists:  
<http://www.cih.org/ukha/2010finalists.htm>

### UPDATE

It has been made clearer across the UK that responsibility for setting direction, accounting for performance and delivering improvement lies with housing organisations. In England, national mechanisms for driving and assessing service quality are being further reduced and replaced with local arrangements. This could fit well with the strong desire within the sector to focus on what is right for customers and businesses rather than simply responding to, and complying with, policy and operating environments.

Economic circumstances, national policy and public funding are placing real pressures on housing organisations across the UK. A changing context requires changing organisations. Many organisations are taking a twin-track approach – focusing on how they can be the best in anticipated future contexts as well as in the current environment. The way housing organisations respond to current and anticipated pressures and aspirations will shape what the sector is, the quality and range of what it delivers, and its reputation for years to come.

Vision, leadership and governance have been identified as critical to organisations' capacity to change and improve, factors that seem more important now than ever before.

#### This is a Pact session

**Developing the Housing Pact 2011 – Our commitment to deliver the best possible outcomes for communities**



Building on the successes of the 2010 Pact, we will:

- Identify the priorities we want local and national government to address
- Make commitments to specific housing practice

Through four main themes which reflect the challenges and opportunities being faced:

- The housing advantage
- New ways of working
- Setting our own course
- Money

To be presented to the Housing Minister at the end of the conference.

Be part of the session, vote on the CIH Stand, or tweet to **#housing2011**.



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