



**community led housing .
london**

resource and advice hub

Community-led Housing Adviser Team

Call for Interest

May 2018

SUPPORTED BY
MAYOR OF LONDON



1. Introduction to the Community-led Housing London resource and advice hub

When communities and future residents are at the centre of housing development and management, their creativity and inherent interest in long term value helps achieve more successful places for us all.

Community-led housing shares the following principles:

1. *A requirement that meaningful community engagement and consent occurs throughout the process. The community does not necessarily have to initiate and manage the development process, or build the homes themselves, though many do.*
2. *The local community group or organisation owns, manages or stewards the homes and in a manner of their choosing.*
3. *A requirement that the benefits to the local area and/or specified community must be clearly defined and legally protected in perpetuity.*

There are various forms of community-led housing such as Cohousing, Community Land Trusts, mutual and non-mutual Cooperatives (including Mutual Home Ownership Schemes), Tenant Management Organisations, Self-help, etc. The precise model can be tailored to each case. A determined and enthusiastic group of people is as important as any theoretical model.

The CLH London hub is supported by the Mayor of London and several London Boroughs, and is hosted by CDS Co-operatives. The hub is overseen by a Steering Group including the National CLT Network, UK Cohousing network, Confederation of Co-operative Housing, as well as GLA, CDS Co-operatives, and London CLT.

We aim to significantly boost the delivery of community-led housing in London by providing community groups and organisations with information and advice, capacity building, and technical support. We are also here to help relevant stakeholders with practical advice in creating opportunities for CLH.

2. Community-led Housing Adviser Team

We are looking for consultants to join a Team of Accredited Community-led Housing Advisors.

The Team should help to address the difficulty many community-led housing groups and organisations face in accessing high quality specialist advice. This is not only due to limited funds, but also due to a limited knowledge of what to ask for and who can help, particularly at the early stages of a community groups' development. Sometimes invaluable input can be provided in a short session or piece of work, saving months of frustration for a community group. The team may also be asked to advise other stakeholders in creating opportunities for community-led housing.

Being part of the Team is an incredibly rewarding way to spread your specialist knowledge into community led projects and allows your expertise to be applied to new situations.

Accredited CLH Advisers are encouraged to act like a team, exchanging experience contacts, and support. The hub will host regular meet-ups to make this easier, and Advisers will be welcome to use the physical offices of the hub, as a coworking environment, if they wish.

3. What Community-led Housing Advisers will do

The 'Advisers' need to have a very particular combination of skills and knowledge. They should:

- i) Have the personal skills to guide, mentor, and support groups and schemes, giving them space to make their own decisions, rather than acting as a project manager or lecturer.
- ii) Understand various community-led housing models including Cohousing, Community Land Trusts, mutual and non-mutual Cooperatives (including Mutual Home Ownership Schemes), Tenant Management Organisations, Self-help, etc. and how these can overlap, in order to encourage groups to think openly about the right models for their objectives and ambition.
- iii) Have a broad knowledge of housing development, delivery and management, to pass on skills and knowledge required to access the professional support needed to take an idea through the planning and development process.

The most effective Advisers are those who can quickly understand a groups' issues, and the issues of a given context, and then provide specific guidance related to their broad specialist insight or knowledge. This may take the form of discussions at key meetings or facilitating conversations between stakeholders. More specifically, the advisers are likely to be called upon to:

- Help identify and clarify group objectives, purpose and common values
- Help establish good governance and democratic procedures with clear roles and responsibilities
- Support the shaping of strategy and routes appropriate to the groups' objectives, 'sense checking' the approach and scope or ambition.
- Support groups to understand the regulatory environment in which they operate, including procurement, best consideration and State Aid regulations.
- Explain the legal constitution & incorporation for different CLH models
- Discuss ways of building membership, and community engagement where appropriate
- Discuss development options (tenure, partnerships with RPs and private developers, costs, risks)
- Help define timescales for the group to be working to; suggest key documents, organisational tools and processes;
- Support groups to identify, access and leverage opportunities and resources;
- Act alongside the group, making introductions and building relationships as required
- Help identify funding and fundraising opportunities appropriate to the scope and scale of the group;
- Explain and signpost relevant development financing options; support investment readiness;
- Provide an overview of construction methods and contract management options
- Provide an overview of housing management issues, and mortgage-ability issues
- Advise on briefs for further/detailed work

Advisers will **not** be expected to carry out substantial work for the group, such as business planning, development appraisals, site due diligence or capacity studies, or provide formal professional legal advice or financial advice (particularly as these are regulated).

The hub will offer separate funding to support groups to access other relevant consultants such as solicitors specialising in property and/or public-sector law, surveyors for development appraisal and valuation etc, land agents for site sourcing, and financial advisors / brokers.

This will probably involve incorporated groups being offered repayable grants to contract such professionals themselves, although they may need CLH Adviser time to help with this.

4. How the CLH Adviser Team and their Assignments will work

The table below sets out the kind of support that can be offered through the hub, either directly (stage 1) or through the CLH Adviser Team (stage 2 and 3). The stages broadly correspond to the National CLT Network Start-Up Fund. <http://www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk/funding-and-resources/funding/start-up-funding>

First Contact	CLH Adviser Assigned	Group ready to Incorporate	Site Secured	Start on Site
"hub triage" (NCLTN Stage 1)	"group formation" (NCLTN Stage 2)	"site search/agree" (NCLTN Stage 3)	Pre-development Funding stage	
The hub will meet the group to assess their needs. A formal note of support required will be prepared with or by the group, which would be treated as an application for Stage 2 support. The hub will coordinate input from the Adviser team.	Accredited CLH Advisers help until there are clear and credible objectives, and the group are suitably incorporated (normally 8-10 half-days)	Accredited CLH Advisers continue to be on hand to guide the group (extent to be agreed for each group)	Groups select their own consultants to project manage and prepare a planning application. There should be a range of funding available at this stage. The CLH Adviser team is no longer paid to support the group.	
		Development Consultants funded for discrete pieces of work (contracted by groups receiving grants)		
Offered free to all groups.	Offered free to groups following Stage 1 triage assessment, paid for by the hub at a set day rate. There is an MoU (letter of terms) with the group	There is a Grant Agreement with the group, indicating the amount to be repaid <u>if and when</u> there is a Start on Site	Grants will be repayable if and when there is a "start on site"	

Stage 1 "hub triage" will be equivalent to a negotiated application and assessment process for groups wishing to benefit from CLH Advisers. All Adviser sessions and assignments will be coordinated and approved by the hub. It is clear that some groups will be further progressed, and the stages identified above will not always run in a neat sequence. Assignments may be treated flexibly and on an ad hoc basis as required. Consultants will be assigned to a group or project by the hub on the following criteria:

- Availability
- Suitability to the groups' broad objectives
- Seniority / skills / experience
- Existing or potential conflict of interests

Stage 2 would involve the CLH Adviser undertaking some or all of the activity listed in section 3 above, for the community group. Generally, assignments should be a collaborative active engagement with the community group, rather than a purely desktop exercise. Occasionally similar equivalent guidance may be required for a public-sector organisation or other stakeholder seeking to initiate a CLH project.

CLH Advisers will have an ongoing contract with the hub (CDS Co-operatives Ltd for contractual purposes). The hub will also have an MoU in place with each group at each stage naming the Adviser and setting out the scope and basis of the Adviser support/guidance to be provided. This will essentially be a grant award letter, awarding 'paid-for Adviser time' rather than funding.

CLH Advisers should treat the 'group' as the 'client' for each assignment. However the hub should be kept up to date with project details and development, as well as time spent with a group.

The MoU with groups will include a Client/Group Responsibility clause¹, which should make clear the nature of the advice, however CLH Advisers would be expected to maintain their own professional indemnity insurance cover adequate to the value of work undertaken by the CLH Adviser.

Normally CLH Advisers will be assigned to work with a group for a small predefined dose of time. This will be measured in half-day units. A typical half-day may include preparation, a face to face meeting, follow-up points, contacts, emails or phone calls. There will be a rate of £250 per half-day including VAT and expenses, for CLH Advisers.

There may be lower demand for certain CLH Advisers, and the hub cannot guarantee a steady stream of assignments.

Appointments to the Team may be made on a rolling basis.
Appointments will be reviewed by the hub annually.

Accreditation for CLH Advisers

We know that very few consultants will have all of the skills outlined in section 3. Even where a consultant has some experience of working with one or two community groups, these may not be transferable or useful for others, and may even hold back progress.

The national membership bodies have developed a training and accreditation programme, to ensure CLH advisers are delivering a consistent and non-prescriptive outline of the options available to groups.

The accreditation programme is being piloted June-August 2018. Appointed advisers would be expected to have successfully gained accreditation. Advisers may be accepted onto the London team on the understanding that they will achieve this accreditation, in due course.

¹ CLIENT/GROUP RESPONSIBILITY: The Client / [Group x], in receiving guidance from [CLH Adviser x], must appreciate that, while [CLH Adviser x] has wide experience of the qualities and requirements of community-led development they are not acting as a land agent, surveyor, solicitor, accountant and so on. Where appropriate [CLH Adviser x] may refer [Group x] to local and national professionals when providing advice, but the Group acknowledges that they will be wholly responsible for ensuring that all relevant and independent advice is obtained, and all necessary contractual obligations are in place, before proceeding.

5. Expression of Interest and Appointment Process

If you are interested in joining the Community-led Housing Adviser Team

Please provide the following information to info@communityledhousing.london

A. Basic information

- Full name of the consultant who will be providing support.
- Title/position in organisation
- Telephone number
- Email address

B. Relevant Experience

Provide **up to 2 examples** of previous work demonstrating relevant experience in delivering some or all of the services described in section 3. Your experience does not have to be in community-led housing and may be transferable. Please include the **client name, budget, start/end date, and your specific role** in no more than **1 A4 page per example**.

C. Your Approach

Describe your approach to guiding, mentoring, and supporting groups and schemes, and encouraging groups to think openly and clearly about their objectives and how to achieve them **in no more than 1 A4 page**.

D. Quotation

Confirmation of acceptability of £250 per half-day including VAT and expenses.

E. Potential Conflict of Interest

Provide a statement of any involvement and potential conflict of interest the consultant may have in acting as a CLH Advisor.

Selection Criteria

Selection will be based upon the responses provided above. A selection panel including representatives from the hub steering group will be responsible for reviewing submissions.

Selection will be based on assessing advisers under the following criteria:

- Breadth and depth of relevant experience - 50%
- Approach and understanding of the adviser role - 50%

Expressions of interest received will be considered on a rolling basis, where they complement and grow the range of Advisers we are able to assign to groups.