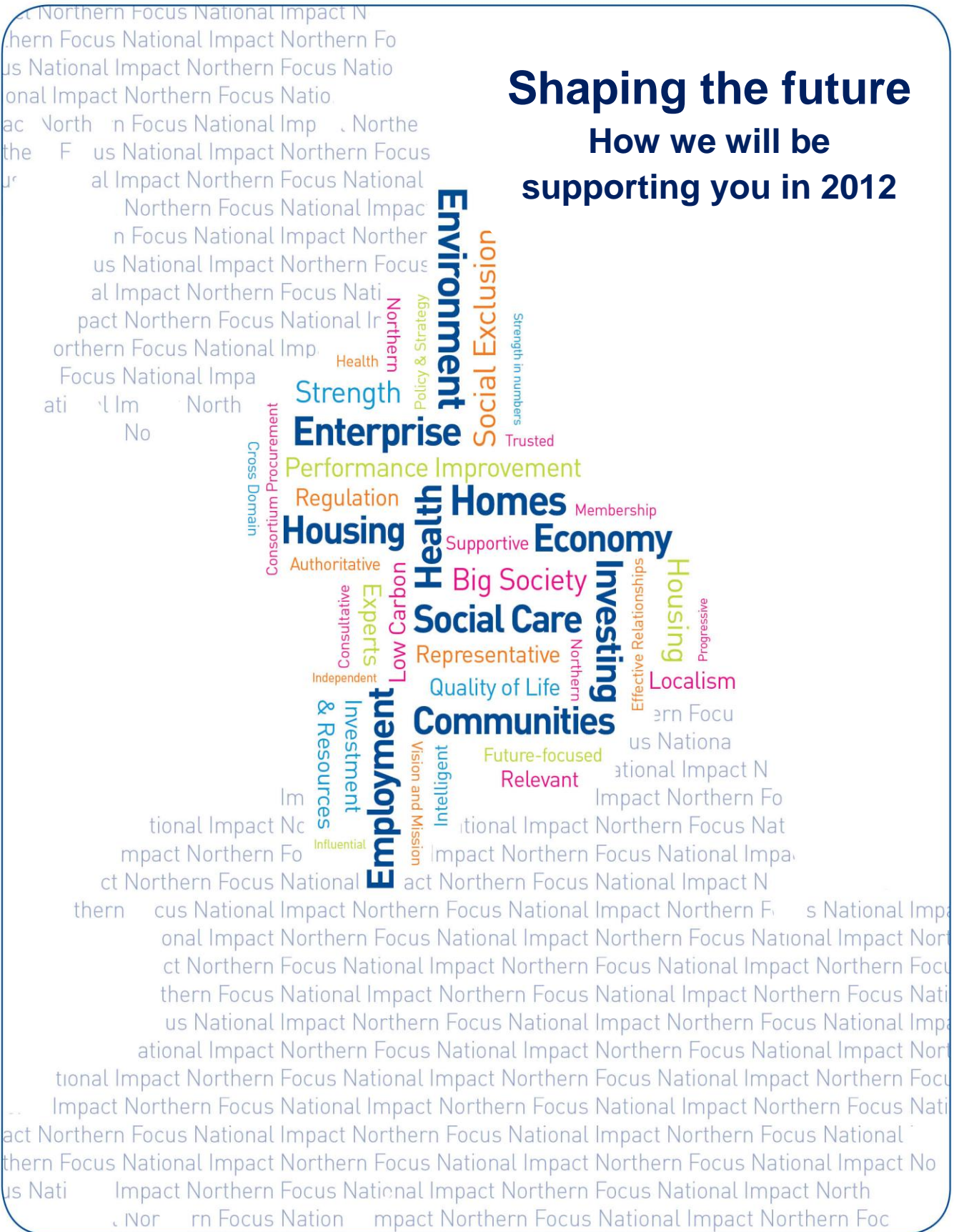


# Shaping the future How we will be supporting you in 2012



## How can we help you? ...

We seek continual feedback from Members to shape our forward plans to provide practical policy support to you to improve your services and support communities you work with.

We have used the feedback Members have provided to us, and in response have outlined some of the services we will be delivering in early 2012 to support you. We have broken our activities under the following categories:

- Housing and the Economy
- Housing, Health and Wellbeing
- Supporting Communities
- Supporting Efficiency

We will be updating this forward look every quarter – the next edition will be provided in March 2012.

If we haven't included something which is of interest and importance to you, please contact Charlotte Harrison, Executive Director on [charlotte.harrison@northern-consortium.org.uk](mailto:charlotte.harrison@northern-consortium.org.uk) or 0191 566 1034.

## Housing and the Economy

- We are undertaking a review into the ongoing contribution of housing to economic growth of local areas. This study will go beyond the focus on construction as part of house building programme but rather the investment that housing providers make through employment opportunities, spending power via repairs services etc.
- LEP engagement – we continue to hold sessions with northern LEPS to demonstrate the valuable role that housing can provide across the North. We shall link into Northern HCA activity in this field.
- Whilst we welcome the additional funding made available via the RGF and are hopeful that the North continues to benefit from this funding, it is inevitably the case that some areas will not directly benefit from RGF or Enterprise zones, within this context, we are interested how the concept of “resilience” can be considered and the role that housing providers can play in supporting or growing resilience – both at individual or community level. We have had early discussions with the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) which we are keen to widen to NHC membership.
- We recently supplied evidence to the IPPR Northern Economics Commission and hope to engage with IPPR at an evidence session in 2012.
- We will continue to monitor the economic impact of the New Homes Bonus following our publication earlier this year.
- We will work with Joseph Rowntree Foundation & Future London to explore what ‘affordability’ now means for low income households.
- We will update our work exploring new approaches to delivering affordable housing.

### Housing and the Economy contact:

Brian Robson, [brian.robson@northern-consortium.org.uk](mailto:brian.robson@northern-consortium.org.uk) or 0191 566 1038.

## Housing, Health and Wellbeing

- We have recently launched a new toolkit to engage with the health sector in light of the new health and wellbeing landscape being shaped by the Health Bill. Our tool “A Foot in the Door” is a practical support document to assist NHC members. We would welcome feedback from members and keen to support you in its implementation.
- We are keen to understand how members are engaging with the new health landscape and will be undertaking a survey on this issue in the New Year.
- The NHC has had a longstanding interest in the value of Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and the contribution of the housing sector – both in terms of providing a portal to engaging with communities, a broader role around asset management and deployment and the capacity of the housing sector to deliver services. As we move towards the development of Health and Wellbeing strategies, JSNA acts as vital tool in shaping services. We will continue to engage with NHC membership on participation in JSNA and will represent to national structures the value of housing sector contribution.
- Alongside our Assisted Living Framework, we are working on an Assisted Living best practice publication. Assisted Living has demonstrated its role as a crucial support service that supports and promotes independence, provides security of mind for service users and family support networks alike – and crucially in this economic climate – offers fantastic value for money as it prevents or reduces demands on acute health services.

### Housing, Health and Wellbeing contact:

Sarah Taylor, [sarah.taylor@northern-consortium.org.uk](mailto:sarah.taylor@northern-consortium.org.uk) or 0191 566 1029.

## Supporting Communities

- “Troubled Families initiative is a flagship policy for the Government and many NHC members will be actively involved in reshaping services to improve outcomes for families and provide more effective use of public resources. We will be delivering a range of projects exploring the role of the housing sector in this agenda.
- Welfare Reform continues to be a sector priority and the need to support communities through the changes has never been greater. We have continued our representations in Parliament regarding the Welfare Reform Bill and as the Bill moves towards Royal Assent, our focus has turned to practical tools to support members. We are working on a toolkit on elements of the Bill and will be supplementing this with a series of roundtables to share best practice and impact assessment.
- Closely aligned to our work on Welfare Reform, a strong plank of our policy support over the coming months will be focused on supporting you to deliver Financial Inclusion. We are working with housing providers and credit unions and the national credit union support agency (ABCUL) to improve access to affordable credit and savings.
- How well do we understand how communities work, how information flows from individual to individual, who has influence within a community, how do social networks underpin communities. These questions are forming centrepiece of a new project we are working on “Connected Communities” – this project will give us (and NHC members) an invaluable insight into how communities are connected (or disconnected) and how the housing sector can respond. We will publish an issues paper in early 2012 – for more information please contact [Jacqui.Grimes@northern-consortium.org.uk](mailto:Jacqui.Grimes@northern-consortium.org.uk)
- What does migration look like in the North in 2012? How will management of the asylum support programme develop and what impact will this have on communities? How can the housing sector demonstrate leadership on this issue, develop effective community leaders and support networks? We are keen to engage in this debate and will be hosting a Members event in the New Year to explore how the sector can lead and support community cohesion.

### Supporting Communities contact:

Satty Rai, [satty.rai@northern-consortium.org.uk](mailto:satty.rai@northern-consortium.org.uk) or 0191 566 2013.

## Supporting Efficiency

As the impact of the cuts deepens, and further threats appear on the horizon, the need for efficiency in operations, procurement and value for money across the board has never been greater. We have realigned our focus to ensure that we are in a position to offer the services Members need. Services we offer are:

- **Efficiency reviews;** our efficiency review offers a full and comprehensive 'critical friend' look at any of your services. We will use a range of methods and techniques in reviewing service to meet your needs. Customer involvement is an integral part of our offer.
- **Procuring & managing services;** we have developed cost-effective procurement solutions for our members over many years. Efficiency remains the watchword and, linking in with our efficiency review offer, we will continue this development and offer assistance in the following areas:
  - Procurement strategy
  - Contract management
  - Assurance
  - Skills and development
  - Asset management

### Current Frameworks

- Assisted living
- Gas servicing and maintenance
- Grounds maintenance
- Fire safety
- Digital aerial upgrade
- Bathroom adaptations
- Stair lifts
- Tenants contents insurance
- Electronic bill payments

### Frameworks in Development

- Asbestos
- Home adaptations
- Legal services
- Insurance brokerage
- Gas servicing
- Digital aerial maintenance

### Efficiency Market Place

The Efficiency Market Place (EMP) is a new electronic platform that will transform the way NHC Members access goods and services, as well as allowing you to share and trade resources within the social housing sector.

### Efficiency contacts:

**Efficiency reviews:** [nigel.johnston@northern-consortium.org.uk](mailto:nigel.johnston@northern-consortium.org.uk)

**Procuring & managing services:** [nicola.hellewell@consortiumprocurement.org.uk](mailto:nicola.hellewell@consortiumprocurement.org.uk)

**Current frameworks:** [gill.jackson@consortiumprocurement.org.uk](mailto:gill.jackson@consortiumprocurement.org.uk)