

Budget 2009

Northern Housing Consortium Press Release

John Moralee, Chief Executive, Northern Housing Consortium said *"We welcome the announcements made in today's Budget in particular the £20bn scheme to guarantee mortgage backed securities, the £80m to extend Homebuy Direct and £500m of extra funding to kick start stalled schemes. The North's construction industry has been hit hard by the recession. In the last year sales completions have dropped by an average of 26% across the North with the greatest falls in the North West - the region which has estimated that stalled sites could deliver over 3 year's supply of housing. And with over 600,000 households sitting on housing waiting lists across the 3 northern regions, an increase of over 20% since 2005 it is now more crucial than ever that this funding kick starts development of much needed affordable homes. We also welcome the announcement of £100m for local authorities to build energy efficient housing and £435m to develop energy efficient measures for homes and public buildings. This is an active area for the Northern Housing Consortium; we are working on related procurement solutions that will support our members to deliver quality, efficiencies, innovation and continuous improvement"*.

The Northern Housing Consortium maintains that this is not just about maintaining our capacity to deliver through the recession. As well as bringing uncertainty, times of crisis bring an opportunity to champion new ideas and break new ground. The North has led the way in the delivery of multi-area agreements with a strong focus on housing as a driver for sustainable economic growth, and we see today's announcement of statutory city regional status in Manchester and Leeds as an opportunity to strengthen this further.

The North remains focussed on the long term challenges of regenerating our existing homes and communities, connecting people to jobs and creating places that support innovative and sustainable economies. We are disappointed that the Chancellor has not made clear the long term commitment to housing investment beyond the current spending round and would urge the government to support the North to deliver into the long term.

Ends

Notes to editors

1. The Northern Housing Consortium is a non-political, not for profit, member based organisation, whose members between them manage almost 90% of social housing in the North. Our main roles are:
 - To provide a comprehensive range of timely, relevant and affordable services for members with a distinct focus on Northern issues
 - To take a lead role in enabling the improvement of housing and organisational performance in the North
 - To work with Government and other bodies to ensure the region benefits from the resources and funding available to provide safe, vibrant, sustainable communities

Our provision of support is delivered across four themed areas: Quality of Life, Quality of Place, Performance Improvement and Investment & Resources.

Further information can be found on our website at www.northern-consortium.org.uk