

Press Release 19th May 2010 Building the Big Society

The new government yesterday set out the foundations of its approach to “Building the Big Society”. As previously trailed, the statement focused on themes of localism through the devolution of power and responsibility to communities and neighbourhoods. Charlotte Harrison, Northern Housing Consortium’s (NHC) Director of Policy and Strategy commented, “Whilst it is still very early days, the new coalition’s focus and the omission of the housing minister from the cabinet appears to indicate that the housing sector will have to fight harder than ever to make our case heard. The NHC are keen to retain our local focus to make a national impact on behalf of our members, and we will be leading on a range of initiatives designed to highlight the specific issues of the North and to demonstrate the innovative steps that the North is taking to address these issues.”

“Further policy announcements are expected in the coming days in advance of the Queen’s Speech. Many of the issues included in the brief overview document cover areas of interest for NHC members – and indeed have been topics of discussion in our recent Policy Sessions. In particular, we look forward to hearing more detail around:

- Reform of the planning system and the practical implications of this
- Promotion of community ownership of assets
- Promotion of community organisers and peer champions
- Development of social enterprise initiatives
- Review of local government finance – in particular the future of HRA reform
- Abolition of regional spatial strategies
- A shift in data provision through the new “right to data”

Emergency Budget – What does it mean for the North?

Charlotte continues, “Aside from these forthcoming policy initiatives, the sector will be anxiously awaiting the outcome of the Emergency Budget on the 22nd June. With huge savings to be delivered, the NHC is very keen to engage with our members to map the level of efficiency savings expected of them and their proposed approach to service delivery. The Consortium will host 3 regional round table discussions in July to share ideas, approaches and concerns, and we will use these sessions as a platform from which to build our CSR campaign in the Autumn.”

For further information, visit www.northern-consortium.org.uk or email enquiries@northern-consortium.org.uk.