



## **Press Release**

**MONDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2007 – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **HOUSING EXPERTS TO TESTIFY BEFORE MPs**

A panel of Housing experts will testify before a cross-party committee of MPs and Peers next Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> December\* to give their verdict on the Government's proposals to deliver 3 million new homes by 2020.

The All Party Urban Development Group, a cross-party parliamentary committee of MPs and Peers, is conducting an inquiry into the new mechanisms proposed by the Government to deliver increased housing supply with a specific focus on delivery in urban areas. It will deliver its final report in February 2008.

Whilst the Government has clearly set out the amount of new housing and where it should be built, it is less clear on how this is going to happen – including how new funding streams, delivery tools and agencies will operate. The ultimate challenge will be to ensure that the Government's targets will be met.

At the inquiry session, the committee of MPs and Peers will ask experts to give their views on the role new Central Government agencies such as the Homes and Communities Agency, new local delivery vehicles, and the private sector can play to deliver the urban housing offer.

#### **THE INQUIRY**

Witnesses at the inquiry will be broken into the following three sessions:

##### ***Session 1: Local delivery perspective (1.00 pm to 1.30 pm)***

Witnesses:

Alan Benson, Head of Housing, Greater London Authority  
Eamonn Boylan, Deputy Chief Executive, Manchester City Council

##### ***Session 2: Central delivery perspective (1.30 pm to 2.00 pm)***

Witnesses:

Steve Douglas, Acting Chief Executive, Housing Corporation  
Emma Appleton, Head of Enabling, CABE

##### ***Session 3: Private sector delivery perspective (2.00 pm to 2.30 pm)***

Witnesses:

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\* The inquiry is open to the public. It will be held in House of Commons, Committee Room 13 from 1.00pm to 2.30pm on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2007.

Malcolm Harris, Chief Executive, Bovis Homes PLC  
Mark Ryder, Chief Executive, Isis Waterside Regeneration  
John Coles, Director, Evenbrook Group Ltd

Witnesses within each session will provide oral evidence from a local, central and private sector delivery perspective on the following key issues:

1. *Institutional reform*: How should the new Homes and Communities Agency best respond to local need, and support councils and the private sector in working together to deliver a better urban housing offer?
2. *Local delivery vehicles*: How will local asset backed vehicles, such as Local Housing Companies, improve on the work of councils and existing bodies to deliver a better urban housing offer? How should these work in practice; what powers and functions should they hold; and how should they work with the private sector?
3. *Housing Management*: How can we ensure effective long term housing management, particularly in developments where tenure and type are mixed? How can national government incentivise better management of the urban housing offer over time and encourage greater private sector investment?

**Urban Development Group Chair Clive Betts MP, said:**

“The Government has set out new targets and funding, conducted a thorough review of the delivery chain and introduced new legislation to deliver more affordable housing. But will current arrangements deliver what is required? Our inquiry will take a holistic look at the Government’s proposals and make recommendations on how central government agencies, local delivery vehicles and the private sector can effectively deliver the range and quality of housing the country so desperately needs.”

**JOINING INSTRUCTIONS**

The session will be held on **Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2007** from **1 pm to 2.30 pm** in **House of Commons, Committee Room 13** and will be **open to the public**.

Entry to the House of Commons is through **St. Stephen’s Entrance**.  
<http://www.parliament.uk/documents/upload/faxmap.pdf>

Attendees should arrive fifteen minutes early to clear security.

Attendees do not need to present security with a formal invitation, but must explain to security that they are attending the session in Committee Room 13.

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

The Government has started a national debate on housing policy:

- The **Housing Green Paper** sets out clear targets to deliver 3m new homes by 2020, and earmarks £3bn of new money for affordable housing for 2008-11.
- The government has undertaken a thorough **review of the delivery chain** – from the Barker Review of Housing Supply (2004) to the Calcutt Review of Housebuilding Delivery (2007).

- The **Local Government White Paper** and **Sub-National Review of Economic Development** set out new powers for towns and cities over place-shaping, regeneration and growth – including housing policy.
- The **Housing and Regeneration Bill** established the Homes and Communities Agency, to oversee housing planning and delivery, and a new social housing regulator. The Bill also enables Councils to retain the rent from the new council housing they build, and recycle funds back into provision.

Current arrangements for delivering new housing face a number of challenges, including:

- **North v South** – household growth is running ahead of housing supply in almost every region, especially the Greater South East. But increasing supply will not be the answer everywhere. Many Northern areas need to rework their housing offer and ensure that it complements areas of growth, not just blindly build more homes.
- **Institutions** – the challenge will be to manage the tensions between a top down approach and the need to ensure local players have the freedom and capacity to deliver the housing offer.
- **Delivery tools** – do Local Authorities have the right tools at their disposal to deliver an improved and enhanced urban housing offer?
- **Housing Management** is essential to ensuring both new and existing housing is sustainable, but too often this has received insufficient investment from both the public and private sector.

### **About the Group:**

The All Party Parliamentary Urban Development Group was established to provide a forum for MPs and Peers from all political parties to come together to raise awareness of matters concerning urban renewal and sustainable development.

The Group's officers include:

- Clive Betts MP (Labour – Sheffield Attercliffe – Chair)
- Lord Richard Best (Cross-bench – Vice Chair)
- Andrew Pelling MP (Conservative – Croydon Central – Vice Chair)
- Baroness Scott of Needham Market (Liberal Democrat – Vice Chair)
- Rt Hon Nick Raynsford MP (Labour – Greenwich and Woolwich – Hon Chair)

The British Property Federation has been formally registered by the Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards to provide secretariat services for the Group in partnership with the Centre for Cities, an independent urban research unit, carrying out the Group's research.

### **CONTACTS**

**Catherine Glossop, Researcher, Centre for Cities**

020 7803 4308/ [c.glossop@centreforcities.org](mailto:c.glossop@centreforcities.org)

**Kurt Mueller, UDG Clerk / British Property Federation**

0207 802 0128 / [kmueller@bpf.org.uk](mailto:kmueller@bpf.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.allparty-urbandevlopment.org.uk](http://www.allparty-urbandevlopment.org.uk)