Bringing real localism into practice through co-operative housing governance

Lang, Richard; Mullins, David

[Link to publication on Research at Birmingham portal](#)

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

Housing and Communities Research Group

HCR
Housing and Communities Research

WORKING PAPER 1

Bringing real localism into practice through co-operative housing governance: The prospects for community-led housing in England

HAs and Local Authorities

Community-led Projects

Local residents

Local residents

Local residents
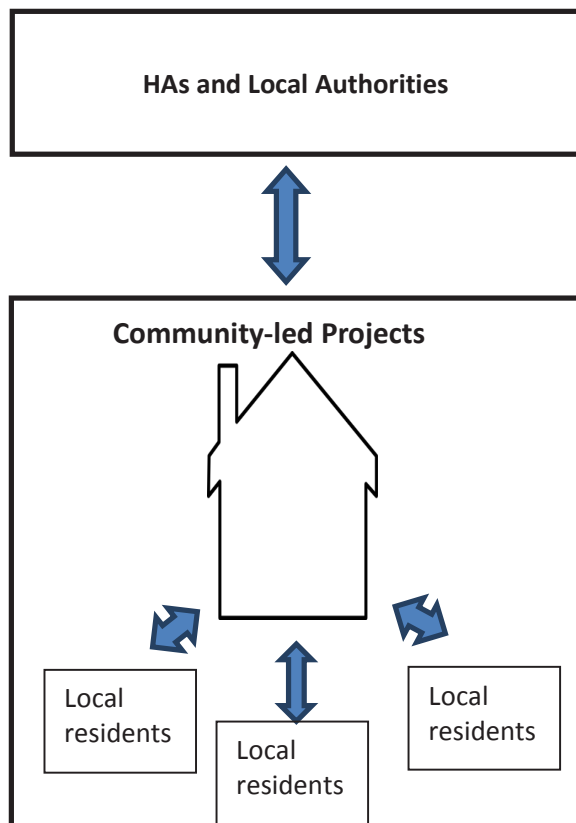
FINAL REPORT OF WILLIAM PLOWDEN FELLOWSHIP
Principal Researcher: Asst. Prof. Dr. Richard Lang
Institute for Innovation Management (IFI)
Johannes Kepler University Linz
Supervisor: Professor David Mullins
Housing and Communities Research Group
University of Birmingham
May 2015

Acknowledgements

Asst. Prof. Dr. Richard Lang
Institute for Innovation Management
Johannes Kepler University Linz
May 2015

Table of contents

Foreword

We were very lucky to have Dr Richard Lang as an academic visitor for three months in Spring 2013, at an uncertain time for housing in England. Richard was the first winner of the prestigious Plowden Fellowship in Good Governance. This fellowship celebrates the contribution of William Plowden who believed strongly in the need to improve the way we are governed, and practical approaches to public policy, sensitive to the needs and experiences of real people. At a time of major change the Fellowship aimed to build on Plowden's legacy.

Richard's Fellowship focused on recent change in the English housing sector and explored the relevance of the international experience of co-operative housing to the community-led housing sector and its interaction with policies on "localism". It followed Plowden's insistence on understanding real impacts on people, especially in relation to governance and social innovation. This approach is particularly apposite to current policies purporting to promote "localism" and its bedfellow, "the Big Society"; policies that are often seen as merely symbolic but which, if implemented for real, could have profound impacts on people, not least through the impact of community participation on social cohesion and good governance.

Richard's focus on the conditions required for "real localism" to flourish involved engagement with a wider international experience of co-operative governance. Drawing on the Vienna model of public promotion and institutional support highlighted the importance of the wider governance context in stimulating a strong co-operative housing sector but potentially endangering bottom-up resident action. Richard clarifies that, while the English co-housing and community land trust sectors have sprung out of different social movements not always linked to the co-operative housing tradition, they clearly exhibit co-operative principles in their governance. Moreover, the sector's engagement with localism policies has been sceptical and contested, with the sector doing much to redefine the scope of localism and to challenge less helpful policies that have accompanied it. Richard has laid down a number of challenges for our further research on self-help housing, co-operative housing models and housing association governance. This is a remarkable achievement for a short research study in another country with different institutions and language, and deserves to be followed up.

Thankfully we were successful in securing a Marie Curie Fellowship to develop this work into a full comparative project in the Housing and Communities Research Group. This will investigate how different governance models of co-operative housing influence the creation of social capital among communities and how this might be enhanced through vertical "linking capital". This study will broaden the focus from the regional level and include case studies of co-operative and community-led housing across England and Austria. This will provide the opportunity to track the emergence and evolution of the co-operative and community-led housing sectors in the two cases using a strategic action fields perspective.

This further research will benefit enormously from our engagement with key parts of the community-led and co-operative housing sectors achieved during the Plowden Fellowship in liaison with the Mutual Housing Group and Third Sector Research Centre, and ongoing liaison with the Community-led Housing Alliance.

Professor David Mullins
Housing and Communities Research Group
University of Birmingham

Executive summary

The overall aim of this project was to explore the potential that co-operative governance offers for effective localism and sustainable community building. This goal has been broken down into four research objectives and the key contributions of this research to addressing them are outlined below.

Assess the relevance of the localism agenda and related reforms in social housing for the community-led housing sector

Recent localism reforms and the "Big Society" agenda have materialised neither in substantial reforms of social housing nor in a significant scale of funding for community-led initiatives as some representatives of the sector might have hoped. However, the new programmes that have emerged, including the Homes and Communities Agency's (HCA) community-led programme and the Empty Homes Community Grants Programme, have been significant in their own right, albeit on a relatively modest scale nationally. Moreover, the underused Community Right to Build (CRTB) Funding is now providing an opportunity for capacity building in the sector following the failure of significant take up. Nevertheless, by establishing a powerful discourse on localism, the current government has created a fairly positive environment for implementing more elements of mutualism in mainstream housing in England. Furthermore, the global financial crisis has already stimulated a debate about new sustainable forms of financing for affordable housing (CCH 2009). This opportunity needs to be quickly seized by sector representatives in order to institutionalise the co-operative and community-led approach on the national level of housing policy.

In contrast to other policy fields, housing seems a very promising area where the ideas of mutualism and localism can be mainstreamed, given the existing infrastructure in the social housing sector in England (Handy and Gulliver 2010, Gulliver et al. 2013) and the number of good practice models of co-operative and community-based schemes. This report has featured some of these models focusing on the English West Midlands. With new community-led models, such as Community Land Trusts (CLTs), the sector can now also reach out more effectively to residents and policy makers who might have had some reservations about the co-operative housing model.

Under the Localism Act, the current government has introduced various community rights to increase local accountability and community control over local services (right to build, neighbourhood planning, right to challenge, right to bid). The problem with these community rights, however, is that they are not well known and local communities often lack the skills to use them effectively. In general, local communities need more information and training on models of participation and community-based governance, as well as the effective use of funds for community initiatives. The government, it seems, has not fully understood that funding schemes need more explanation and that essential community skills need to be gradually built up with the help of sector umbrellas and community-based Housing Associations (HAs). Putting out funding is not enough if local communities do not know how to access and use it to initiate community-led housing schemes.

Finally, an analysis of localism reforms under the current Coalition Government reveals two contradicting understandings of localism and decentralisation: On the one hand, there is a focus on efficiency and cost reduction which is evident from the Localism Act itself. On the

other hand, the localism agenda provides useful guidelines for strengthening local accountability. These are mainly presented in the Department for Communities and Local Government's (DCLG) essential guide to the Decentralisation and Localism Bill (DCLG 2010b). Thus, larger social housing providers have to make strategic choices in terms of the type of "localism" approach they want to follow. Realistically, it will only be the small group of HAs which have a bent towards supporting community leadership and can bring forward real localism in social and affordable housing by actively using the new community rights in partnerships with smaller community-led initiatives and local authorities. However, this does not imply that for an HA to support a community-led housing solution they need to be of a particular size or have a certain organisational structure. It can even come down to particular members of staff and board members who can establish the necessary link to local communities. (NE2e)

Develop a better understanding of the structure of the community-led sector and relevant support mechanisms

The empirical part of this report has provided new insights into the community-led housing sector which is still emerging and is insufficiently covered by the literature (Moore and Mullins 2012; Mullins et al. 2011).

Community-led housing is not a new phenomenon in England. Different initiatives, such as co-operative housing, have a long tradition in England but received little public promotion after the 1970s. The sector offers a variety of organisational models as a response to the increasing need for affordable housing in both rural and urban England, such as self-help housing, the co-housing movement (with Danish and North American roots) or the community land trust sector (with North American and Scottish strands). Although these initiatives sprang out of different social movements and are not always linked to the co-operative housing tradition, they clearly exhibit co-operative principles in their governance. Nevertheless, the identity of the sector and its boundaries have become blurred due to the different labels (externally and internally) assigned to it.

Community-led housing is actually a very small sector but has attracted much interest recently. The target groups of community-led initiatives differ according to territory, goals of local stakeholders and tenures offered. New community-led building activity can be found in both rural, sub-urban and urban areas. Whereas the co-operative model has a tradition of targeting lower income people, the target group of some other models, such as community land trusts (CLTs) or co-housing, ranges from lower income groups who are in need of low cost housing to groups in the middle income bracket who are seeking alternatives to existing market housing and represent the 'can't rent, can't buy' generation (NE8). This is also reflected in mixed-tenure approaches which may serve as a tool for cross-financing affordable homes within community-led schemes. CLTs and other community-led models tend not to produce high volumes of new homes but can ensure the long-term affordability of homes that respond to the needs of local communities.

The different models should not only be discussed in terms of providing alternative approaches to affordable housing. Their relevance for the localism debate can also be seen in providing different opportunity structures for active citizenship. CLTs, for instance, may involve a wide range of local residents rather than being confined to residents of the specific housing scheme as in the case of housing co-operatives. Nevertheless, compared to the co-operative model, the lack of institutionalisation of newer community-led models raises

questions about their long-term sustainability, especially if funding is reduced. Furthermore, integrating the innovative CLT model with traditional governance elements of co-operative housing could also help in creating new community-led bodies which would democratically represent the residents of a neighbourhood in local planning and housing policy. This would complement the recently introduced community rights with necessary community-based governance structures on the local level[1]. CLTs could also consider more fully a co-operative approach to the services for their residents (NE2e).

The identity of new community-led models differs in an important aspect from traditional co-operative housing models. The participation principle mainly translates into "community participation" rather than only "member participation" or the self-help provision of affordable housing by the actual residents. Thus, "new co-operative" housing models within the community-led sector are centred on the idea of "extended self-help" meaning not (only) by actual users or members of a formal organisation but by engaging a wider local community. The empirical evidence presented in this report provides support for earlier studies (e.g. Lang and Roessl 2011) that in "co-operative community models", such as CLTs, a shared place identity among residents is crucial for the sustainability of the community-based governance model, at least in early stages. The reference to emblematic past experiences of the communities concerned, such as losing a social centre, is an essential element of this place identity which can be seen as reinforcing reciprocal transactions among residents (Lang and Roessl 2011).

The research has shown that external support mechanisms play a crucial role in the development of different community-led models. This is due to the specific challenges that community-led initiatives face in order to ensure long-term building and management activity. These challenges include the lack of sustainable funding and financing structures for producing affordable housing; technical expertise, management and governance competence among residents who run the schemes; or the weak political and institutional legitimacy of the sector as a whole and its sub-sectors.

In principle, there are two ways in which the community-led sector could respond to these challenges. Either, a grass roots community mobilises the resources needed (bottom-up approach (see governance models in Chapter 3.3). This self-help approach might also include the "external" support structures provided by sector umbrellas. Or, as outlined in Chapters 5.3 and 5.4, the sector goes into partnerships with local authorities and HAs for funding and other resources such as empty properties in the case of self-help housing (bottom-linked approach). The empirical evidence presented in the report suggests that this external enabler role can best be carried out by secondary co-ops, local authorities in relation to some functions, and those HAs that have not lost touch with their local communities and which are committed to community-led housing. Only external service partners who are genuinely committed to co-operative principles and community-based development can fully deliver as intermediaries, providing resources and opportunity structures for community participation and for leveraging resources into structures that are governed by the local community. However, the necessity for community-led initiatives to engage in partnerships with HAs and local authorities might weaken such community governance by establishing hierarchical governance pressures based on external accountability for resources.

---

[1] Thanks to Professor George Jones for suggestions for a greater focus on links to local democratic governance.

Test out a coherent framework for analysing localism practice and its links to different community-led housing models (CLTs, self-help housing, co-operatives)

The study has contributed to the literature on territorial housing models which is still underdeveloped (e.g. Rowlands 2009) and is not specifically related to social capital building. It has presented a refined concept of linking social capital which refers to the vertical ties between residents and people in positions of influence and power in formal institutions (Lang and Novy 2014). The introduced framework presents a more all-encompassing conceptualization of co-operative governance, going beyond the organisational to the external, institutional environment. The work of Elinor Ostrom (1990, 2003) can beneficially complement a social capital approach for studying co-operative and community-led governance in housing, as her approach to the governance of institutions refers to a community rather than just to an organisational level and also explicitly takes into account external governance aspects. This viewpoint comes closer to the current reality of co-operative forms of housing provision and seems particularly appealing in relation to the study of new community-led forms of housing provision.

In particular, the case analysis shows that community-led housing is more about involving residents in a participation process than about delivering a ready-made product, i.e. affordable homes. Community building already starts with the selection of residents and the anticipation of the right fit between future residents. Representatives of community-led initiatives accept that not every resident consequently seeks active participation. Although a community of residents cannot be artificially created, external enablers can provide residents with space to build a community. Involving tenants early in the planning and letting process, combined with informal meetings, is more likely to create a community than the anonymous and impersonal environment of larger social housing providers. In all analysed cases, residents are quickly put into governance roles and they are given responsibility "*so that they feel they really own*" (CLT1.1) the projects. Participation is relevant to residents in the co-operative case, as they are disillusioned by the paternalist experiences of council housing and parts of the HAs sector. For residents involved in the CLT case, having a say is relevant in local development more generally. This may be a way to overcome NIMBYISM. Furthermore, the empirical evidence from better-off neighbourhoods reminds us of the crucial link between social capital and economic capital, the latter actually giving social networks their "effectiveness" for community-led initiatives (Bourdieu 1985).

The attachment of residents to their housing provider in the co-operative case is based on their identification with co-operative principles of the organisations. Secondary co-operatives can support attachment through the distinct design of sites where residents are actively involved. In contrast, residents' attachment in the Community Land Trust case mainly refers to the wider village and parish as a place where they have been living for a long time. A wider motivation for participation in the CLT case is concern for future development of the villages, such as the availability of a social centre or a village pub; the affordable housing project may be instrumental to broader aims.

The case analyses clearly show that active citizenship in community-led housing requires the support of enabling organisations which can link residents effectively to the necessary resources for community-led development to occur (either in-house competence or links to external service providers). The community organisations could not realise this solely through the self-help mechanism. Enabling organisations also act as mediators between communities and external authorities, such as planning bodies or local authorities.

Explore the potential of international models of support for effective localism and sustainable community building, such as the Austrian co-operative governance model.

The results of the cross-country study in this report (see Chapter 6) contribute to a better understanding of the need for infrastructure and facilitation bodies in the promotion of community-led housing in England (Moore and Mullins 2012).

The empirical evidence presented suggests that the institutionalisation of co-operative elements into established housing systems presents a unique set of challenges for the community-led sector. In this respect, the research has shown that new community-led housing fields in England are facing similar challenges to the earlier co-operative housing movement in Austria, as well as in other European contexts. Housing co-operatives have not been able to grow and expand significantly through self-help mechanisms alone, given their inherent scarcity of economic capital, compared with other co-operative sectors, and given the need for technical expertise, management and governance competence. Thus, they require some form of external support, such as that of public housing programs, which however threatens the co-operative and community-based nature of these housing providers, as the Austrian case shows. This insight reminds us that although community-based organisations can be the trigger for important social innovations in housing – exemplified by the Vienna case (Novy et al. 2009) – they easily get trapped in the local because of their resource limitations and their explicit normative focus on *Gemeinschaft*. Nevertheless, the cross-country study highlights that through structural partnerships with local and regional government, a balance between local determination and broader societal influence can be achieved within a co-operative housing sector.

The Vienna case can be seen as a good practice example where public promotion programmes are explicitly linked to sustainability goals (Förster 2002), and as such the contribution of community-led and co-operative housing can be leveraged towards sustainable and inclusive urban and regional development (Lang and Novy 2014). In contrast to the English context, developer competitions in Vienna focus on specific development sites for cheap land opportunities. Developers are scored according to architectural quality, economic aspects, ecological quality and also the social sustainability of the projects. Social sustainability refers to identity and community building as well as social mix, increasing tenant participation in subsidised housing estates (Förster 2002; Wohnfonds Wien 2015). For the English context, the introduction of similar social sustainability aspects in developer competitions at the local site level could institutionalise community-led housing and link it to public funds for housing.

On the organisational level, a balance of self-help and external support is crucial for sustainable governance models. The Austrian case shows the need to keep and to support diversity not only of community-led provider models but also of umbrella bodies within a co-operative movement. In Austria, the creation of a powerful central umbrella body together with the state promotion model has led to isomorphism tendencies within the third sector. However, the co-operative idea in housing is based on local communities inventing and experimenting with new organisational structures and with umbrella bodies to meet particular local needs which in turn keeps the co-operative idea alive.

Thus, in their relationships with government bodies, the Mutual Housing Group and umbrellas of the different sub-sectors have encouraged a diversity of organisational models

of community-led housing in order to support social innovation within the sector. This is not an easy endeavour since, as is also the case in England, public funding favours standardised models. Strengthening residents' linking social capital always means walking a tightrope between organisational agency and structural partnerships with governments, for-profit or professional third sector providers.

Conclusion and further research

This fellowship report provides a good starting point for further research on co-operative and community-led housing in England. It has deepened understanding of the emergence and evolution the English community-led housing field, highlighted the importance of comparative research in identifying similar dilemmas but different mechanisms to resolve them and has laid the foundations and institutional links required for a deeper comparative project.

Note to readers

The fieldwork and literature review which informs this working paper were undertaken in 2013 with the assistance of a Plowden Fellowship. Community-led housing is a fast moving field and there have been considerable changes since the fieldwork. Furthermore, this publication comes after a General Election in May 2015 replacing the Coalition Government with a single party Conservative-led administration. New research is currently underway assisted by a Marie Curie Fellowship. Rather than updating the original study, this report responds to comments received from a number of expert readers on the earlier draft. Further publications are planned to update the work to the 2015-16 period and to extend the scope from the West Midlands and Vienna regions to provide national comparisons between England and Austria.

1. Introduction

1.1. Problem background

With the Localism Act 2011, the neighbourhood could become a key scale for governance reform and innovation with the potential to build sustainable communities. Localism had a strong policy resonance both for the previous Labour government and the Coalition Government's "Big Society" agenda of devolving services from government to communities (Alcock 2012). In the context of localism, the role of community-led housing, such as community land trusts and self-help housing, has gained increasing attention in England. Social innovations at the local level are an important challenge to the dominance of scale economies and reducing local control that have characterised recent housing reform in England (Mullins 2012). However, evidence to date is of patchy institutional support for such innovation and contested models for spreading innovation through "scaling-up" or "going viral" (Moore and Mullins 2013).

This agenda provides an excellent case in which to apply William Plowden's insistence on ensuring that policies have the effects intended based on a real understanding of impacts on people, particularly in relation to governance and social innovation. Community-led housing has strong connections with the co-operative housing tradition (CCH 2009, Rowlands 2009). Historical (Birchall 1992) and international experience (CECODHAS 2012; Moreau and Pittini 2012) in this field therefore has strong relevance for implementing localism today. The reality of co-operative housing refers to a wide range of governance models, combining characteristics of private, state and community-based governance.

Although the concept of co-operative housing is widespread and has a long tradition in the UK, co-operative housing practice today is still little-known and just being rediscovered as an innovative alternative to renting properties in order to tackle the demand for affordable housing after the housing crisis (e.g. Bliss et al. 2013). Despite a significant growth in private renting (Pattison 2014), individual home ownership still is the predominant form of tenure.

In England, the concrete configuration of co-operative and mutual housing, and thus also of its organisational governance models, differ considerable between regions and cities (Birchall 1992; Rowlands 2009). Different co-operative governance models have been good at meeting specific housing needs at particular times (Rowlands 2009). Recent changes in the policy environment for housing have created new opportunities for co-operative forms of housing, but have also redefined their societal role and organisational identity beyond that of member-oriented housing providers.

Co-operative housing initiatives often fill the gap left by the withdrawal of the state, not only in affordable housing provision but also in urban development, which increasingly involves them in processes of external societal governance, such as urban renewal (Flint and Kearns 2006). The current political interest in co-operative housing has been partly sparked by the nature of its organisational governance model, which is said to have positive implications for sustainable urban development. Positive external effects of co-operative governance practice are mainly seen in the stabilisation and even increasing attractiveness of neighbourhoods through long-term investments in social relationships among residents, or in the physical quality of their housing stocks. Where residents make a financial and organisational commitment to their housing provider, they have a vested interest in keeping rents down and housing quality up, which in turn generates spill-over effects on the housing stock across the

rest of the city. (Beetz 2008) Moreover, housing co-operatives may engage residents in social entrepreneurship, civic engagement and democratic practices which form key aspects of sustainability in urban development.

In opposition to a neo-liberal policy regime, austerity and the lack for real housing options for many, England has seen a re-emergence of community-led housing initiatives in recent years.[2] The co-housing and community land trust (CLT) sectors have sprung out of different social movements, not always linked to the co-operative housing tradition but clearly exhibiting co-operative principles in their governance (Somerville 2007; Moore and McKee 2012). Self-help housing has also expanded as a result of a convergence between empty homes initiatives and wider employment and training initiatives and stimulated by a programme ring-fenced to community-led groups (Mullins and Sacranie 2014). It can be assumed that community-led housing will become more important as fewer people can afford home ownership (NE1) and as new solutions are promoted to urban renewal in an era of more constrained public expenditure.

Advocates of the co-operative and community-led housing sector point to 40 years of co-producing well designed and managed places, with high levels of resident and neighbour satisfaction (housingforum.org.uk 2013). Research has explored the role of co-operative forms of housing as a catalyst for community involvement in urban governance (e.g. Flint and Kearns 2006). However, co-operative housing has remained a small sector, accounting for less than 1% of housing in England. The wider range of community-led initiatives now under way provides an interesting arena in which to explore competing governance models and assess success conditions. Given the growing strategic role for co-operative and community-led housing, international experiences of promotion of co-operative forms of housing can provide important lessons for implementing a real localism agenda in England.

The localism agenda in England could potentially stimulate organisational autonomy, and a stronger agency role to be played by local actors through co-operative forms of governance (Flint and Kearns 2006, Mullins 2012). However, implementing effective localism involves walking a tightrope between organisational agency and structural partnerships ("help from within and help from without") (Moore and Mullins 2013). International experience shows that community building cannot simply be triggered by devoting a stronger role to individual housing providers in neighbourhood governance without wider institutional support. The German case highlights the risks of devolving control while at the same time abolishing public promotion and support (König 2004). The Austrian case shows how public promotion and institutional support beyond local governance have enabled professionalised housing co-operatives to leverage community ideas and practices leading to a solidarity-based housing policy. It also shows the risk that hierarchical and bureaucratic governance cultures of public promotion can endanger bottom-up resident action in co-operatives and so community-led social innovations may lose their dynamic (Lang and Novy 2014).

---

[2] From a more critical perspective, new community-led housing initiatives could also be considered inadvertently complicit in neoliberalisation, as the state reduces its roles and responsibilities to citizens. However, while there are limits in the extent to which they can oppose and combat these forces, citizen involvement does provide a markedly different response to state retreat than simple market expansion (NE4e).

The developments described above suggest that, because of its distinctive nature, co-operative housing cannot be reduced to the organisational sphere alone but has to be complemented by an external, institutional perspective.

1.2. Goals of the project

This project was intended to:

a) **Assess the relevance of the localism agenda and related reforms in housing policy for the community-led housing sector.**
b) **Develop a better understanding for the structure of the community-led sector and relevant support mechanisms.**
c) **Test out a coherent framework for analysing localism practice and its links to different community-led housing models (CLTs, self-help housing, co-operatives).**
d) **Explore the potential of international models of support for effective localism and sustainable community building, such as the Austrian co-operative governance model.**
e) **Establish research links with the community-led and mutual housing sector in England through partnership with the Confederation of Co-operative Housing (CCH), self-help-housing.org, the Community Land Trusts Network, and other actors involved in the Mutual Housing Group.**
f) **Act as a scoping study for a longer term fellowship application (e.g. Marie Curie) being developed by the applicant with the Housing and Communities Research Group and ensure the relevance and usefulness of that more detailed research study to sector actors.**

The research aimed to develop practical implications for urban development and housing policy as well as for the management of housing organisations. In this respect, the research results were intended to help policy makers to develop more effective support measures through learning about the design of sustainable institutions in the co-operative housing sector. In this way it was intended to assist in building linking social capital and contributing to social cohesion in the city. Housing cooperatives themselves might use the research to assist on their strategic positioning and policy formulation.

1.3. Methods

The three-month Plowden fellowship project built on previous research by the applicant (Lang and Novy 2014), and involved the following methodological steps to reach its aims:

a) **Carrying out a systematic review of recent policies from the Localism Act and forms of organisational response emerging in the community-led and mutual housing sectors.**
b) **Developing and applying a typology of co-operative governance models derived from the literature and international experiences.**
c) **Undertaking a set of semi-structured stakeholder interviews with representatives of the co-operative and community-led housing sector in the English West Midlands as well as visits to a sample of innovative projects and analysis of case studies in the various mutual housing fields.[3]**

---

[3] For a detailed description of the case study methodology see Chapter 4.2

d) **Preparing for a deeper study of localism and co-operative governance of housing to meet the needs of the evolving mutual housing sector and provide a platform for international comparative research.**

e) **A presentation based on this research was made to an invited audience from the William Plowden Committee and from the mutual and community-led housing sector. This was used to build relationships and establish a dialogue for the deeper study, for which Marie Curie funding was later secured.**

2. The government's localism agenda: relevance for the community-led housing sector

From a political perspective, we can broadly define "localism" as devolving service delivery and governance of housing from governments to local communities.

Although housing, in some respects, is a specific field of community action and localism practice, it exemplifies many issues relevant to future development of the voluntary and community sector as a whole.

It is interesting to see that issues raised by the Localism Act and Big Society Agenda of the current Coalition Government are remarkably similar to the debates following the "New Localism initiatives" by the former Labour government. For example, NCVO's Voluntary Action report in 2005 already discussed the tensions arising from emerging partnership arrangements between community-based organisations and government bodies or larger third sector providers (e.g. HAs). As this project has shown, this is also a key issue for the future development of community-led housing.

The localism debate in housing is also a perfect example of how wide the gap still is between "big political ideas" and "community practice on the ground". The following statement from an interview with a representative of the community-led housing sector highlights that there is still little clarity and a good deal of scepticism about the political agenda on localism.

"Localism, that's politics, isn't it? […] The shaping of the political end, I'm not really interested in that. In terms of the practicalities on the ground […] our approach is to try to see if we can develop more housing in various different ways. And there are small amounts of success." (NE 2)

The above statement also highlights the relevance of William Plowden's principle for public policies to be based on a real understanding of what communities need and how reforms would impact on them.

2.1. Overview on recent localism reforms in England

Localism had a strong policy resonance both for the previous Labour government and the Coalition Government's "Big Society" agenda of devolving services from government to communities (Alcock 2012). Social housing is important for the localism agenda because it provides a direct link to local neighbourhoods and has a history of outsourcing public services to third sector organisations, although reforms in the social housing provisions of the Act did little to promote "real localism" (Mullins 2012).

Under recent Labour governments, priorities for localism reforms referred to allowing local managers to meet national priorities more effectively, facilitating more direct neighbourhood governance, and engaging community in local democracy and service delivery (e.g. under the label of "co-production").

The Conservative-led Coalition Government broadly shared Labour's vision of localism as shifting more power to local people and communities. However, the Conservatives' "Big Society Agenda" put greater emphasis on volunteering as a cornerstone of localism and made fewer provisions for capacity building and enabling of community providers. This ultimately leads to questions whether a purely voluntary system can solve pressing societal problems, such as poverty, or whether citizens have the necessary skills for taking over a wide range of public services including housing management. Critics of the "Big Society" often claim that the priority of volunteering is used as a cover for public service cuts (e.g. Gosling 2012), and for transfer of public services to large private contractors rather than to communities. Furthermore, the "Big Society" also pledges more support for co-operatives, mutuals and social enterprises as tools for implementing localism reform. Nevertheless, with the government in place since 2010, these organisational models still play a minor role in public sector reforms. Representatives of the voluntary and community sector argue that third sector organisations are already doing a better job in service delivery than the public sector but that the role is poorly recognised by the government (Gleeson 2012).

Social housing reforms under the current government cannot be reduced to the Localism Act in 2011 but also involved a series of provisions which will be briefly discussed in the following.

The Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) in 2010 already gave a clear indication of the scale of deficit reduction aimed for in the social housing field. While the previous Labour Government had announced a record affordable housing programme, the Coalition Government's overall reductions were between 60% and 75% from this previous comprehensive spending review. The abolition of Regional Spatial Strategies also meant negative consequences for building new affordable homes. Regeneration funding was reduced through the abolition of the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) and by the ending of the Housing Market Renewal Areas programme. Accompanying changes within the CSR aimed at keeping down private sector rents through housing benefit reductions while increasing social housing rents towards market levels (Mullins 2012).

An earlier Housing Consultation Paper had prefigured some of the reforms to be found in the Localism Act, giving local authorities greater flexibility in social housing allocations as far as types and length of tenures is concerned. Thus, a periodical review of social tenancies was proposed for new tenants. Applicants with low levels of housing as well as homeless people could be moved to other housing stock, such as private rented dwellings. While it is questionable whether reforms of allocation policies are really about localism, parts of the Housing Consultation paper which dealt with regulation changes showed a better fit in this respect. The paper proposed a stronger role for tenant panels, local councillors and MPs to enable tenants to hold landlords to account and press for better services (DCLG 2010a; Mullins 2012).

The Strategy for Housing (DCLG 2011b) was introduced at the same time as the Localism Act. It was in line with the changes already proposed by the CSR and Consultation Paper in 2010. In detail, it proposed a fuller entry for profit distributing providers into the affordable

housing market and boosting supply through innovation by HAs. It also presented a revival of the right to buy and thus promoted home ownership but also made it easier for tenants to move through home swaps and transfers. As suggested in the Consultation Paper, long-term security of tenure and registration on local authority housing lists should be removed. Finally, a move away from community-based, non-profit providers to profit-providers and partnerships in building new stock was proposed (Mullins 2012).

The Localism Act 2011 confirmed the direction of the CSR and the Consultation Paper. The legislation moved away from Labour's focus on regionalism, allowing neighbourhood planning and community right to build. The latter enabled communities to bring forward proposals for development they want - such as homes, shops, playgrounds or meeting halls. Furthermore, top-down regulation of social and affordable housing was favoured with selective retention of central control (DCLG 2011a). The provisions suggested a further marketisation of the sector and local agents were pressed towards cost reduction. The key idea of promoting mobility and flexibility conflicts with building solidarity and community in neighbourhoods. Furthermore, there were hardly any new provisions for tenant self-management. Surprisingly, the Right to Manage, which had for 25 years enabled council tenants to manage their housing on a co-operative basis was not extended to housing association sector under the Localism Act despite its emphasis on community rights and social housing (DCLG 2011a).

2.2. Political principles for localism reforms

While the contribution of the Localism Act to real localism was limited, the DCLG's essential guide to Decentralisation which had accompanied the Localism Bill (DCLG 2010b) set out some more significant principles. Six actions of decentralisation were set out in the guide. Mullins (2012) suggested that implementation of the outlined principles in the Guide might lead to the reversal of the dominance of scale and efficiency over local accountability and control in the sector. The following paragraphs particularly discuss the relevance of these six localism actions for the community-led housing sector as part of social or affordable housing. The insights are based on expert interviews with sector representatives.

2.2.1. Reducing the burden of bureaucracy

Bureaucracy is evident in the social housing sector, and especially with larger HAs. However, the burden of bureaucracy is also experienced by community-led initiatives, as this study shows, for instance, when seeking the status of a registered provider in order to access public funding. This cumbersome process is done through the Homes and Communities Agency and involves a lot of paper work, and quite rigorous provisions in relation to finance and governance standards that newer and smaller organisations have considerable difficulty in meeting in advance. Smaller groups are therefore often faced with two alternatives; either to secure grant without becoming a registered provider (this approach proved very successful under the Empty Homes Community Grants Programme 2011-15) (Mullins and Sacranie 2015) or to seek partnerships with existing registered providers. The empirical evidence of this study shows that outside of EHCGP its has been common for HAs to have sometimes acted as intermediaries in the application process. (NE2)

More established community-led providers, such as co-operatives, already tackle such bureaucracy through partnerships with HAs which have the necessary resources and experience. The well-established co-operative sector in Austria shows that, over time,

community-led providers can learn how to deal with bureaucracy "upwards" to quangos and central government, for example when submitting bids for public funding of housing schemes, but that this can be at the expense of downward accountability to tenants. (NE2)

In earlier periods, community-led organisations within the HA sector were seen as an answer to some problems with bureaucracy in the social housing sector by balancing downward accountability to tenants with upward accountability pressures. Over a decade ago, Clapham and Kintrea (2000) conducted an intensive study on the governance of community-based housing associations in Scotland. They came to the conclusion that community-based providers, such as housing co-operatives or tenant management organisations, can be effective in "downwards" accountability to local residents compared to large HAs or local authorities. However, since that period, HAs have continued to grow larger, even in Scotland, as a result of competitive pressures and upward accountabilities. Given such empirical evidence, it is even more astonishing that the Coalition Government does not explicitly refer to the community-led housing sector as a viable example of localism practice in housing in their Guide to the Localism Bill; and that the Localism Act itself contained no provisions for devolving management from large housing providers to smaller community-led organisations.

2.2.2. Empowering communities

The government discourse of community empowerment has a long tradition in England, growing recently, but is contradicted by the deeply rooted paternalistic culture in the country. Moreover, the discourse of "empowerment" is too superficial to account for the complexity of localism reforms, and is even misleading, as you cannot easily transfer power downwards to communities. Housing is a perfect illustration of the fact that localism and empowerment is rather about pro-actively "taking power" which requires a learning process local communities have to go through. (NE2)

In larger HAs, the localism principle of "community empowerment" clearly conflicts with corporate strategies and institutional logics focused on economies of scale (Mullins 2006). However, as this empirical study shows, a range of HAs is fairly committed to the aim of empowering local communities and is also willing to adjust their organisational governance according to this goal (HA1.1; Coop1.1; CLT1.1). The community-led housing sector can already point to some decades of success in local accountability and active local participation, with high levels of resident and neighbour satisfaction (e.g. Clapham and Kintrea 2000; housingforum.org.uk 2013). Again, it is worth noting that the current government seems to have neglected this empirical evidence in its localism strategies. Nevertheless, with its new provisions for neighbourhood planning and community asset management, the government has at least provided some tools for community self-empowerment (Mullins 2012).

2.2.3. Increasing local financial control

Given the current centralisation in the finance and regulation of social housing, it seems unlikely that this principle of localism can soon be implemented. Local influence over new housing development was greater under the last Labour government and its Local Investment Plans. Nevertheless, Labour also focused on centralisation by closing conversations about independent access to HCA investment and other support measures (NE10). The reality of localism reforms under the Coalition Government is that funding rather goes to large HAs which often operate nationally and not directly to local areas (Mullins

2012). This is mainly as a result of the shifting investment climate for all new social housing in England which now involves only around 13% public subsidy with the remainder coming from loans, reserves and cross-subsidy (HCA 2015). This regime privileges large HAs that have been able to accumulate considerable assets from historic public funding and now enjoy large surpluses, much of which are invested in new stock. Smaller and newer community-based groups without this historic accumulation of reserves are much less able to compete.

Nevertheless, various community rights have recently been introduced by central government (right to challenge, right to bid etc.) which can be related to the localism goal of "increasing local financial control". The "Right to Bid", for instance, gives residents the opportunity to take over local assets, like shops or pubs, and thus secure a social centre for the locality (DCLG 2011a). The problem with these community rights however is that local communities often lack the skills and access to resources such as finance to use them effectively. There is a lack of knowledge about participation and the use of funds which the government, it seems, does not fully understand. Indeed third sector infrastructure funding has been substantially cut at the same time as government has espoused community participation and the "big society". These essential community skills need to be built up. Putting out funding, under rather short timescales, is not sufficient if local communities do not know how to access and use them for community-led housing. The current government has not promoted and explained their funding schemes enough to local communities. Furthermore, the civil servants concerned with managing the funding for community-led housing often lack the skills to work with ordinary communities on this, although one has the feeling they would like to see things really happening. (NE2) However, such negative experiences are partly mitigated by efforts undertaken by the HCA which introduced regional champions to act as dedicated points of contact for those applying to community-led funding programmes (some of which have proved effective). These efforts help to streamline and improve communication links and working relationships with communities. (NE4e)

The Community Right to Build fund provides an interesting example of policy adaptation. It enjoyed very low take-up initially. The terminology "community right to build" is a bit misleading because it is actually more about the planning system. The idea behind it was to simplify the planning system and to make it easier for communities to obtain planning permission but also to create community organisations in order to develop new affordable housing (with community assets). The idea formed part of neighbourhood planning through which the government wanted communities to see new developments as their own and not introduced from outside which has led to resistance in the past. The community right to build's failure to take off in the beginning was due it being very complicated for communities themselves to administer (get funding, plan, build etc.) (NE3). It was therefore converted into a development fund enabling small amounts of money to be spent to bring schemes to the planning stage. Locality[4] has been promoting this fund and HACT[5], has developed a project

---

[4] Locality is a national body whose members are large, independent multi-purpose voluntary and community based organisations. A number of those organisations engage in developing housing, in a variety of models, such as Community Land Trusts or under the Empty Homes Funding program to bring properties back into use within their own communities and to meet their housing needs. Locality supports its members with due diligence assessments, i.e. reviewing their business model, looking at the financial viability and supporting community groups to be able to access both feasibility and development finance to move their housing projects on. (NE11)

to match communities with HAs as external enablers who could bridge the expertise and knowledge gap.

This experience of community right to build can be contrasted with earlier localism experiments. During the Thatcher era, when the "right to manage" was introduced and Tenant Management Organisations were set up, government had implemented a process for council tenants to learn self-management and collective organisation skills. This could be a learning point for the Coalition Government's localism agenda. (NE2).

2.2.4. Diversifying supply of public services

Traditionally, diversifying public housing supply has been done through strengthening HAs, including through stock transfers. A problem with this part of localism reforms is that many HAs lack accountability to local communities and are rather distant from the community and voluntary sector (Mullins 2012). The empirical data of this project shows however, that there are also good practice examples to be found among HAs where individual managers support community-led schemes by focusing on building capacity and competence among residents (HA1.1; Coop1.1; CLT1.1). The crucial question in order to reverse the current trend will be how to deal with non-responsive HAs (Mullins 2012). A way forward might be the explicit introduction of genuine localism and community accountability criteria in developer competitions which will be discussed in more detail later in this report.

2.2.5. Opening up to public scrutiny

This localism principle seems to be weakly specified and with an emphasis on costs rather than benefits in HAs. In general, there is hardly any tradition of resident-led scrutiny within the sector. The Localism Act abolished "The Tenant Services Authority" and recommended social landlords to support tenant panels (or similar bodies) so that tenants can scrutinise the services being offered. In a similar vein, the newly introduced "right to challenge" gives local community groups the opportunity to put forward ideas for improvements in local services (DCLG 2011a). Again it would be worthwhile to look at already established local accountability practices and track records of the community-led housing sector, e.g. of housing co-operatives or tenant management organisations (Clapham and Kintrea 2000; housingforum.org.uk 2013). In contrast to most HAs, residents in the community-led sector are able to effectively control management activities.

2.2.6. Strengthening local accountability

The dominant theme within the HA sector is upscaling and not a focus on local accountability. Corporate management practices reduce the possibilities of participation for residents. Thus, it will be interesting to see if the government's localism agenda and some tools that have been implemented such as neighbourhood plans and local referenda are picked up by HAs for affordable housing schemes. The Localism Act introduced a right for local people to draw up a neighbourhood plan, so they can decide where and how new housing and businesses should be established in their communities (NE3). Nevertheless, the Strategy for Housing (DCLG 2011) creates incentives for further upscaling of the HAs sector

---

[5] HACT is a housing "think-and-do tank" that has promoted community-led housing through partnerships with groups such as Self-Help-Housing.org (SHHO).

through merger and greater involvement of the profit distributing sector rather than greater responsiveness to local communities.

2.2.7. Concluding remarks

An analysis of localism reforms under the current Coalition Government reveals two contradicting understandings of localism and decentralisation:

- On the one hand, a focus on efficiency and cost reduction and flexibility in social housing which is evident from the Localism Act itself alongside small scale promotion of community-led initiatives such as neighbourhood planning.
- On the other hand, guidelines for strengthening local accountability which are mainly presented in the DCLG's essential guide to the Decentralisation and Localism Bill (DCLG 2010b).

In a way, these opposing goals of localism also reflect the competing logics in the social housing sector between scale and efficiency and local accountability (Mullins, 2006) and could lead to a further rift between these different management approaches. Thus, social housing organisations have to make strategic choices in terms of the approaches they want to follow. The new flexibility proposed by the government in terms of rent levels and tenancy security is already exploited by some providers in the sector. In contrast, locally and community-based associations could find support in the localism provisions which recommend partnership arrangements with local authorities and communities transforming them into neighbourhood hubs for all local public services. Realistically, it will only be the latter, smaller group of social housing providers which can bring forward real localism in social housing while the majority of the sector will most likely produce more of the same.

2.3. Effects of localism reforms on the community-led sector

This Chapter focuses on how key representatives of the community-led sector perceive the impact of recent localism reforms on the sector.

Most sector representatives agree that "localism" is more of a political discourse than a practical policy that can be actively used or taken up by umbrella bodies or community-led initiatives on the ground. Key representatives of community-led housing are not interested in changing the macro level of the politics of localism. They primarily focus on the micro level of its application with residents, to promote their direct and positive influence on their communities and their homes.

Although the majority of the community-led movement is ideologically not connected to the parties forming the current government, key representatives recognise that the localism agenda has some positive impacts for their sector, mainly in terms of establishing a favourable discourse on community-led and co-operative housing: "*The discourse is absolutely fantastic for us from all the political parties really*" (Coop1.1).

Furthermore, the co-operative movement has proved that it can attract support from all parties as the co-operative idea appeals to different political philosophies. A representative of a housing co-operative in the West Midlands highlights this when he says, "*in R. we've always had cross party political support I think it's fair to say*"(Coop1.1).

The current localism debate shows once again that parts of the Conservative Party are traditionally in favour of the co-operative and tenant-managed housing models and also of the self-help idea, "*because that government was very interested in breaking down the power of the state. The Conservative party thinks that the paternalist model of delivery has failed in Britain and it's created these sink estates […] to break out of that, they see co-operative models as offering some self-help within that*". (Coop1.1) Even the Labour Party might be looking for a new model of public delivery in the near future including some form of co-operative housing (Coop1.1).

The Coalition Government's localism agenda has triggered a lot of activity around the concept of community-led housing compared to previous governments – even Labour ones. Sector representatives agree that the political discourse on localism has primarily given the sector a better profile in the wider public. Furthermore, it has attracted increasing attention among local communities, housing providers and local councils from all over the country to engage in community-led schemes.

In contrast to these "soft" effects, the Coalition Government only made available small-scale funding for community-led initiatives, some of which were underspent. From the start, there was considerable interest from the above mentioned stakeholder groups to access this public funding in order to set up new community-led schemes (NE2).

One of the reasons, however, why only a small percentage of interested stakeholders actually started developing housing schemes can be seen in the lack of knowledge about community-led housing and related support structures among the wider public in England (NE2). Although co-operative housing has quite a long history in England (Birchall 1992), it seems that with the localism debate, community-led initiatives have been rediscovered by politicians as an innovative alternative form of housing provision and neighbourhood management. Whereas the working environment with government is seen as positive (NE2), it mainly comes down to sector umbrellas to inform interested communities, housing providers and even government bodies about the basics of community-led housing and relevant support structures. The Coalition Government offered funding but did not really reach out to local communities and enable schemes to get started. Sector representatives were sceptical that recent reforms can reverse the heavy political focus in housing on homeownership and individualist approaches, a major obstacle for scaling-up community-led initiatives.

3. Structure of the mutual and community-led housing sector

3.1. Introduction

Community-led housing is not an entirely new phenomenon in England. Different initiatives have been around for several decades. Co-operative housing, for instance, has a long tradition in England and other parts of the UK but got little public promotion since the 1970s. Nevertheless, co-operative is a more mainstream form of housing delivery in some other European countries such as Austria and Denmark. However, the community-led sector offers a greater variety of organisational models than just co-operative housing. As a response to the increasing need for affordable housing in both rural and urban England, new community-led initiatives have emerged, such as self-help housing, the co-housing movement (with Danish and North American roots), the community land trust sector (with North American and

Scottish strands) sprung out of different social movements, not always linked to the co-operative housing tradition, but clearly exhibiting co-operative principles in their governance (Moore and McKee 2012; Moore and Mullins 2013).

The current localism debate has been an opportunity for these different movements to get more attention, and community-led housing has been rediscovered as an innovative, alternative form of housing provision and neighbourhood management. So far, while there are a number of practice audience publications, the sector is insufficiently covered by the academic literature (Moore and McKee 2012; Moore and Mullins 2013), and thus a key goal of this research project is to get a better understanding of its structure and relevant support mechanisms. The material presented here draws heavily on in-depth interviews with sector experts and visits to case study organisations. Inevitably, therefore, it is a view from "inside", which we will subject to more critical analysis later in this paper.

The label "community-led" represents a compromise between different groups involved in the umbrella body Mutual Housing Group. As the sector is still emerging, there are only few definitions for community-led housing which highlight the variety of organisational models and their locally based modes of governance. The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA 2011:3) recognises that "*the community-led development sector is a broad one encompassing a range of models and approaches with varying aims and aspirations. This includes CLTs, mutuals and co-operatives, co-housing, self-build and others*".

According to Gooding (2013:8), who has provided an excellent overview of the sector for Habitat Local Tees Valley Unlimited, community-led housing describes "*homes that are developed and/or managed by local people or residents, in not for private profit organisational structures. The detail of the organisational structure can be varied, but governance should be overseen by people who either live or work in the locality of benefit or are direct beneficiaries.*"

For the purpose of this study, the structure of the sector is analysed from a co-operative perspective which can be considered an overarching concept of community-led housing. Thus, I would argue that different community-led fields – although they are not always explicitly linked to the co-operative housing tradition – clearly exhibit co-operative principles in their governance, such as self-help and co-ownership. This view has recently been reasserted in a new publication promoting the wider sector (Bliss and Lambert 2014).

The extent to which community-led housing schemes are labelled under the "co-operative housing umbrella" is influenced by dominant discourses on the macro level of housing policy which might or might not favour and promote the co-operative idea for affordable housing policies (see Wales vs. England vs. Austria). (NE2; HA1.1). On a more technical basis, only those projects that comply with the International Co-operative Alliance definition (see below) of co-operative governance can be considered to be fully part of the co-operative sector.

3.2. Overview of the different sub-fields

3.2.1. Co-operative Housing

Basic Model

According to the International Co-operative Alliance, housing co-operatives represent member-based organisations which are governed according to co-operative values and principles (self-help, self-responsibility, democratic control, open membership, equality, equity, solidarity etc.). The English umbrella body, Confederation of Co-operative Housing (CCH), centres its approach to co-operative housing on the principles of democratic self-help and community building. The CCH actively promotes co-operative values among residents. (NE2)

Co-operative housing can involve different tenures with elements of homeownership and rental housing. When entering a co-operative, residents buy shares and thus invest in the co-operative enterprise and its developments. Similar to the rental model, it is relatively easy to move in and out of a co-operative, as units are usually just transferred and not sold on the market. Nevertheless, some co-operatives allow the transfer value of shares to be at least partly determined by market value ("limited-equity co-operatives"), providing a return for residents. The standard co-operative model however is a "non-equity" one where shares sell for the same price as they were purchased.

Housing co-operatives might not necessarily be incorporated as co-operative organisations and can also take the legal form of a private limited company or charitable housing association in order to bring external partners on board for instance. (Coop1.1) This rather loose legal conception comes close to the reality of co-operative housing in England but also other European countries (Moreau and Pittini 2012).

Relevance and Size

Although the concept of co-operative housing is widespread and has a long tradition in the UK (e.g. Birchall 1991), co-operative housing practice today is still little-known and just being rediscovered as an innovative alternative form of housing provision and neighbourhood management (e.g. Rowlands 2009, CCH 2009, Bliss et al. 2013). In contrast to other European countries[6], co-operative housing is not very developed in England and it accounts for less than 1% of all homes in the UK (Moreau and Pittini 2012). The official numbers for the size of the sector might even be exaggerated as it also includes 'cooperative-like' organisations (NE2). Co-operative housing in England is actually an umbrella term for very different types of initiatives. At present, there are about 250 co-operative housing organisations in England with individual organisations tending to be relatively small and community-based. An average mainstream housing co-operative has about 50 members. At the lower end of the sector, you even find schemes of just one shared house (NE2). However, CCH, through its member co-ops, has promoted a substantial number of new schemes in the last 18 month compared to what has been achieved since the 1990s. Among these new schemes, eco-friendly homes have become a priority for co-operative housing which underlines the traditional capacity of this housing model to come up with social

---

[6] Austria: 8% co-operatives and 10% limited-profit housing companies of total housing stock (Moreau and Pittini 2012)

innovations (CCH 2009; Coop1.1). The need to build environmentally friendly housing can be successfully communicated to residents when highlighting the affordability aspect of homes as a representative of a housing co-operative highlights:

"*I'd been waffling for ages about the environmental agenda […] when you're talking about CO_2 emissions and the planet. It's very, very difficult. When you're talking about how you make your property as affordable as possible to live in by reducing the heat requirement, then it becomes a very easy argument for people to understand*" (Coop1.1).

The co-operative model used to be state-promoted like the HA model is now. Most co-operatives have received social housing grant which required them to be regulated under the same legal frameworks as HAs. There was a relatively big wave of co-operative activity in the 1970s and 1980s in England, sometimes promoted by local authorities such as the Greater London Council which enabled several coops to develop in the Waterloo area under both Conservative and Labour administrations (Birchall 1991; NE2).

<u>Types</u>

In England, the concrete configuration of co-operative and mutual housing, and thus also of its organisational governance models, differs considerably between regions and cities and over time (Birchall 1992; Rowlands 2009). Different co-operative governance models have been good at meeting specific housing needs at particular times (Rowlands 2009, 2012).

At present, two important types of housing co-operatives should be distinguished: ownership co-operatives and tenant management co-operatives.

In **ownership co-operatives**, home owners have a joint stake in the development as a whole and set up co-operative governance arrangements for common maintenance and democratic control, but have individual ownership of their homes and may sell these on the market subject to certain collective obligations. This model is common in some parts of Europe such as Norway or Sweden but less developed in England. Most ownership co-operatives were initially established with government funding in the 1970s and 1980s and in legal terms are part of the HA sector. Their members have a nominal membership share of £1 or £5. (CCH 2009; NE1)

The co-operative ownership model which was originally imported from Scandinavia to England as early as the 1960s was also known as "co-ownership housing". It should allow tenants to build up an equity stake over time in order to become home owners. As Birchall (1991) points out this was the only element in which the government was actually interested in when transferring the model to the UK. It neglected other key co-operative elements of the Scandinavian approach such as democratic governance structures which would have allowed real self-management by residents and co-operative education of tenants. Finally, in the 1980s, co-ownership housing largely became part of the individual homeownership sector, losing its co-operative connections (CCH 2009). There have been recent attempts to revive co-operative ownership models with exploration of a mutual home ownership model in London, Leeds and the West Midlands (NE1).

In **tenant management co-operatives**, tenants of local authorities or HAs form organisations to take responsibility for the democratic management of features of the delivery of housing services but do not have individual ownership of their homes. The actual ownership of the properties rests in the hand of the local government or HAs, but the

management is done by the co-operative. Tenant management co-operatives democratically elect the board of directors or management committee, which is entirely composed of tenants. In technical terms, the co-operative members remain tenants of the council or a housing association. However, they enter into a management agreement with the umbrella organisation which regulates those aspects of management and maintenance which tenants wish to take responsibility for. (NE1) This model has greater uptake in England and there are good examples in the Midlands including WATMOS. The Confederation of Co-operative Housing has successfully promoted this model for local authority stock transfers through the "Community Gateway Model" (CCH 2009), and has influenced a small number of whole stock transfers to mutuals; notably Rochdale and is now trying to give similar stimulus to the ownership co-operative model (CCH 2009).

Stock transfer models from public housing, called tenant management organisations (TMOs), are also often considered as a type of co-operative but rather represent "mutuals". ("*essentially where over 50% of the management is by residents, I think it qualifies as a co-operative*", Coop1.1) Nevertheless, most co-operative models are intertwined with other housing sectors, such as HAs and council housing. In contrast, there are community organisations based on co-operative principles that do not consider themselves part of the movement which is fine for CCH. (NE2)

Co-operatives can also contain a strong self-build aspect making them more independent in production, and making it also easier to tailor the homes to needs of residents and realise an environmentally friendly agenda as the following example of a housing co-operative shows:

"*we found a Norwegian forestry co-operative that produces houses […] because they built to Norwegian building standards rather than British building standards [...] we started buying some of those and realised that the technologies involved in actually building them were quite simply really […] so we bought the technology off the Norwegian Forestry Commission and we now build them ourselves in W. in a factory […] to produce very environmentally friendly housing […] They [the residents] can then personalise their property. The property can then be built inside the factory and then can be assembled on site.*" (Coop1.1)

Member participation rates can vary significantly between different co-operative schemes and over time (CCH 2009). In the co-operative model, tenants are supposed to get actively involved in the management of their co-operatives and also to serve as board members. A rule of thumb might be that 1/3 is actively and 1/3 passively involved, and 1/3 is not interested in participation. Member participation in community-led housing is usually strong when an initiative is new (e.g. CLTs) but decreases over time (e.g. older coops). Members' turnover plays a significant role in participation rates in particular schemes. (NE2; Coop1.1)

Target Groups

Co-operative housing has often been labelled as social or affordable housing but the sector wants to get out of this straightjacket and develop schemes for people on different incomes and to become a mainstream home ownership model (NE2e). The co-operative model has a tradition of targeting lower income people who have often left council housing and other people in housing need. The CCH accepts the need to have a variety of co-operative models to meet the needs of local communities and it has achieved a good track record in adapting the co-operative idea of housing to local circumstances (NE2). Nevertheless, the identity of the sector and its boundaries have become blurred due to the different labels (externally and

internally) assigned to it which often irritate potential tenants and local authorities (and even sector representatives). The marginalisation of state-funded social and affordable housing in England also had negative effects on the co-operative sector. (CCH 2009; NE2)

The co-operative movement seeks to broaden its member-base as co-ops were traditionally seen as transient lifestyle models ("*It's either been short life in London which leads to people that are having transient lifestyles and a sort of hippiedom image*") or as rented social housing model for the bottom 10% of the population ("*And secondly, the main model […] has been one of rented housing, social housing where we do house the bottom 10% of the population and we haven't broken out of that glass ceiling*") (Coop1.1).

As a reaction, CCH has actively promoted "new co-operative models" that aim at social mixing, also targeting higher income groups. In this respect, mutual homeownership and co-housing models open up new perspectives. (Coop1.1) The long-term goal of CCH is to mainstream co-operative housing. Whether this is realistic remains to be seen. (NE2) However, representatives of the sector are sceptical that a tenure mix of affordable, subsidised and market-based schemes, i.e. setting rents according to income levels, would work for most co-operatives. (Coop1.1) An entry barrier to co-operative housing, and also other community-led fields, can be seen in the culture of homeownership promoted by both Labour and Conservatives over several decades (CCH 2009). "*The advantage of resident mobility which the co-operative usually provides through its open membership principle is limited by long waiting lists which are often managed by the local council* "(Coop1.1).

Empirical studies have shown that resident satisfaction is substantially higher in co-operative housing than it is in council housing or HAs (CCH 2009; Rowlands 2009; NE2). A reason why residents choose co-operatives is that these homes are often better in terms of quality than council housing. Furthermore, it is important for them to manage and decide about their homes themselves (Coop1.1). Residents also see an advantage in the explicit community development approach of co-operatives (e.g. getting residents off benefits and help them to acquire skills) (CCH 2009). Compared to council housing, a significantly higher proportion of tenants are back in work after about 12 months of being in a co-operative (Coop1.1). According to sector representatives, co-operative housing does well in terms of social mixing of estates, although this cannot not be done artificially but with respect to the local circumstances. Residents are also alienated by the language of larger HAs. In this respect, co-operatives are the contrast to the paternalist model of HA and council housing. (NE2)

3.2.2. Community Land Trusts (CLT)

<u>Basic Model</u>

The term CLT refers to community ownership of land or other assets. CLTs thus help serving the needs of a local community. Thus, CLTs as non-profit, community-based organisations can help facilitate the provision of affordable housing – as both home ownership and rental housing – to meet local needs predominantly in rural areas and as such are also explicitly supported in the Coalition Government's agenda (Moore and McKee 2012). The CLT model has mainly thrived in rural areas, but there are now 25 urban CLTs at various stages of development and another 20 pilots were launched in June 2014 to prove that CLTs can work in a range of housing market contexts (NE8). However, in order to reach the goal of affordability, CLTs need some form of public or private subsidies which are locked into the trust (CCH 2009). Of course, CLTs are not unique in needing some form of subsidy to

develop affordable housing. All other forms of community-led housing and even housing associations invariably need too, even though they have reserves to draw on. (NE8) Some CLTs own and manage other types of property and run other services such as community shops and pubs (CLT1.1; Moore and McKee 2012; Gooding 2013).

Relevance and Size

The Scottish and US experience with CLTs (longer history and advanced models) has extended beyond housing and shown that community control of wider estates can have positive economic, social and environmental benefits (Rowlands 2009; NE4). Over the last decade, the CLT model has also become popular in England (Moore and McKee 2012). At present, there are 160 CLTs in the UK at different stages of development with about 20 of them having been completed, with 300 homes completed or in planning (Moore and Mullins 2013). As far as housing is concerned, the average size is around 10 units (NE8). The CLT model is not designed to produce high volumes of new homes but to meet local needs in a way that can ensure the long-term affordability (Gooding 2013). However, this does not necessarily mean that models based on the CLT concept cannot produce high volumes. There are a number of projects currently being developed where CLTs are working in partnership with a developer or a local authority to develop high volumes (in the region of 250 homes in one case). This is partly because developers are waking up to the point that when the community are involved in development that can help unlock housing as opposed to going to the default position of being resistant to change. The largest CLT in the United States has about 2500 homes which might show the future potential for CLTs in England in terms of size. (NE8) In a nutshell, the relevance of CLTs can be seen in two ways: first, it secures the ownership of properties for the common good by restricting occupation and resale and secondly, CLTs provide a structure for democratic community-based governance (Moore and McKee 2012). The latter aspect seems to be crucial when discussing localism, as CLTs represent a model of active citizenship in a different way from co-operatives. Nevertheless, the community-based governance structures of CLTs are not yet sufficiently developed to be able to democratically represent a whole neighbourhood which is affected by new schemes, e.g. formality of governance structures, involvement of residents of CLT homes, participation of wider community members. Reasons for this might include lack of interest from wider community members in becoming formally involved, likewise for residents of the homes who hadn't necessarily signed up for resident-led cooperative governance. (NE4e) However, expert commentators involved in this study agree that such governance innovations might be a first step in the direction of a local government reform that leads to real localism. As an expert on the CLT sector points out, the in-depth planning processes and community activities of CLTs can arguably offer opportunities for a greater number of residents affected by schemes to influence development, as opposed to the limited number of places on management and governance boards. The 'external democratic governance' of CLTs refers to engagement and consultation of communities and provides residents with opportunities to influence how a scheme looks, where it is placed, and what tenures the homes should be. This tends to take place through community meetings, surveys (with relatively high response rates), and collaborative planning (along the lines of Planning for Real[7]). (NE4e)

---

[7] see also www.planningforreal.org.uk/what-is-pfr/planning-for-real-events/

<u>Types</u>

It is difficult to create a standardised model or scheme for CLTs as they depend on a pragmatic approach to match the local circumstances (e.g. housing allocation systems and local land supply and development opportunities) (Moore and McKee 2012). However, more generally, it appears questionable that CLTs which are set up by committed individual residents can be sustainable given the lack of expertise in relevant areas (CLT1.1). Thus, CLT models mostly involve the creation of a local management committee based on local residents and some kind of partnership approach. A crucial precondition and challenge for CLTs is access to land which often involves going into partnership with HAs and arrangements local government and local private landowners. (CLT1.1; NE4) Furthermore, given the lack of institutionalisation compared to co-operative housing, CLTs and their umbrella bodies strongly rely on the work of volunteers. This raises questions of sustainability of the model especially if funding is reduced (Moore and McKee 2012). In a nutshell, CLTs, run by volunteers, invariably need external support and expertise to develop projects; some CLTs more than others in fact. This support function can be provided in partnerships with housing associations, by 'Umbrella CLTs', the National CLT Network, peers and other relevant bodies.

CLTs have so far mainly been used to provide affordable housing in the countryside. The need for new affordable housing models in the countryside results from second home buying and holiday lets which drive up house prices. Rural Exception sites can be an important source of land for CLTs. (NE8) In this case, it is about getting planning permission to transform farming land into residential use which multiplies the land value. Getting planning permission for farming land often requires a mutually beneficial deal with the land owner to support the community-led scheme and benefit from the added land value in return. A key challenge to develop community-led housing in rural areas is to win support of the parish council and reduce opposition within the local community who might object to the increase in building or particularly to affordable homes in the area (CLT1.1).

The CLT model is at an earlier stage in the urban context, with the most advanced schemes in East London, Liverpool and Leeds. Setting up a CLT in urban areas is different from the rural context in terms of scale (transforming a larger area) but not in the principle task of assessing the amenities of an area. The challenges for CLTs in urban areas involve high land prices and plots mostly too small for real community development (NE4); the approach of incorporating a community-led parcel within larger scale private residential developments has not been widely used, in contrast to including affordable housing parcels in planning permissions. In this regard, the contrast with the development competition system used in allocating new housing land in Vienna (see section 6) is quite striking. However, it is not always the case that high land values pose the biggest problem to CLT development. There are now a growing number of CLTs in former HMRA[8] areas where dereliction and years of decline and low land values and viability of schemes is the problem. (NE8)

In general, accessing land is a key issue for all community-led housing models and not just for CLTs. Building land at an affordable cost is a form of subsidy to then be able to develop homes that are affordable. (NE8)

---

[8] The Housing Market Renewal Programme was a scheme for housing refurbishment in designated areas in the North and Midlands of England between 2002 and 2011. (see also Cole and Flint 2007)

CLTs target a mix of income segments, depending on tenure and territory. The target groups for CLTs in the countryside are younger people and senior citizens of local communities. CLTs can offer an alternative to middle income households who cannot afford homeownership and also suffer from shortages in supply of social rented housing (CCH 2009).

CLTs often provide a small number of affordable homes (NE2). The affordable housing can also be attached to other types of housing, such as private ownership, or community-based infrastructure, such as a village pub. Such mixed models of CLTs are sometimes driven by the idea of cross-financing for affordable housing (CLT1.4). However, a driver to develop other assets is that CLTs take a holistic view about what is needed in the community to keep it sustainable, and this often means developing other community assets and not just housing. (NE8)

A representative of the co-operative sector highlighted a difference between the target groups of CLTs and co-operative housing: "*They* [the CLTs] *tend to have produced housing that is sub-market housing, intermediate housing models but it tends not to produce co-operative housing*" (Coop1.1). A CLT sector representative however highlights that a defining feature of CLTs is that they are set up to provide permanently affordable housing, as well as other assets (NE8). It is also worth recalling that a main difference between CLTs and co-operative housing is that CLTs are set up for community benefit and co-operatives are primarily set up for member benefit, although having community benefit as one of their principles.

3.2.3. Self-help Housing

Basic Model

Self-Help Housing draws on groups of local people to bring back into use empty properties for housing. The intended use of these properties varies from long-term tenancies to short life housing to meet immediate housing needs. In contrast to other community-led models, there is greater focus on employment and training opportunities for local community members and in some cases for residents, which makes it more similar to co-operative housing than to community-land trust initiatives. It also involves negotiation with the owners of the empty properties for use and refurbishments. In some cases self-help projects have been able to purchase assets for long term use. Partnerships with local authorities, other third sector organisations and the national umbrella body (self-help housing.org) have been important in supporting the development of self-help schemes; there has generally been less support from HAs (Mullins and Sacranie 2014). Tenures are usually rent or short leasehold arrangements (Mullins 2010, Mullins et al 2011; Gooding 2013; SHHO 2013).

Relevance and Size

Aided self-help housing has a rich history in many European countries, including Austria, Germany and Scandinavia, and was a trigger for important social innovations which were subsequently adopted by mainstream (social) housing. The history of this community-led model shows both periods of strong institutional support and opposition probably because it offers advantages in times of housing crisis but at the same time challenges more institutionalised forms of housing provision (Harris 1999; Novy et al. 2009). Short-life housing

has a long tradition in England, especially in urban areas such as London during the 1970s and 1980s, and is closely linked to a co-operative model known as "short-life co-operatives" but with less focus on formal co-operative governance (Birchall 1991; NE1). Local authorities and other landowners who plan to demolish or improve a property, make it available for a short period of time and thus enable co-operatives to rent them on short leases or short tenancies to mainly young, single people who have got no other option (NE1). Present self-help housing activities remain relatively small scale, even within third sector housing (Mullins et al. 2011). The schemes usually involve a small number of units (between 2 to 50). At present, there are about 120 self-help housing projects in England with a number of additional projects not registered with a support organisation; this number has been significantly boosted by the availability of public funding under the 2012-15 Empty Homes Community Grants scheme (EHCGP) (Gooding 2013, Mullins and Sacranie 2014). The self-help model contributes to wider neighbourhood development by reducing the number of empty properties. It can trigger the foundation of social enterprises with an asset base and is thus very relevant to the localism debate (SHHO 2013).

Target Groups

The target group of self-help housing are usually people who are not able to afford to buy housing themselves and are often also excluded from permanent tenancy by other social housing providers (Mullins et al. 2011). The model can provide a response to tackling homelessness (Teasdale et al. 2011). However, even under the grant funded EHCGP programme "*access is not dependent on allocating the homes produced to those in greatest housing need as recognised by statutory guidelines. This flexibility and complementarity of self-help housing to social housing was noted in earlier reports to be an important advantage enabling a wider range of groups to benefit*" (Mullins and Sacranie 2014).

3.2.4. Self-build Housing

Basic Model

Self-build housing differs from the self-help model in that homes are built from scratch (Mullins et al 2011). This section focuses on community self-build (and not individual) as a sub-field of the community-led housing sector. Thus, it requires a group of people or a community organisation that undertakes planning and building activities. The actual self-building element can range from undertaking all works themselves to procuring parts of or the entire construction process. In custom-build projects, developers and professional housebuilders construct the homes except for final stages where customers have the opportunity to choose between different types of lay-outs, kitchens, bathrooms etc. (Wallace et al. 2013). Most self-build is for single family home ownership, but there have been experiments with community self build. The community group subsequently takes over the self-management of the schemes (Barlow et al. 2001; Gooding 2013). If self-build housing contains a training aspect, it needs substantial support structures and can also be organised under a co-operative governance model as the following example of a self-build project shows which was initiated by a housing co-operative in the West Midlands:

"*We did a self-build at P. Road ten, twelve years ago […] We took a group of young vulnerable people which is probably not the model that's being floated round now, that were extremely vulnerable and homeless […] and we put a support worker […] and a contractor alongside them and we took them from having no qualifications and no house in all cases to*

having an NVQ Level 2 in Construction Skills and having a flat and we kept most of them out of gaol in the process which was a significant achievement at the time." (Coop1.1)

The self-build model is challenging in many ways, as the process of building a home is complex in itself when based on the do-it-yourself principle. Particular problems with self-build housing can arise from building during the cold months of the year which the following statement shows:

"*It's not the most attractive of things to do and when you're trying to fit a job around that, that can be incredibly difficult. So if we can get the property watertight […] at a very early stage it can enable people to contribute a split equity to their property.*" (Coop1.1)

Another key challenge is access to short term finance so that potential builders can hold building plots before they actually start constructing. Main barriers to carrying out self-build projects relate to planning regulations which often favour larger developers (Barlow et al. 2001). All this shows the need for strong individual leadership within a self-build group (Wallace et al. 2013) but even more crucial are intermediaries in the sector which can link self-build communities to external resource holders.

Relevance and Size

Self-build housing has a long tradition in England but is more focused on rural areas. Governments, including the current one, have generally been very supportive of self-build projects probably because it can be ideologically linked to the idea of individual responsibility in housing and society in general. It can also be linked to the localism goal of diversifying housing supply in the affordable homes sector.

Determining the size of the self-build market is not an easy task. Wallace et al. (2013) estimate that the self-build sector (mainly individuals) in the UK currently delivers around 12,000 self-build homes per year, which makes 7.6 per cent of new supply[9], and between 5,000 and 9,000 homes for England. Thus, despite its low profile, self-build accounts for larger numbers of new homes than all of the large housebuilders produce together. This is an important consideration given the low levels of housebuilding in the UK in relation to need.

There are no exact figures available for the community-build segment which usually covers schemes of about 10 to 20 properties (Gooding 2013). A good example, although small-scale, would be Ashley Vale in Bristol. There is also the experience of the 'community' self build schemes fostered through the Community Self Build Agency, with a heyday through the 1990s, being effectively picked up and then put down again by the social housing sector (NE9). Wallace et al. (2013) cite a recent DCLG survey from 2011 which found that one in four potential individual self-builders would be interested in joining a group self-build project to build their homes. In the last two decades, more than 100 community self-build projects have been completed in the UK which would account for approximately 1,000 homes (Wallace et al. 2013)[10].

Target Groups

---

[9] Compared to Hungary 52 per cent, France 38 per cent, or Sweden 30 per cent (Wallace et al. 2013)

[10] The community build definition by Wallace et al. however includes co-housing and CLT which make the numbers a bit confusing.

The self-build market is dominated by older and more affluent households (Wallace et al. 2013). However, self-build projects are also increasingly initiated by people in housing need who then become the self-builders (Gooding 2013). However, community projects can also be initiated and commissioned by housing organisations (e.g. HAs or co-operatives) highlighting the affordability aspect (Barlow et al. 2001; Coop1.1). Residents without building skills can also participate in self-build projects by devoting time or by learning new skills as external volunteers (Gooding 2013). In this respect, an aim of self-build projects can be to help reintegrating homeless and/or vulnerable people. The model can also contribute to local regeneration programs (Barlow et al. 2001).

3.2.5. Co-housing

<u>Basic Model</u>

Co-housing[11] comes close to the co-operative model of housing as it aims at establishing a community of residents based on mutual support and limited in size. Residents usually get involved in design, planning, maintenance and management of the schemes which should be tailored to encourage community interaction (Bunker et al. 2011). The main difference from co-operative housing can be seen in the important role of shared infrastructure in co-housing schemes – usually of substantial size – which makes the individual resident's everyday life more efficient.

Thus, purposive and sustainable community building through specifically designed shared infrastructure becomes the principal goal of co-housing in a narrower sense. In contrast, co-housing in a wider sense describes housing schemes where the shared infrastructure is mainly used for leisure activities and not tailored to satisfy daily necessities of residents. (Millonig et al. 2010) In detail, the defining characteristics which distinguish a co-housing scheme from other forms of collaborative housing are the following (McCamant and Durrett 1994; Millonig et al. 2010; Cohousing Association 2013):

- Resident participation: Future residents have to be significantly involved in designing and running the schemes. Thus, projects designed for community living but initiated and driven by an external developer, in a narrow sense, do not count as co-housing.
- Neighbourhood design: The design of the housing schemes targets the building of a strong sense of community among residents (shared open spaces, doorways of individual homes facing each other etc.).
- Common facilities: These facilities have to be designed for daily use and thus complement the individual homes' infrastructure. The co-housing scheme must include at least a common house with a community kitchen and dining room, as well as some additional shared infrastructure, such as a laundry, workshop or gardens.
- Resident self-management: Residents substantially engage in managing the community, maintaining the property, setting up a governance structure and policies for the resident community.

---

[11] It is often also referred to as "Cohousing" (without a hyphen) (NE9). The word "co-housing" is used throughout this report but the authors do not intend to picture the sector as something that is "just" a form of "co-operative housing".

Two additional criteria characterising co-housing are:

- Non-hierarchical governance: Although individuals take leadership roles within the community, key decisions have to be voted on by all residents.
- No shared community economy: Each household is economically independent of the community.

<u>Relevance and Size</u>

Individual co-housing schemes are relatively small scale (CCH 2009). They range from under 10 to low double digit numbers of homes including a common house and other shared facilities (Bunker et al. 2011). The Threshold community project in Dorset has been the first UK co-housing project to gain public grant funding. The Housing Corporation did actually list co-housing as a potentially fundable style of project in its 2008-11 grant prospectus. Another example is the LILAC project in Leeds with its innovative 'mutual-ownership' framework. (NE9) About a dozen co-housing communities have already been established and more than 40 are at different stages of development (CCH 2009; Gooding 2013). The concept of co-housing was originally introduced in Denmark and the US (e.g. McCamant and Durrett 1994). Over the last three decades, co-housing schemes have also been developed in many other countries, including Germany and Austria (id22: Institute for Creative Sustainability, 2012). The English language term "co-housing" has even been adopted in German-speaking Europe and has become an established concept of community-led housing there. The roots of co-housing in Austria, for instance, go back to the early self-help and co-operative housing movement, and the idea of the "Garden Cities" established in the late 19th century. In the 1980s, the initiatives of several authors, architects and resident groups marked a revival of these community principles in housing which led to the foundation of a so-called "New Settlers' Movement" in the tradition of the influential Co-operative Settlers' Movement of the 1920s in the Vienna region. Apart from focusing on community building, the new co-housing projects were centred on the principles of eco-friendly design and sustainable living (Millonig et al. 2010).

<u>Target Groups</u>

Co-housing targets people of all income backgrounds and educational and professional status. Co-housing projects around the country aim at developing a variety of tenures and living arrangements to reduce the ongoing cost of living. There are a great deal of costs that can be reduced through community sharing and bulk purchase. (NE10) In contrast to co-operative housing, co-housing can only be partly considered social or affordable housing, as residents often buy into these schemes rather than rent the home (NE2). Co-housing is an answer to changing demographics in society, particularly appealing to the elderly but also to younger people who cannot afford to buy their own homes as the following statement of a sector representative highlights:

"*I think they're people that don't have the same traditional family structures but are looking to put support networks in place for as they age and I think co-housing is a wonderful way of doing that.*" […] "*for young aspiring professional people that haven't quite got the resources to get on the housing market in the current economic situation.*" (Coop1.1)

Given its target groups, co-housing schemes are designed to provide homes, providing the opportunity to choose to live in "intentional communities" which may comprise either elderly

or younger residents and also multi-generational communities where it is what people want. (CCH 2009)

3.2.6. Tenant Management Organisations (TMOs)

<u>Basic Model</u>

In tenant management organisations (TMOs), tenants of local authorities and in some cases HAs, form organisations to take responsibility for the democratic management of features of the delivery of housing services but do not have individual or collective ownership of their homes. The schemes are still owned by the council (NFTMO n.d.)

The TMO needs to have a certain legal form, e.g. a co-operative, and residents elect a management committee which sets up a legal contract, called a management agreement, with the landlord, i.e. the local council or a housing association. This agreement specifies the services which are taken over by the TMO. These services typically involve rent collection, repair services, allocations and lettings (NFTMO n.d.).

<u>Relevance and Size</u>

About 250 TMOs were established by local authority tenants in the 1980s and 1990s, mostly on the legal basis of the "Right to Manage" which was introduced in 1994. A smaller number of TMOs have since been established through voluntary agreements with HAs, as there is still no extension of the Right to Manage to HAs despite apparent government enthusiasm for community rights. A good example of a TMO in the West Midlands, in Walsall, is Watmos Community Homes where 8 TMOs established their own independent housing association (CCH 2009), which now also manages some schemes in London. Also in London, the Leathermarket JMB covers over 1500 London Borough of Southwark council homes and is now building new homes on a site within one of the estates. The size of a TMO can vary between single digit numbers of units to the low thousands (Gooding 2013), with one local authority TMO in Kensington and Chelsea approaching 10,000 homes.

<u>Types</u>

Most TMOs operate at the level of one or more local authority estates, giving tenants the opportunity to be involved in the governance of local housing services and operational issues. A few TMOs operate on larger scale, with the notable case of Kensington and Chelsea, a whole authority TMO managing 6,900 rented homes and over 2,500 leasehold properties on behalf of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. As noted above, a third type of TMO are those established by voluntary agreement with HAs.

<u>Target Groups</u>

Target groups for TMOs comprise existing tenants and leaseholders of social landlords and are still made up predominantly of local authority tenants and leaseholders. Research and evaluation studies have demonstrated a strong record of housing management performance and user satisfaction with TMOs (Price Waterhouse, 1995 Cairncross et al 2002, Newton and Tunstall 2013). In this context it appears strange that there have been no proposals under the Localism Act to extend the right to manage to tenants of HAs and that the extent of voluntary agreements in the HA sector remains quite limited.

3.2.7. Public Housing – Management and Asset Transfer Models

The concept of asset or stock transfers has become a much broader one than delegated management by TMOs. In the late 1980s, stock transfer from council to non-profit housing organisations became a key element of housing policy in the UK (Malpass and Mullins 2002). By 2010 over half of local authority housing had been transferred to HAs, including a new generation of specially created stock transfer associations, but with a gradual integration into the wider HA sector through mergers and group structures (Pawson and Mullins 2010). Arguably, over time, many of these transfer HAs have lost their distinctiveness and therefore their potential to contribute to the localism agenda. However, many have not and some have formed distinctive groupings such as PlaceShapers (www.placeshapers.org) to promote local accountability. Furthermore, some provide well known cases for a wider agenda of asset transfers. In the West Midlands these include Castle Vale Community Housing Association and Witton Lodge Community Association (the first is a registered housing association and the latter is an unregistered housing provider).

CCH has developed an explicit co-operative alternative for stock transfer from council housing to TMOs, called Community Gateway. The Community Gateway model requires stronger commitment in order to develop the co-op principles in a whole neighbourhood community, given the size of stock transfer areas (several thousand homes). Nevertheless, tenants themselves decide the degree of involvement and control over neighbourhood-related issues by establishing local panels or estate agreements. A good example is Preston where tenants launched the first Community Gateway Association in 2005. (CCH et al. 2003; NE2). Welsh community mutuals are comparable models and represent democratically governed HAs (HA1.1; Mills and Swarbrick 2011).

Besides formal mutual housing models, a number of HAs could be considered to exhibit characteristics of mutuality. These community-based HAs show high levels of resident influence without having any formal community membership structures (CCH 2009).

3.3. Summary

Community-led housing remains a very small sector in England but has attracted much interest recently. It has potential to expand if sufficient support is put in place. To a large extent, community-led housing can be seen as part of the spectrum of social and affordable housing. Nevertheless, the target groups of community-led initiatives differ according to territory, goals of local stakeholders and tenures offered. In general, the target groups of community-led housing are the middle to lower income segment who require "affordable housing", there may be provision for home ownership and for rented housing, and in the case of self-help housing for less secure housing options as "meanwhile use" of empty properties.

Although the community-led sector is not a single coherent field, co-operative elements are visible in the organisational models of most sub-sectors. For instance, CLTs show co-operative principles in that they are member-based and characterised by sustainability and permanence in housing provision. Community self-build housing requires a democratic community organisation to reach its goals, distinguishing it from the majority of "custom build". Self-help housing may follow traditional principles of co-operative housing and co-housing comes very close to the co-operative housing model and often involves additional shared living arrangements.

However, the co-operative identity of some new community-led models differs in important respects from traditional co-operative housing models. The participation principle mainly translates into "community participation" rather than "member participation" or the self-help provision of affordable housing by the residents themselves (see Figure 1). Thus, I would argue that "new cooperative" housing models within the community-led sector (see Figure 2) are centred on the idea of "extended self-help" including not (only) actual users but also a wider local community who share in responsibility for scheme governance. In some cases the wider community may be involved in establishing the scheme before residents are in place.
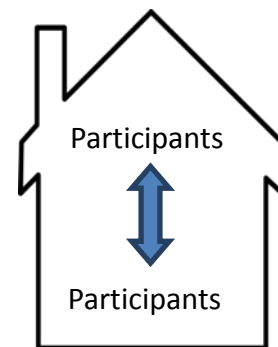
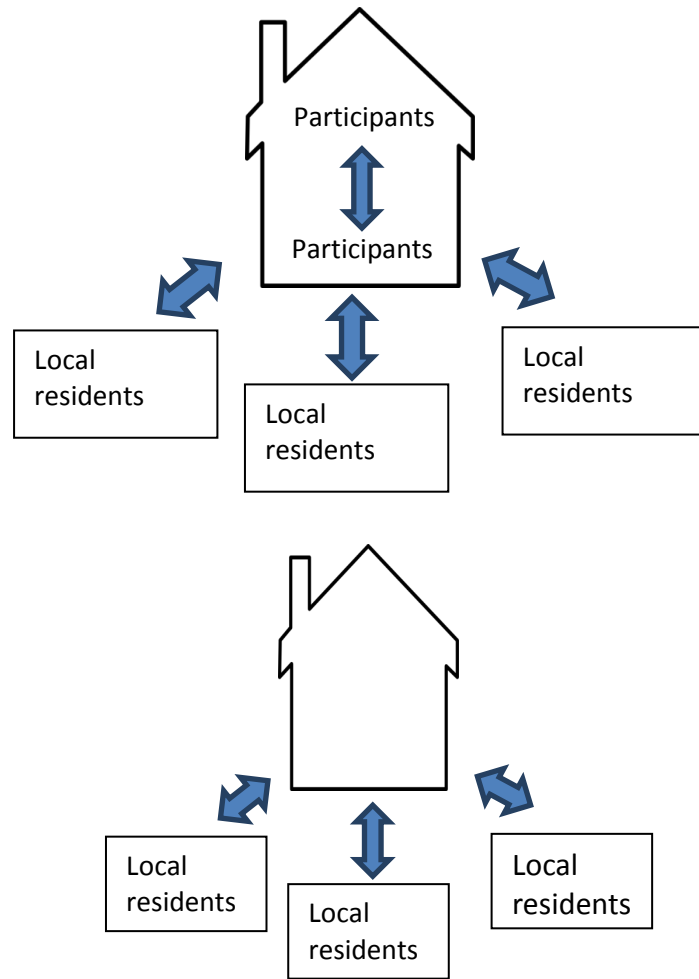

Figure 1. Traditional (user) self-help

Figure 2. Extended (community) self-help models

4. The sector's own approach to localism

With the passage of the Localism Act 2011, community-led housing gained increasing attention and also some small scale funding in England. However, there were few expectations that community-driven social innovations would challenge the dominance of scale economies in "mainstream" social housing; particularly when set alongside provisions in the Localism Act itself that had the opposite effect (Mullins 2012). Nevertheless, community-led housing is of wider societal relevance to the localism agenda, if we consider active citizen engagement as a cornerstone of localism. Thus, in contrast to the political approach to localism in Chapter 2, we now look at localism practices "on the ground", and therefore also need to redefine the term localism. Localism as active community engagement (Deakin 2005) is crucial for social innovation at the neighbourhood and city level (Moulaert et al. 2010) and for social cohesion (Forrest and Kearns 2001; Dekker and Van Kempen 2009).

Third sector providers have a crucial role in supporting active citizenship (Stoker 2005). They can build so-called "linking social capital" which refers to the capacity of residents to leverage ideas and resources not only within their housing organisations but beyond the neighbourhood level (Lang and Novy 2014). Co-operatives can engage residents in social entrepreneurship, civic engagement and democratic practices which can create positive external effects for sustainable urban development (Beetz 2008; CCH 2009). Furthermore, they act as intermediaries between residents and the wider institutional environment.

Applying qualitative case-study oriented research, this Chapter contrasts experiences from different community-led housing initiatives in the West Midlands and provides a critical comparative understanding of the design of sustainable institutions in co-operative and community-led housing.

First, a multi-dimensional framework is presented to analyse residents' "linking social capital" in housing organisations. Then, we discuss how this type of social capital can be stimulated by governance institutions, applying Elinor Ostrom's (1990) concept of institutional design principles. Finally, case studies of community-led housing in the English Midlands are explored using these frameworks.

4.1. The concept of linking social capital and its governance support

The concept of linking social capital has its roots in development theory where it emerged as an approach to describe vertical ties between community members and people in positions of influence and power in public governance, such as resource holders in regional and national infrastructure bodies or social investors (Woolcock 2001, Lang and Novy 2014).

In our empirical study of community-led housing in the English West Midlands, we distinguish linking social capital, as vertical linkages, from bridging and bonding social capital, which both refer to horizontal linkages between residents (Granovetter 1973; Gittell and Vidal 1998; Putnam 2000; Woolcock 2001). While from a spatial perspective, bridging social capital might be considered as the external capital of a neighbourhood (Westlund et al. 2010), it is usually measured by membership and participation in civic organisations (Gittell and Vidal 1998; Putnam 2000). However, there can be a blurring of differences between linking and bridging capital when gathering evidence on participation (Middleton et al. 2005).

This study clearly distinguishes between horizontal and vertical linkages by focusing on the degree to which residents can influence decision-making processes on neighbourhood-related issues. Thus, we identify *attachment to the housing organisation*, *vertical ties to managers*, *participation in activities of the housing organisation*, *influence on decision-making* and the *perceived relevance of participation* as the main domains for operationalising linking social capital on the organisational level (cf. Table 1).

Attachment to the housing organisation
Vertical ties to housing managers
Participation in activities of the housing organisation
Influence on decision-making
Perceived relevance of participation
Link to the wider institutional environment

Table 1. Domains of 'linking social capital' (adapted from Lang and Novy 2014)

As this report stresses the potential of linking social capital as an innovative resource for empowering residents, the findings of our empirical study will be analysed at two levels. Housing organisations are not only able to institutionalise resident networks, but can also *link* them *to the wider institutional environment* (cf. Table 1) to create benefits for individual residents, local communities and the local organisation (Hibbett et al. 2001; Flint and Kearns 2006; Beetz 2008). As discussed, the analysis of community-led housing governance cannot be reduced to the organisational sphere alone. It needs to be enriched by an external, institutional perspective which is already implicit in its original definition as "the capacity of individuals and communities to leverage resources, ideas, and information from formal institutions beyond the immediate community radius" (OECD 2001: 42). Importantly this involves an exploration of vertical links to funding and support bodies at different scale levels in the territorial research context.

The localism agenda and the wider range of community-led initiatives now underway also provide an interesting arena in which to apply Elinor Ostrom's concept of institutional design principles in order to better understand how common-pool resources are governed in a sustainable and innovative way (Ostrom and Ahn 2003; Minora et al. 2013). Drawing on the insight that residents' linking social capital can be stimulated by the governance of housing organisations, this study adapts Ostrom's institutional design principles for common-pool resources (Ostrom 1990: 90; Brandsen and Helderman 2012: 1143) to conceptualise the governance capacity of different community-led models for the creation and maintenance of linking social capital. As the study only focuses on a vertical type of social capital, the following of Ostrom's design principles (cf. Table 2) have been selected as they show a clear relation to the domains of linking social capital (cf. Table 1):

- Boundaries of the housing stock itself and group of users must be clearly defined.
- Residents and other relevant actors involved in the housing stock must be given the opportunity to participate in decision making (through direct or indirect representation).
- Monitoring must be transparent and accountable to the actors involved.
- When the housing is part of a larger system (such as the social housing stock), relevant management activities (such as provision, monitoring, or removal of resources) must be organised close to the local level.
- External authorities must not interfere with the right of the community to organise itself.

Table 2. Institutional design principles for building linking social capital

This paper now turns to study residents' linking social capital and corresponding governance principles in case studies of community-led housing organisations from the English West Midlands. Next, the methodology for the case studies will be presented.

4.2. Case study methodology

The research was carried out in spring 2013. From a literature review on the English housing context (Rowlands 2009; Mullins et al. 2011; Moore and McKee 2012) and exploratory interviews with stakeholders of the community-led sector, three (already well-established) organisational fields and respective governance models could be identified as suitable for selecting cases: (1) Housing Co-operatives, (2) Community Land Trusts, and (3) Self-help housing organisations. From each group, one case study was selected for further analysis. The time available for the field study did not allow in-depth studies for all the fields of the sector.

Research methods for each case involved a semi-structured, qualitative interview, with executive board members or managers of the selected housing organisations. This was complemented by analysis of archival data, field observations of housing sites, field notes of informal encounters with residents of the facilities and observations of interactions between staff members and residents to increase the contextual and content related plausibility of our data. For the third case study, self-help housing, advantage was taken of a parallel study in progress in the Housing and Communities Research Group (Mullins and Sacranie 2014) comprising 6 case studies and an analysis of 19 self-help housing organisations in the Midlands in receipt of funding under the Empty Homes Community Grants Programme (EHCGP).

The research strategy allowed the analysis to be based on the principle of triangulation, and to meet validity and reliability criteria of case study research (Yin 2009). A qualitative content analysis of the material gathered was applied (Strauss and Corbin 2007) to identify the concrete configuration of the domains and principles outlined above (see Chapters 4.4 and 4.5). In a second step, the analysis goes beyond the single case and searches for cross-case patterns (see Chapter 4.6). The key question is whether different forms of institutional design of community-led housing have different influence on the building of linking social capital among residents. The next section provides some background information on the case organisations.

4.3. Case backgrounds

Felpersham Co-operative Homes (like its radio soap opera case study name source is located in English Midlands). It represents a secondary co-operative (although not in legal terms) as well as an umbrella organisation and main service provider for five primary, fully mutual housing cooperatives which altogether make up about 300 homes. Felpersham Co-operative Homes is one of seven member organisations within the Bridge Farm Group, a larger non-profit housing association in the West Midlands. The target group of Felpersham Co-operative Homes is council tenants who are interested in community-based management of their homes. Thus, the main goal of the co-operative organisation is to promote co-operative values and principles, and particularly to build strong communities of tenants (Coop1.1; RCH 2013; Bridge Farm Group 2013).

Figure 3. Estates of Felpersham Co-operative Homes

Community Land Trusts: The cases of Penny Hassett and Ambridge (Borsetshire)

Borsetshire Housing Group (BHG) is made up of the housing providers: Borchester Housing Association, South Borsetshire Housing Association and Do-It-Up Ltd (its repair and maintenance service provider). The Group owns and manages 4,500 homes in Borsetshire and Loxleyshire, including sheltered housing schemes, supported housing for young people and a refuge for women escaping domestic violence. "Working for Sustainable Communities" is one of the main goals of the group and materialises in its engagement in community-led housing schemes, such as community land trusts (BHG 2013). Nevertheless, the cases of community land trusts in the villages of Penny Hassett and Ambridge are still in early stages of development. Thus, the analysis of linking social capital and respective institutional design principles is limited to the planning stage. Furthermore, this case differs from other CLT projects around the country, in that local community members were not involved at early stages and it was led by a HA.

---

[12] Organisation and place names of case studies have been anonymised using a well-known Midlands radio show, "The Archers".

Figure 4. Site for the Community Land Trust in Ambridge

Self-help Housing: Case Studies from the EHCGP

Self-help housing is the term most commonly used to describe those community-led groups involved in bringing empty housing into use. Self-help housing uses empty buildings to provide homes and work opportunities for local people. According to the umbrella body, Self-Help-Housing.Org (2009) it *"involves local people bringing back into use empty properties to live in, organising whatever repairs are necessary to make them habitable"*. These properties may be acquired on a short term lease basis ("meanwhile use"), or may become part of the long-term asset base of provider organisations. Self-help housing can provide a unique opportunity to unleash the wider community benefits e.g. individual and community empowerment, employment and training, community safety, tackling neighbourhood blight and providing attractive options for empty home owners (Mullins 2010; Mullins et al. 2011).

At the same time as the research for this fellowship report was being undertaken, a regional baseline study of 19 self-help housing organisations in the Midlands which had secured funding under the Empty Homes Community Grants Programme (EHCGP) was underway[13]. The Plowden Fellow attended one of the case study interviews for this project; but this report now draws on the six regional case studies for the following analysis.

Figure 5. Self-Help Housing Project in Brummidge

---

[13] Case study report available as Mullins, D and Sacranie, H. (2014) Evaluation of the Empty Homes Community Grants Programme (EHCGP) - Midlands region. Baseline Case Studies Report. University of Birmingham. Published as Working Paper no 2 in Housing and Communities Research Group Series.

4.4. Analysis of residents' linking social capital in community-led schemes

Attachment to their housing organisation / neighbourhood

- In the estates of **Felpersham Co-operative Homes**, tenants get to know each other and their co-operative provider (the managers) very early on in the letting and planning process. ("*Like say there was something, something crazy happened and it was the middle of the night, you know that you could go and knock so, you think, 'Oh, that person won't mind'*".) (Coop1.1; Coop1.2). Furthermore, there is a certain level of social cohesion in the co-operative estates as conflicts among tenants are rare ("*Mediation officer [...] I don't think we really need that these days.*") (Coop1.2). In case of conflicts, there are clear resolution mechanisms in the Felpersham Co-op Case (Coop1.1).

- Most of the local residents involved in the **community land trust** projects in Borsetshire feel strongly attached to their village or parish. That is the reason why they participate in the planning process because they care about the place and about future generations living there ("*we are a group or a board that's across the social spectrum in a way, but we've all come to the same conclusion – there is a need for social housing. And that can't be a bad thing.*" CLT2.3). The CLT projects in Borsetshire have already strengthened social cohesion in the villages concerned and led to new forms of cooperation among residents. Nevertheless, so far the main actors of these initiatives are not the prospective residents. Attachment to the umbrella organisation, the Borsetshire Housing Group, had to be built up during the process using personal relationships. The driver behind the CLT projects was the HA's longstanding commitment to securing local parish council approval to building new homes in rural communities (CLT1.4; CLT2.3).

- The **self-help housing** case studies showed a variety of forms of attachment between users and the organisations many of which were formed at the local neighbourhood level. In these projects there are two main types of users: the workforce involved in doing up the empty properties and residents who eventually live in them. In some projects these user groups overlapped with significant results. "*It enables us to join up training with living. We find that a lot of young people who come to us during the day…we start to make a difference to their lives, we start to train them but then they go back to a dysfunctional home…some of them don't have a home…having our own houses we can look after them 7 days a week, 24 hours a day and start to really make a difference to their lives*". (SH1.1). The participative nature of some projects meant that forms of attachment to the group and organisation were strengthened through undertaking the building works together. This was exemplified by a faith-based project working with homeless people as a live/work community: "*I think the thing that we're probably proudest of is that we've been a group of people who have no experience of doing this kind of work, working with a group of individuals that can be very challenging and we've managed to achieve our outcome in quite a short space of time … you know, going from a standing position, I think we've moved forward very quickly to achieve something spectacular really*" (SH2.1).

Vertical ties between residents and management

- First personal meetings between management and prospective residents of **Felpersham Co-operative Homes** take place during the letting and planning process. So most residents know their housing managers personally very early on. The management of Felpersham Co-operative Homes continues to visit estates regularly and is present for key events such as handing out keys or handling major complaints (Coop1.1).

Management staff provide hands-on personal support to residents (“*I wasn't very well with mental health, like depression and stuff, I could phone the office and have a good cry over the phone to somebody and like they just made me feel it's all right.*” (Coop1.2).

- During the planning process, the management of **Borsetshire Housing Group** has developed strong personal ties to key actors of the community land trust initiatives (CLT1.1). The community members acknowledge the close interaction with the representatives of Borsetshire Housing Group: *“I found it a worthwhile experience […] I think that [names of key staff] [addresses staff member] Yes you explained it to us in sort of layman terms didn't you – you didn't just say, 'Oh well such and such a thing' […] you explained why you couldn't have that and why you couldn't have this.”*

- Most **self-help housing** projects are small scale, enabling strong personal relationships to be formed between project managers and participants. It was usual for residents and users to be introduced on first name terms and for personal stories to be used to highlight the benefits of self-help housing for users. This was exemplified by the following training based project manager: *“a young man who was homeless, the family broke down, found himself on the street, we provided housing for him. He's a model tenant. He subsequently went to college to do painting and decorating, and he then subsequently became a mentor and now one of our teacher assistants at the school, and he's looking to, next year, he will be graduating from college, and moving on to independent living. So those kinds of success stories is an inspiration for us”* (SH3.1).

Resident participation

- The member participation rate in the general meetings of the individual co-operatives of **Felpersham Co-operative Homes** is around 50% (Coop1.1).

- Meetings for the **Borsetshire Community Land Trusts** have mainly been attended by existing local residents including older homeowners with an interest in housing and community facilities (such as maintaining the local pub) but not directly concerned with housing themselves. Across both schemes in Borsetshire, the level of volunteering is high including the wider community (CLT1.4; CLT2.3).

- Participation of **self-help housing** project residents varies according to project governance. While some self-help housing organisations are constituted as co-operatives with resident involvement in governance, this was not the case in any of the Midlands case studies.

Residents' influence over decision making

- At **Felpersham Co-operative Homes,** tenants articulated that they had influence over the management of their neighbourhoods (“*You have quite a lot of your say.*” Coop1.2). They are also taking over management roles for their co-operatives (“*I'm a lettings officer. Basically, I'm the one that everyone comes to if they're faced with a problem.*” Coop1.2).

- The local community members involved in steering groups of the **Borsetshire Community Land Trust** describe their experiences with the decision making process as overall positive (“*clearly the gentlemen here and their colleagues* [from the Borsetshire Housing Group] *have shaped that and how that appears with my team and I think it's been a really positive experience for all of us.*”). The steering group also organised public meetings open to all community members to give them a say in the proposed project (CLT2.3).

- Despite the absence of formal resident representation structures in the Midlands **self-help housing** cases, there was clear evidence of residents and workforce having a say in how the projects operated. In some cases it was possible for trainees to live in the properties they had renovated, resulting in high levels of identification with the organisation. "*Our apprentice says he lives in the best house in the street and he's therefore got a great pride in it*" (SH1.1).

Relevance of participation and decision making to residents

- For residents of **Felpersham Co-operative Homes**, it is important to manage and decide about their homes themselves as the following statement of a resident highlights: "*How is it different from other forms of housing? Because we run it. We have our say.*" (Coop1.2).
- For the **Borsetshire Community Land Trusts**, relevance of participation (e.g. in public meetings) seems to be selective according to different user groups, with older residents and families being most concerned ("*So the actual numbers wasn't particularly large, but I think at one meeting we did get something like 50 people, which is not bad.*"). A key motivation for participation is the concern for future development of the villages, such as availability of affordable housing for younger people but also the availability of a social centre, such as a village pub (CLT1.4; CLT2.3).
- For **self-help project** participants there was a sense of having made a direct contribution to the construction works and in some cases to their own home that can be equated to having a say. As one apprentice put it: "*I feel the satisfaction of being able to look at the house and be like, 'Yeah, I've done this' … But I think, especially the way it's done up, I think whether (it's for) a family or separate rooms or whatever it will be, yeah, they'll be pleased, I think they'll be very pleased*" (SH4.2).

Links to the wider institutional environment

- Links between the co-operative housing sector and central government are traditionally relatively weak compared to the HA sector (NE2). Nevertheless, the Coalition Government has recently shown a new openness for mutual and community-led models of housing delivery although funding streams have been relatively small scale. **Felpersham Co-operative Homes** is in partnership with the local council in terms of the resident selection process and also to access building land and funding streams (Coop1.1). In terms of access to finance and development and management expertise, the Bridge Farm Group plays a key role for Felpersham Co-operative Homes to develop their homes. Felpersham Council shares relevant housing services with the neighbouring local authority which poses some problems for the co-operative as it is only focused on Felpersham and has to deal with two different council administrations (one Labour and one Conservative). Nevertheless, the Felpersham Co-operative model traditionally got cross-party support as the self-help idea also appeals to Conservatives (Coop1.1).
- The Borsetshire Housing Group currently represents the umbrella body and host organisation for the **community land trusts** of Penny Hassett and Ambridge. However there are plans to develop a wider governance framework in which the local CLTs are represented on an umbrella body, receiving services from BHG. Key links of BHG to the external environment are the ones to the parish councils ("*The housing association first – and the agent first came to the parish council with their proposals, which weren't very warmly met I must say*" CLT 2.2). These linkages and the links to the agents of a particular estate are also crucial in order to get permission for farming land to be

converted into residential area. Some council members have eventually become actively involved in a steering group of the Ambridge CLT to manage the process towards getting permission from the local planning authorities (CLT2.3).

- In the case of **self-help housing**, links with the wider institutional environment were brokered by a sector umbrella body, Self-Help-Housing.Org. National government funding under the Empty Homes Community Grants programme was accessed through bids to a processing body and support was sometimes secured from local authorities to access properties and sometimes other funding sources. The role of the umbrella body was captured by one project champion: *"I think their website's been useful, their meeting that they organise every year is very helpful, the direct dialogue that you're able to have with that organisation is helpful, but particularly their website. There's a lot of stuff you can pull down. It's up to date. It shares experience, based on other organisations' experience, it's been very, very helpful"* (SH3.1). The role of local authorities was captured by two interviewees. In relation to finding properties: "*Most Local Authorities have an Empty Property Officer. The Empty Property Officer knows exactly which properties are empty, and then we ask them to disseminate information about our organisation to the landlords and hopefully they will get in contact with us, and then we'll take it from there*" (SH3.1). In relation to securing funding: "*the fact that the Local Authority were very enthusiastic so that means when the next round of bidding comes, they already think that we're prepared to do the jobs and interesting things that they want as well, so I mean I think that's an important relationship in the whole of the Empty Homes Programme with the Local Authority*" (SH5.1).

4.5. Institutional design of community-led models: building linking social capital

Boundaries of the housing stock and group of users

- From an architectural point of view, **Felpersham Co-operative Homes** clearly distinguish themselves from adjoining neighbourhoods. ("*I think our estates probably are very visible because they're all new build developments that are a bit separated […] I think people generally know when they're on a Felpersham Co-operative Homes development*"). The new estates are all eco-friendly built (with solar panels and timber frames); the distinctive design and layout of the estate promotes a sense of community among residents and their attachment to the co-operative neighbourhood. In this respect, the case confirms results of an earlier empirical study among housing co-operatives which suggest that the distinctive architecture of an estate is likely to strengthen the identification of residents with a place (Lang and Novy 2011). The individual co-operatives are situated each in a different neighbourhood of Felpersham; some neighbourhoods are still missing though (Coop1.1).

  The target group are prospective tenants from Felpersham area in housing need who are on the council waiting list ("choice-based lettings system") whereas previously the co-operative had its own sub-list. Furthermore, the co-operative management undertakes personal interviews with prospective tenants where they check their willingness to live to the co-operative principles and bring in certain skills (Coop1.1). More generally defined, the target group of Felpersham Co-operative Homes is "the bottom 10% of the population" (by income) – representing the traditional target group of social housing – often people with economic and social problems and households that are under stress (Coop1.1).

- The prospective sites for the affordable housing schemes within the CLT projects have clear boundaries within the respective villages. For instance, one development will be built around a closed village pub, which the CLT intends to re-open as a community hub. However, the local community members involved in the **Borsetshire Community Land Trusts** still do not have a clear idea of the target group, i.e. who the prospective residents of their affordable housing schemes will be. It is anticipated that these will be mainly local people in need of affordable housing, but in one case there will also be market housing for sale to cross-subsidise the pub refurbishment and affordable housing.
- **Self-help housing** schemes may be focused on particular neighbourhoods or even individual streets. Often they aim to promote wider regeneration of the neighbourhood and therefore do not restrict their boundaries to project participants but seek to engage a wide range of local partners. In one case, the project champion claimed that "*at a meeting recently one of the local planners was saying that the one property we have finished is already having an effect on local house prices…The one property we have done up to such high standards is having an effect on people's expectations of property value.*" (SH1.1) However, in other cases the main focus may be on securing move-on housing for project residents with less attention being given to the wider community in the places where the properties are located. In one case, the resident saw the main benefits in relation to individual housing solutions and moving away from a more collective experience: *"Compared to what I was living in before this (hostel) what I'm in now is much better so I'm progressing. There's more independence because you ain't got to come down here for one-to-one meetings every week. It helps you grow up"* (SH6.2).

Opportunity for residents to participate in decision making

- Tenants of **Felpersham Co-operative** are supposed to get actively involved in the management of their co-operatives and also to serve as board members (Coop1.1). General meetings take place every month and tenants serve as officers for different management sections such as repairs, mediation or lettings (Coop1.2). The management already involves tenants in the planning stage of a site, a year before the houses are actually built. They are able to pick their plot and decide on certain features of their homes (e.g. kitchen design). (Coop1.1).
- Local community members were not involved in the earliest planning stages of the two **Community Land Trust** projects as Borsetshire Housing Group had initiated the project and later approached community members and involved them in regular project meetings ("*I don't think they start, mean to have started that way* […] *But, you know, there's a passion there now.*") (CLT1.1). For later stages of the project, BHG seeks strong participation of community members in on-going management and maintenance activities of the model "*so that they feel they really own it*" (CLT1.1). This is linked to proposals for a broader governance structure for the CLT Umbrella with representation for the individual CLTs, thereby embedding community ownership in what was initially a housing association led initiative.
- As noted above, none of the Midlands **self-help projects** were constituted as co-operatives, so opportunities to participate in decision making tended to be more informal and linked to direct contributions to the construction work. However, several of the projects aimed to promote independence and active participation by workforce and residents, particularly through personal links with project managers as outlined above.

Transparent monitoring and accountability to local actors

- Tenants are directly represented on the board of **Felpersham Co-operatives Homes**. Meetings usually takes place in the Town Hall, and are face-to-face with councillors and management professionals from the Bridge Farm Housing Association ("*the co-ops have five places on the board. […] And then there are the council and Bridge Farm HA. They have five places on the board.*") (Coop1.1). However, this clearly represents a very different environment from the neighbourhood co-operative meetings and is challenging for the residents as informal negotiating style meets chamber-debate and business behaviour styles. Nevertheless, this also leads to interesting coalitions emerging during board meetings ("*it is interesting to see that the alliances shift […] at some point you have the co-ops and councillors on the same side, sometimes you have the co-ops and Bridge Farm on the same side and so you see […] how that shifts and moves over time.*") (Coop1.1).
- There are regular meetings in the planning stage of the **CLT in Borsetshire** increasingly putting community members in leading roles. BHG also tries to make the process as transparent as possible and reserves the right for the community to stop the project at any point ("*Community, do you want this, to take on this risk and can we help you to do that? And if you do, you can go on further. If you don't, you can stop at this point.*") (CLT1.1).
- **Self-help housing** projects taking part in EHCGP are formally accountable to Tribal Education[14] for spending the grant and the main monitoring mechanisms are around this relationship. However, the more fundamental aims of the projects are to work with local partners, volunteers, workforce and residents and there are plans for a self-assessment audit of the wider community benefits of this work.

Locally-based management activities

- As already mentioned, local tenants of **Felpersham Co-operative** serve as officers for different management roles such as repairs, mediation or lettings. For instance, repairs are done very quickly ("*if you've got a repair it's done within a week*"). (Coop1.2). Although the council supervises the selection process of residents through the administration of waiting lists, the local co-operative has the right to interview prospective tenants to make sure that there is a fit with the co-operative principles but also to accommodate homes to special needs of prospective residents (Coop1.1).
- As for now, the **CLTs** in Borsetshire are still very much a development of Borsetshire Housing Group and have not been fully transferred to community ownership. Nevertheless, some management roles are transferred to community members during the planning process.
- Given the small size of most **self-help housing** projects the main delivery point tends to be the properties themselves where the refurbishment work and living opportunities take place. Some larger organisations have established local management arrangements at the project level. In one case, this is at the level of a street within a regeneration area of older terraced housing in a rural market town: *"we've got them (terraced houses) to a higher standard in eco-terms. If we could change the street as we originally intended*

---

[14] Tribal Education is an arm's-length government body which did consultancy in social housing until 2011 and since then has moved the focus to education and training (Inside Housing, 11 April 2011, online).

it...to green the street to make it safe for people, to make it attractive on the outside of the properties (SH1.1).

External authorities' interference in community organisation

- At **Felpersham Co-operative Homes**, tensions arise as management gives residents the opportunity to decide collectively on their homes and estate while at the same time, planning authorities have to be satisfied. Thus, the management of Felpersham Co-operative Homes acts as a mediator between the community of residents and external authorities, such as builders or planners, to ensure real involvement of (future) residents. In this respect, Felpersham Co-operative Homes has learned to be realistic to tenants about what they can achieve for them. Moreover, the local council is on the board – officially bringing in the wider community interest – and also has certain influence in the selection of residents through the administration of waiting lists. There are tensions for instance under the choice-based letting system on who really is in housing need and thus eligible for the co-operatives. (Coop1.1). Again, Felpersham Co-operative Homes acts as a mediator between the interests of the council and also the Bridge Farm Group on the one hand, and the individual co-operatives on the other hand ("*Those interests are facilitated on the umbrella organisation which is Felpersham Co-operative Homes and […] none of those interests have any involvement in the five neighbourhood co-operatives which are fully mutual.*" Coop1.1). Another external influence came from the Charity Commission that objected to the granting of tenancy by the individual housing co-operatives as conferring a benefit to members in contravention of status as a charity. As a response, a sub-committee of RCH was set up to secure the right of the local communities to grant tenancy to their members (Coop1.1).

- In order to set up its **Community Land Trust** projects in Borsetshire, a key challenge for BHG was to go into a partnership with local parish councils. ("*it's particularly about winning support from a parish council and trying to reduce opposition which might emerge from within the community*", CLT1.1). In the initial stages, parish councils were the community element of the CLTs, later other local residents were invited and in the longer term participants in the new CLT houses will be added to the community interests.
  BHG received support from the local authority, Borsetshire Council, which expressed a commitment to community-led housing, asset transfers and local social enterprise during a period of significant reduction in council budgets and services.
  A relevant external authority, the national CLT movement, was seen as rather critical of the Borsetshire CLT projects. It seems that they had reservations against a housing association being too much involved or initiating a CLT project since this was seen to weaken the community-led credentials (CLT1.1). Nevertheless, BHG defended its role in the project as an external professional service provider facilitating and supporting volunteering by the community members ("*you have to have a good corporate governance, you have to understand risk, you have to have a scheme that's fully developed, you have to draw on all the professionalism that we have developed over the years as a sector* (CLT1.1).
  In many ways, BHG saw the CLTs as a continuation of its long-term work in building affordable housing on "exceptions sites" in small villages. This had always involved winning over NIMBYs by persuading parish councils of the case for affordable housing through needs surveys and parish meetings. The establishment of more formal community governance models was seen as a way to embed local community support and pave the way for good relationships with scheme residents. ("*I think the process will*

pay dividends in that because our experience of exception development has always been to a certain degree hostility and nimbyism about its acceptance, then actually when it's built and it's let to local people" CLT1.1).

- **Self-help housing** projects are also dependent on partnerships with external organisations to secure the resources they need (Moore and Mullins 2013). This was widely recognised as the key success ingredient: "*We realised as an organisation we can't do this on our own, so it's finding the right partnership in order that we can fulfil that global objective."* (SH3.1). However, judgements need to be made about the acceptable price for such support in terms of diminished independence. In most cases, external partners such as Self-Help-Housing.Org, local authorities were viewed entirely positively. There were more limited and more mixed experiences of securing support from HAs. In one case, the project ended up becoming part of a housing association group, thereby securing technical resources and financial support, but transferring the asset acquired under EHCGP to the housing association's large property portfolio. Support from private property owners was essential under EHCGP but produced the most difficult relationships reflected in a report from the national umbrella body: "*Difficulties with securing leased property from private owners was an issue that arose in several regional meetings. The main reasons given for this, being…problems in getting owners to come forward and unrealistic demands regarding rents… making it very difficult to then manage properties at an affordable rent...*" (NE5).

4.6. Summary

The attachment of residents to their housing provider in the co-operative case is based on their identification with co-operative principles of the organisation. The secondary co-operative supports attachment through the distinct design of sites where residents are actively involved. In contrast, residents' attachment in the CLTs mainly refers to the wider village and parish as a place where they have been living for a long time. However, the CLTs are still an open process in terms of user definition and boundaries of estates. In both cases, we find relatively strong bonds between managements and residents and community representatives respectively which have been established early on in the planning process. Self-help housing projects are small scale and often involve local attachment of workforce, residents and partners, often through individual relationships.

As far as participation is concerned, representatives have to accept that not every resident seeks active participation. Nevertheless, community-led housing is more about involving residents in a participation process than about delivering a ready-made product, i.e. affordable homes. In self-help housing, such participation is often very direct through involvement in the property refurbishment process, leading to especially high levels of benefit to apprentices and workforce where they go on to live in the properties being renovated.

Participation is relevant to residents of co-operatives; as it emerged in a number of the source interviews that some residents had been disillusioned by the paternalist experiences of council housing and some HAs (Coop 1.1; 1.2). Both Felpersham Co-operative Homes and Borsetshire Housing Group quickly put community members into management roles and gave them responsibility. For residents involved in community-land trusts, having a say is relevant in local development more generally. Formal participation in decision making is less common in the Midlands self-help projects, none of which are formally constituted as co-

operatives, however in one case of a faith-based project, users and volunteers form a single live-work community with open meetings making key decisions.

Interestingly both, the individual cooperatives of Felpersham and the CLTs of Borsetshire have HAs as parent organisations (Felpersham Co-operative Homes/Bridge Farm Group and Borsetshire Housing Group) which can link residents effectively to resources for housing development (either in-house competence or links to external service providers). The community organisations could not realise this on their own. Different mechanisms were used to connect self-help housing projects with higher level decision making and resources, primarily through the umbrella body and local authorities. In one case support was secured from a housing association and the project subsequently became a part of the housing association group.

Felpersham Co-operative Homes and Borsetshire Housing Group can also act as mediators between communities and external authorities. Whereas the co-operative gets backing from the wider co-operative movement and regional authorities, Borsetshire housing association's efforts have greater support from local government than from the wider CLT movement. The self-help housing case study concluded that "*without the combination of support provided by SHHO and some local authorities, take up of the EHCGP would have been substantially lower and delivery less effective*" (Mullins and Sacranie 2014: 60).

5. Support mechanisms for community-led housing

The case studies have shown that external support mechanisms play a crucial role in the development of different community-led models, thereby confirming the findings of Moore and Mullins (2013) on CLTs and self-help housing. This is due to the specific challenges that community-led initiatives are facing which the following Chapter will briefly summarise.

5.1. Main infrastructure needs of community-led groups

The co-operative movement and the other community-led sectors are in different stages of development as organisational fields. Newer community-led fields mostly lack the support structures which the co-operative movement has established over several decades. The current focus for newer initiatives is on building new homes which was the focus of co-operative housing in England during the 1960s and 1970s. For the co-operative sector, in the meantime, the focus had shifted to improving management services for the existing stock (Birchall 1991; NE2) although recent years have seen a renewed focus on growth and development in the sector (Bliss and Lambert 2014). In the case of self-help housing, the focus is mainly on making use of empty existing homes and neighbourhood renewal, activities that once formed an important activity for HAs (NE6).

There are several key lessons for the various initiatives in the community-led sectors to be learned from the experiences (successes and failures) of the co-operative movement during its long history in England (Rowlands 2012) and also from early experiences with newer community-led models, such as CLTs (Moore and McKee 2012; CLT1.1). To support their building and management activity, the community-led housing sector and its individual initiatives have to consider early on how to build up and secure essential resources, such as

- sustainable funding and financing,
- technical expertise,
- political and institutional legitimacy,
- transparent regulatory frameworks,
- management and governance competence among residents who run the schemes and
- a culture of cooperation among all stakeholders involved.

This leads us now to the question how these infrastructure needs can be met? Based on the empirical data, the following Chapters will outline some possible solutions.

5.2. Sector umbrellas as intermediaries

One well-tried solution has been the provision of support from within the sector. The community-led sector is made up of different types of organisations, governance models, and labels which has led to a certain identity problem. The foundation of the Mutual Housing Group (MHG) was a reaction to this and an attempt to create a bigger umbrella over this rather diverse sector to meet resource needs of individual initiatives and promote interests jointly. Its goal is to pursue common policies for the sector and to strengthen lobbying power with government. A further goal is to share learning across the sub-fields, and generally to build a supportive environment for mutual and community-led housing.

Nevertheless, MHG remains a rather loose group of actors and is still an emerging umbrella body. It does not entirely solve the issue of competing (meta-)identities within the movement. Each sub-field has its own umbrella organisation with links to other housing sectors and government bodies. The Confederation of Co-operative Housing (CCH), for instance, covers England and Wales and is a representative body run by volunteers and funded by the subscription of members. Thus, it can be considered as a democratic form of umbrella organisation that represents its members, the small housing co-operatives (NE1). Some members of the MHG see the co-operative idea as overarching; others do not really feel connected to the co-operative movement. Although the CCH supports "new co-operative models", it also highlights the international co-operative principles (ICA discussed in Chapter as a key difference to other community-led sector (NE2).

Arguments for sector growth through going viral or scaling up have been rehearsed elsewhere (Moore and Mullins 2013). The role of community leadership is of particular importance for "viral" solutions, but for independent local groups it is often challenging to access technical skills and necessary resources for successful project completion. This problem can be illustrated by comparing the situation of volunteer groups in poorer as compared to those in affluent areas. Nevertheless, the capacity of umbrella bodies to support community-led initiatives is often limited especially when it comes to funding which mostly comes from government grants or charitable funds. As a consequence, HAs have often been discussed as potential strategic partners of the sector, however as the next section discussed these relationships have often been paradoxical.

5.3. Paradoxical relations with HAs

HAs can play a key role in supporting community-led initiatives through advising on management and governance competence, consultancy, funding, securing sites and providing development services or even by establishing their own community-led projects. HAs can bring in their reputation as housing specialists and their expertise on schemes and

professionalism to support and complement volunteer work (CLT1.1). HAs may even initiate CLTs themselves based on the case that their managements are intrinsically motivated to support community-led housing, and they are well positioned to access grant funding and deliver programmes within tight timescales, such as the 2011-15 HCA programme, while this would be more difficult for community-led schemes starting from scratch.

Parts of the sector, such as housing co-operatives, have already decided to pursue a "bottom-linked approach" (Lang and Novy 2014), meaning they look for institutional support structures outside the movement such as going into partnerships with HAs – even mainstream providers – to develop new homes (NE2). Having an external service and management provider is actually a traditional approach of co-operative housing in England, particularly in urban settings. The external service partner was traditionally a secondary co-operative but in some cases was transformed into an HA. Sector representatives consider the ideal typical model of co-operative housing, in terms of effectiveness, to have a grass root housing co-operative and a larger professional service provider working together. In this respect, scale is important in terms of service provision to community-led schemes but not for the schemes themselves (NE2).

The transfer of some 2.5 million council homes to the housing association sector has fundamentally changed the nature of these social landlords over the past two decades. In many cases, this was subsequently followed by merger and group structure leading to governance and management growing in scale and becoming more distant from local communities (Leach 2010, Pawson and Mullins 2010; Mullins 2012).

A sector representative describes the paradoxes of governance of large HAs as follows:

"*They're potentially very democratic. You could have all the tenancy members with a one pound share. But they don't in practice because the tenants might vote the board out. So there's no requirement to have more than a dozen shareholders, or ten shareholders.*" (NE6)

The above statement suggests that the internal governance structure of HAs might be an issue in partnerships with community initiatives. When many HAs do not implement the existing democratic governance mechanism of shareholding membership within their organisations – although the legal structures would allow it – how will they handle the crucial issue of tenant participation in community-led schemes? Thus, a key challenge of partnerships between community-led initiatives and HAs is to make the latter work in a community-oriented way (e.g. speak language of the tenants, and foster local community leadership) (NE2).

An external consultant to the community-led sector describes the relationship of large HAs with their communities like this:

"*I wouldn't say that any housing association has gone crazy and completely lost track of where they have homes, but in terms of thinking about neighbourhood factors and community factors […] quite a number of the bigger ones, it's harder for them to be in touch and really understand what's going on the ground.*" (NE7)

For some actors within the community-led sector, as empirical data on CLTs shows, the (direct) involvement of an HA is not welcomed as they fear it would undermine the community-based character of schemes (CLT1.1). Nevertheless, the idea of having HAs as partners is broadly accepted as the following statement of a sector representative underlines:

"I think that having the housing association as the provider is unlikely but I do think they can be critical partners. But they need to speak the language of the tenant." (NE2)

Furthermore, some external consultants recommend partnership models between HAs and community-led initiatives but are aware of the difficulties:

"We don't advocate that HAs break up into Tenant Management Organisations and that would be quite localist, but we advocate that HAs think about the impact they have upon the localities in which they work and as part of that we advocate that they do support, […] organisations, like self-help housing projects […] like community land trusts." (NE7)

This research has confirmed that some parts of the HA sector seem to be normatively committed to localist principles and provide the necessary support structures for the community-led sector to grow. In the somewhat unusual CLTs example discussed here, the HA managers needed to have the ability to assess the capacity of a local community to set up a scheme. They argued that technical aspects should not be top of the agenda; that is part of external service the HA brings in. (CLT1.1). In return, however, missing management and governance competence among community-led activists and residents can lead to reputational problems among necessary partners such as HAs, local councils and central government. Furthermore, there are also unrealistic expectations coming from the community-led housing sector about what can be achieved. (NE2e) Thus, it is important that actors from within the sector build up this crucial partnership competence early on in the planning process. It is equally important for HAs to recognise the importance of legitimate local leadership for community-led schemes and the limits to the roles that HAs should themselves take in governance and decision making.

A housing association based model for CLTs could even result in new regional umbrellas structures for community-led housing. Such an umbrella could be overseen by a board made up of representatives from the HA, the local community initiators, local councils involved and the HCA as a neutral observer. Such a structure was being developed in the case study organisation at the time of the research (CLT1.1). It is recognised that the better established model within the CLT sector is for regional CLT umbrellas, some of whom may also undertake development in their own right (Moore and Mullins 2003). There are now nine established regional CLT umbrella organisations in England, which cover just under 50% of the country. The National CLT Network works with all the umbrellas to increase the national coverage of umbrellas in order to establish a better infrastructure of support for CLTs, as well as other forms of community-led housing. Furthermore, the National CLT Network is about to formalise the relationship with all the umbrellas through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), to consolidate the support offered to CLTs. (NE8)

5.4. Government bodies and local authorities

In general, there is only limited public promotion for affordable housing in England. This is in stark contrast to some other European countries, such as Austria (see Figure 4 and Section 6.2 for an elaboration of the public promotion model in Vienna). The concept of "public promotion" generally refers to the responsibility of the state for the provision of a sufficient amount of good quality housing by providing an adequate material basis (Ludl 2007). More precisely, this means that the state exercises a "direct influence on the supply of different tenures, using a range of policy levers in the land, finance and housing markets" (Amann et al. 2009: 14). While this is a familiar concept in countries such as Austria, France or

Switzerland, it is less known in home ownership orientated countries such as the UK, despite the long-term role of Government funding and regulation and local authority support.

Rather than public promotion, there have been institutional barriers to enacting community-led housing models in England. For example, it was said by one interviewee that the feudal tenure system together with the tax system in the UK have favoured individual home ownership over communal forms of tenure, and that despite the pioneering ideas of Ebenezer Howard, there is no established mechanism for local communities to hold land in common and benefit collectively from land value uplift (NE1). Nevertheless, a variety of funding streams have been provided for community-led schemes in a rather supply-side approach by the current Coalition Government, all however, relatively small-scale. For this purpose, part of an affordable housing fund has been earmarked for community-led housing (NE2). Furthermore, following lobbying and research support an earmarked funding scheme was provided for non-registered providers within the Empty Homes Programme (see Mullins and Sacranie, 2014).

Under the Coalition Government's localism agenda, the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) – a quango – has emerged as a key partner for the community-led sector in terms of funding distribution and support services. The HCA is accountable to the Department of Communities and Local Government (NE2).

Although some small scale funding has been made available for community-led initiatives, government bodies and quangos, like the HCA, are generally mandated to provide housing grant funding directly only to "registered bodies" such as HAs rather than direct to community-led bodies. This suggests a lack of clarity and commitment to independent community-led housing, forcing partnerships with registered providers. Interestingly, only in the case of self-help housing was a separate channel of grant funding made available direct to non-registered bodies, under the Empty Homes Community Grants Programme (EHCGP). This enabled 110 community-led groups to get direct access to around £50 million of housing grant to lease or acquire and renovate private properties that had been empty for over 12 months.

There are also challenges for community-led initiatives in partnership with local authorities. Taking the CLT field as an example, some fundamental objections to new community-led models might arise as the following statement of a sector representative shows:

"[…] *if you talk to the council, they would say, 'Well, we're the community land trust, we're the public guardian of land, why do you need a new model?'*" (Coop1.1)

Despite the huge difference in scale between Brummidge City Council and locally-based urban CLTs, the above statement indicates the scepticism that the CLT model can really empower communities, especially in urban areas, if local authorities are not convinced of the necessity to provide new affordable housing schemes. In contrast, it seems that co-operative housing is still more accepted among public authorities. Thus, for representatives of the co-operative sector, it makes more sense to convince local authorities to facilitate co-operative schemes in urban settings as the following statement shows:

"*Rather than to convince the council to stop being that guardian of public land and pass it to a community land trust […] my personal view is that the scope for community land trusts are quite limited [...] I see far more ability to talk to the council about using its guardianship role to facilitate co-operative housing.*" (Coop1.1)

This co-operative perspective is contrasted by evidence from CLT projects which are looking to obtain land from public authorities on long-term leases as opposed to freehold (NE8). Furthermore, the experience of self-help housing groups in Brummidge with council representatives was also rather different (Mullins and Sacranie 2014). An interview with Brummidge City Council in December 2013 indicated that EHCGP had been seen as an opportunity to enable community-based organisations in the city to build their capacity through housing projects. Some joint promotional activity was organised with Brummidge Voluntary Service Council (BVSC) and support for bidding was set up by the City Council. An officer from BCC had

"*talked to some very small housing associations, people who would like to have set up a housing association and community organisations who once they saw the opportunity thought housing is something we could do for our group. A lot of those conversations took place...the BVSC link gave us a softer feel than if we had approached them direct.*" (SHH.4)

In order to get government support and access funding for community-led schemes in England, schemes need to fit a complex set of programme requirements and conditions and stereotypes about their organisations. In order to win community support, it is also important to choose the right labelling of schemes (e.g. not social housing) and tenure mix (buying options, equity etc.). Differences in experience between two community-led sectors in the same city suggest that individual relationships and brokerage remain important additional factors in the relationship with the local state.

5.5. Summary

In principle, there are two ways in which the community-led sector could grow. Either, a grass roots community springs up and mobilises the resources needed (bottom-up approach, see governance models Figures 1 and 2 in Chapter 3.3). This self-help approach might also include the "external" support structures provided by sector umbrellas. Or, as outlined in Chapters 5.3 and 5.4, the sector goes into partnerships with local authorities and HAs for funding and other resources (bottom-linked approach, see Figure 3).
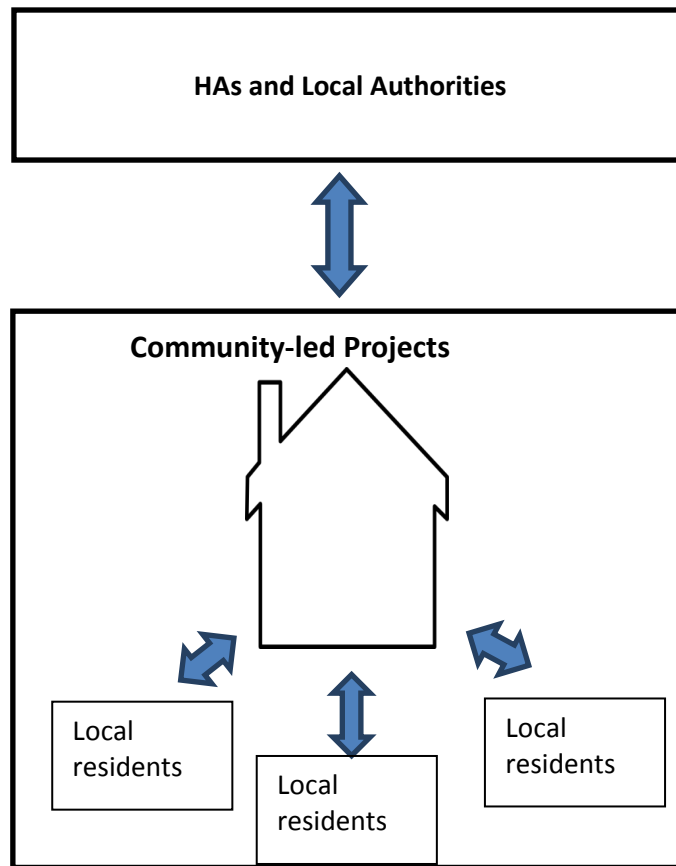
Figure 6. Community-led Governance Models with External Enablers

As the empirical data shows, the existence of an external service and management provider is a traditional approach of co-operative housing in England. A crucial precondition for such partnerships seems to be that community-led initiatives can draw on an external service partner who is genuinely committed to co-operative principles and community-based development. This seems to be the case for a part of the HA sector which supports community-led housing by providing the necessary resources for the sector to grow.

6. Relevance of international experiences: Lessons from the Austrian case

Community-led housing has strong connections with the co-operative housing tradition (Rowlands 2009). International experience in this field, such as the well-established Austrian co-operative housing sector, therefore has strong relevance for implementing localism (Moreau and Pittini 2012). The concrete configuration of co-operative and community-led housing, and thus also of its organisational governance models, differs considerably between Austria, and in particular the Vienna city region, and the West Midlands region in England. Nevertheless, there are lessons to be learnt from the Austrian case for community-led and co-operative housing in England.

6.1. Linking social capital: "Co-operative" HAs as crucial intermediaries

The findings of the case study analyses point to high levels of linking social capital to be found among the residents of co-operative and community-led housing schemes in the West Midlands. Although this is also true for some remaining community-based housing co-operatives in Vienna, the co-operative sector in the West Midlands as a whole has preserved flat governance structures on the level of primary co-operatives[15] in contrast to the Vienna city region where the majority of co-operative housing providers are professional and hierarchical organisations. Furthermore, the variety of community-led housing sectors which can be found in the West Midlands does not exist in the Vienna region.

The comparatively small sector of community-based housing co-operatives in Vienna, today, has few vertical linkages to the multi-level sites where key decisions of housing policy and urban development are taken (Lang and Novy 2014). But the degree to which residents can actually make a difference in their neighbourhoods depends on the multi-level embeddedness of community initiatives in the wider institutional environment of the city. In this respect, professional housing co-operatives and non-profit HAs in Vienna have the greater potential to build linkages beyond the housing estates to key resource holders in the public governance environment. In recent years, they have been used as vehicles by local government to build the majority of new social housing in Vienna (Ludl 2007). In the West Midlands context, the greatest potential of linking residents to wider institutions can mainly be found among HAs as they are preferred partners of government in terms of provision and planning of affordable housing policy. However, stronger links to local authorities could also be very helpful in developing a "public promotion" model.

Nevertheless, another lesson from Vienna is that linking social capital as a multi-level concept needs housing organisations which do not only have linkages to the external governance environment but which are also committed to the co-operative principles in everyday organisational life (Lang and Novy 2014). The Vienna case shows that co-operative governance structures alone do not guarantee this commitment because the bureaucratic culture of public promotion has endangered bottom-up resident action in many larger housing co-operatives. While most HAs in the West Midlands do not have co-operative governance implemented in their organisational structures, they can nevertheless be committed to co-operative principles and community-based development, as shown for instance by the case studies. These HAs can become crucial partners for local communities in leveraging resources. They have the capacity to establish and sustain linkages with government and other key resource holders in the institutional environment at different scales in order to effectively tackle community problems.

Such partnerships are also an opportunity for local community partners to seek the implementation of more co-operative elements in the governance structures of HAs. Residents of community-led housing have to consciously build up linking social capital and use HAs as a vehicle for leveraging their concerns and interests. The virtuous interplay of open-minded management and active residents with strong linking social capital could become a cornerstone for more participatory governance in the social and affordable housing sector. Taking the Austrian example, this might also be a way in a long term perspective to

---

[15] If we take into account the level of secondary co-operatives, the sector indeed shows to have well developed two-tier, hierarchical structures.

institutionalise co-operative elements within the English housing system more broadly and move it into the direction of a more solidarity-based system. Of course, the intermediary role of "cooperative" HAs has to be recognised by local and central government bodies as a main channel for interacting with communities.

6.2. Institutionalised public promotion of co-operative housing

Recurring deregulation efforts on the housing market in England have often been justified with the stimulation of organisational autonomy and a stronger agency role to be played by social housing providers in new governance processes (e.g. Flint and Kearns 2006). However, linking social capital cannot just be leveraged by devoting a stronger role to individual housing providers in local governance.

The experiences from Vienna suggest a crucial precondition for localism reforms that aim at genuinely strengthening community-led housing: some institutionalised form of public promotion. Based on a study of the co-operative housing movement in Vienna, Novy (1983) points to the "myth" that the co-operative housing movement would be able to grow and expand significantly through self-help, given its inherent scarcity of economic capital, compared with other co-operative sectors. During the twentieth century, only through public promotion by the local government, professionalised housing co-operatives were able to leverage community ideas and practices which led to a solidarity-based housing regime at the macro level in Vienna. Thereby, social capital has been transformed into institutional capital (Gualini 2002) as most non-profit housing organisations are still strongly embedded in local political networks instead of globalised financial markets. Thus, building up linking social capital in housing always means walking a tightrope between organisational agency and structural partnerships, not only with HAs but also with government.

The Austrian public promotion model (*Wohnungsgemeinnützigkeit*) and its specific local manifestation in Vienna as an institutionalised partnership for social housing between the co-operative sector and local government deviates from dominant private and market-provisioning. It seems to be unique in Europe (Kemeny 1995; Amann 2008), and might be a best-practice model to enable affordable housing to move beyond finance-market-led housing provision. Decentralised housing policies are a key characteristic of the Austrian model which give the nine Provinces (*Bundesländer*) a certain degree of freedom in designing their housing policies.

Figure 4 illustrates the governance model of "public promotion" where a provincial government acts as an external enabler for co-operatives and other non-profit housing providers in the respective region. Within Austria, Vienna represents a bit of a special case, as it is both, a city and a regional province.
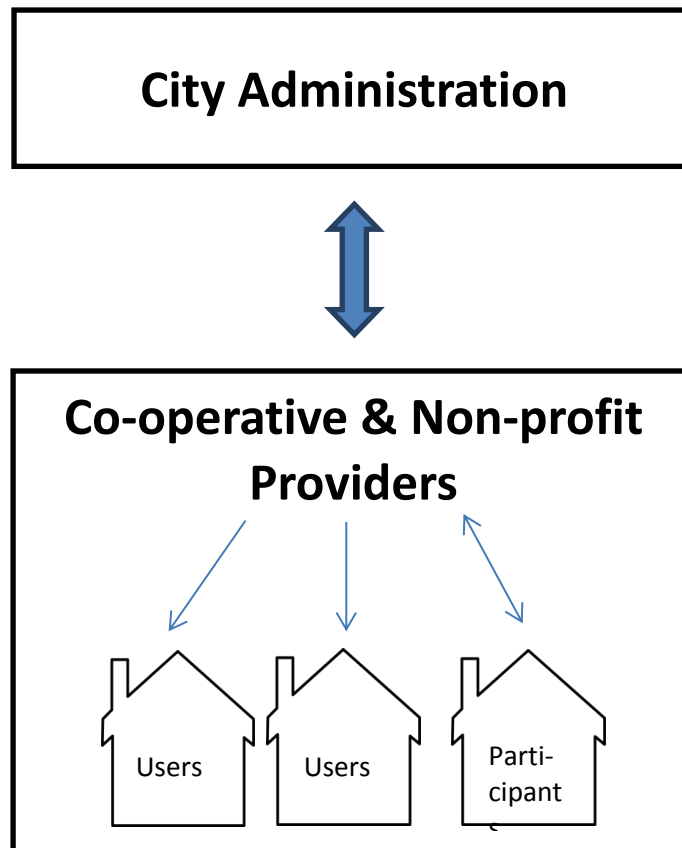
Figure 7. Mainstream Governance Model of Public
Promotion in Non-Profit Housing in Vienna

In contrast to the English West Midlands region (see Figure 3), external promotion in the case of Vienna is more upscale on the level of the city administration which goes into structural partnerships with large third sector providers. However, only a small percentage of all subsidised homes are actually community-led projects where residents are also active "participants" in housing governance and not simply passive service "users" or residents (see Figure 3).

National tax revenues earmarked for social housing are distributed to the provinces according to a complex financial agreement. In the early 2000s, Vienna received approximately 450 million euros each year from these national funds (Förster 2002). Nevertheless, the Austrian case also shows that too much decentralisation within a national housing regime can weaken the whole system of public promotion. Thus, a couple of provinces have stopped transferring the dedicated income tax revenues to social housing purposes and supply-side housing subsidies.

Despite cuts in social housing financing in recent years, this model still provides a secure financing tool for social housing projects of large scale which would not be possible under a pronounced market-based housing regime. Of course, the city of Vienna increasingly has to contribute additional funds to respond to the increasing housing demand. The government provides object-subsidies to the developers so that they can reduce financing costs and

rents. Public, supply-side subsidisation makes it possible to directly influence the production of new affordable housing whereas tax-deduction models and individual subsidies usually support better-off households (Förster 2002).

Of course, across Europe, different models of public promotion can be found, such as in Sweden or the Netherlands, where non-profit providers are leading or dominating housing markets, supported by government policies on the local and regional level that favour integrated rental markets (Kemeny et al. 2005).

Nevertheless, public promotion models of traditional welfare states cannot be communicated as simple messages of practice transfer to the English context. Of course, territorial models of housing policy are path-dependent which makes short-term change difficult to achieve. The regional levels of housing policy, found in Austria are currently largely missing in England following the dismantlement of the Regional Planning and Housing Policy framework established in 2003 by the incoming Coalition Government in 2010. Furthermore, it could be argued that this would just add another level to existing bureaucracy given budget constraints in times of crisis. Other elements of traditional welfare models in housing had a certain tradition in England, such as supply-side subsidies for co-operatives from central government (up to 95%!) until the Housing Act in 1988 (NE2).

Public promotion for affordable and community-led housing is of increasing importance, given the crisis of the finance-market-led governance of housing in the UK and to challenge the priority of privatization, short-term efficiency and marketisation which has been detrimental to sustainable, local, relatively small-scale provision of housing, as traditionally delivered by co-operative housing.

Based on the empirical results of this project, the Welsh model of public promotion is an interesting case to look at to compare to the English co-operative sector because the idea of mutualism in housing has been institutionalised there in recent years. Mutualism is not only practised by the co-operative sector – which is not particularly large in Wales – but also by HAs, such as the case of Tai Calon shows, an organisation which has established its own co-operative model close to the community gateway model in England. Key to the success of mutualism in Wales however are the strong linkages between community-based HAs, local councils and central government which is in favour of the mutualism idea and promotes pilot projects in this respect. Key politicians of the ruling Labour party are also members of the co-operative party and would like to see more co-operative elements in the affordable housing sector. (HA1.1). This led the Welsh assembly to recognise the strengths of community-led housing and set a target of 500 new housing co-operative units by 2015 (Bliss et al. 2013). The CCH has been working with the Welsh Government and the Wales Co-op Centre to develop a number of "pioneer schemes" and has managed to initiate 25 co-operative housing projects by spring 2015 (WCC 2015). All of these schemes are developed in partnership with existing housing associations and in most cases, there has been the need to build community involvement from the grass roots since next to no involvement was found in these areas at the start of the programme. (NE2e)

6.3. Developer competitions to scale up co-operative elements

In Vienna, since 1995, larger social housing projects usually involve a publicly tendered, free competition of housing developers (*Bauträgerwettbewerb*) for public subsidies[16]. In contrast to pure architectural competitions, the housing developers themselves are the project applicants and take on board other experts to form a project team which presents its comprehensive realisation concept for an advertised building site. A preliminary examination of submissions is carried out by external civil engineers. The project applications are then evaluated and scored by an interdisciplinary jury according to a set of criteria referring to different "quality pillars", i.e. architectural quality, economic aspects, ecological quality and also the social sustainability of the projects (Liske 2008). The jury consists of architects, representatives of the construction industry and the municipality of Vienna, and also involves experts in ecology, economy and housing law. In order to contribute to social sustainability in housing neighbourhoods, landlords are encouraged to adopt a more active role in fostering residents' social networks, thus going beyond core housing management activities. Besides the goals of identity and community building and striving for a social mix (wien.at 2013), the focus is also on increasing tenant participation in subsidised housing estates. (Förster 2002; Wohnfonds Wien 2015).

The benefits of developer competitions are seen as reducing construction costs and improving the quality of housing in terms of planning, economic, environmental and social sustainability as well as technical qualities. Another key aspect of these competitions is the institutionalisation of a culture of cooperation and knowledge transfer among different stakeholders in housing, including commercial property developers, and the advancement of architectural innovations also leading to better design of communal facilities, such as open spaces and communication areas, combined with ecological innovations and quality standards (Förster 2002; Liske 2008). In fact, community-based co-operatives have traditionally triggered important innovations which were later mainstreamed in public housing in Vienna (Novy et al. 2009). In traditional co-operative housing estates, social and architectural innovations were combined to build "small villages" with numerous communal facilities, not known in other housing sectors at that time (Novy 1993). Given the high quality standards social housing in Vienna has reached in the meantime, there has been some controversy recently whether social housing should be a sort of high-end housing or simply providing decent quality and affordable homes for its residents (Putschögl 2013). Moreover, the evaluation of social sustainability criteria in developer competitions still poses a challenge to the jury, as this can only be done ex-post. Project teams also do not always explicitly propose models for tenant participation or neighbourhood management in their submissions (Liske 2008).

For the English context, the introduction of site-based competition in which better design of communal facilities, such as open spaces and communication areas, combined with ecological innovations are given greater weight alongside value for money could have advantages for the community-led sector. The competitive element could be appealing to representatives of a more liberal, market-oriented logic in housing, but by relating competition to specific sites rather than national allocations and by weighting social and environmental criteria more strongly this could also contribute to "localism". If social

---

[16] The yearly volume of these direct subsidies is about 230m Euro and about 5,500 units for new housing development (Groschopf 2007).

sustainability aspects become more explicit policy goals, linked to specified public funds, this could begin to overcome the short-run efficiency perspective. It would however require a substantial move away from the current National Affordable Housing Programme whereby allocation for large non-site specific programmes are made to a small number of "investment partners" from non-profit and profit distributing sectors. The case of Vienna also shows that architectural innovations can help rebuilding the reputation of social and affordable housing which it used to have before becoming stigmatised during and even before the Thatcher era.

6.4. Umbrella bodies which encourage organisational diversity and innovation

Does this discussion (6.3) mean that community-led housing organisations in the West Midlands can expect to meet the same fate as the Austrian community-based settler movement, i.e. to become hierarchical, professional housing providers? Not necessarily, as it seems that the sector in England has simply learned lessons from other contexts. While the main umbrella organisation for HAs (National Housing Federation) is primarily supporting larger, registered providers, there has emerged a range of new umbrella bodies for community-led housing which now form part of a loose super-umbrella group for community providers – the Mutual Housing Group[17] – which also has links to governments on different scales. Although there are alternative community-based providers in Austria, they have not yet managed to have voice in the policy discourse. Rather top-down, community-based initiatives (called *Baugruppen*) are launched by bigger co-operative and non-profit housing providers or by municipal housing, such as in the new urban development areas of Vienna like the neighbourhood of Aspern.

A key lesson from the Austrian case is to retain and support diversity not only of community-led providers but also of umbrella bodies within the co-operative movement (Novy 1993). The powerful central umbrella body for the Austrian co-operative housing movement (*gbv*), as well as the implicit state promotion of standard organisational governance models in third sector housing, leads to isomorphism tendencies and runs counter to, and could actually undermine, the co-operative principles of self-help and self-organisation. It is in the nature of the co-operative movement that local communities invent and experiment with new organisational structures and also with umbrella bodies (Novy 1993). In that sense, the mutual housing group should remain a rather loose umbrella body (NE2) for all community-led initiatives and should also not interfere too much with the autonomy of the individual umbrella bodies, such as the community-land trust network, Self-Help Housing.org or the Co-Housing Network. The representative bodies should explicitly encourage diversity of governance models within the sector, as this is a crucial basis for social innovation which can all go through to the institutional level of housing policy, as the Austrian example has proven.

One of the benefits of international comparisons such as this is to reveal how similar underlying tensions between competing organisational purposes and logics play out under different institutional arrangements. In particular, we are struck by the different ways in which competing logics of scale and efficiency and local accountability (Mullins 2006) play out in the two systems. Large co-operatives seem to share similar tendencies to large HAs, traditional co-ops to share similar capacity and resource issues to small community-led

---

[17] The Mutual Housing Group was a loose alliance at the time of this study. Later developments have included moves to develop a Strategic Alliance for Community-led housing with a shared vision and some common communications.

housing schemes. In our view, it is better that policy and organisational strategies recognise the competing implications of these logics, rather than simply letting one logic override the other.

6.5. Socially mixed neighbourhoods

Diversity within the community-led sector could not only refer to the organisational level but can also be encouraged on the resident level (Wohnfonds Wien 2015; Forrest and Kearns 2001). According to the empirical data gathered in this study, the co-operative movement in England is still mainly a "*model for the bottom 10% of the population*" and co-operatives "*haven't broken out of that glass ceiling*" (Coop1.1). To a certain extent, this is inherent to the co-operative model where like-minded residents and people of similar origin come together and organise themselves. Nevertheless, with such an explicit normative focus on *Gemeinschaft*, they easily get trapped in the local and can contribute less to wider urban development goals. The Austrian case shows that public promotion programmes, based on the idea of *Gemeinnützigkeit*, require co-operative housing providers to actively contribute to wider housing policy goals, such as the social sustainability of neighbourhoods. Thus, for larger residential areas, the planning of co-operative and community-led housing developments next to up-market ownership or rental models could achieve a better social mix for a neighbourhood with potential spill-over effects to the different housing models. In Vienna, this planning approach, together with relatively high formal income limits for access to social housing (covering about 80% of the population)[18] (Reinprecht 2007) have led to social housing becoming a mainstream model of housing in Austria. Although in a rural context, the community land trust case study presented in this report has actually introduced a pilot project for planning affordable housing next to privately financed homes on the same site which also recycles the speculative gain from new development towards local community goals of a pub and wider society goals of new affordable housing.

6.6. Theme-oriented estates

The city of Vienna has introduced experimental theme-oriented settlements (so called *Themensiedlungen*) to respond to pressing societal challenges with housing strategies. Estates include ecological housing estates, car-free housing estates, gender mainstreaming in planning, or integrative, multicultural projects. Topics are selected by the city council. Starting as pilot projects, elements of these projects have later been transferred into mainstream housing (Förster 2002, Brech 2003). With the practice of theme-oriented housing estates, non-profit housing in Vienna returns to the traditional co-operative principle of *Gemeinschaft*. However, such "community co-operatives", to a certain extent, promote homogenous membership (e.g. in terms of lifestyles) and thus encompass the danger of establishing cohesive islands that are cut off from the rest of the neighbourhood or city. Nevertheless, especially in the English context, it could be a way of attracting new (middle-class) segments of residents for co-operative and community-led housing and linking the co-operative concept even more strongly to societal innovations in the public discourse.

---

[18] In Vienna, the maximum income is EUR 42,250 up to which a resident is eligible for social housing (wien.at 2013).

6.7. Resident participation

Another key lesson from the Austrian case is that in order to make the co-operative idea popular within larger parts of the society, the movement had to accept that not every resident wants to engage actively in running the organisation. The Austrian study has shown that residents of co-operative housing do care about participation but that the voice and loyalty mechanisms are becoming less attractive for them (Hirschman 1970). In the case of Vienna, the strategic partnership with local government led to the hierarchy and bureaucratisation of non-profit housing, and has considerably weakened the co-operative character of individual housing organisations. Furthermore, residents having the choice between different housing providers is also more in line with the national policy preferences in the English than in the Austrian context (Hooge and Marks 2010). In order to meet market-oriented customer and policy preferences, the application of customer relationship management, to a certain degree, can establish a direct link between residents and housing managements (Lang and Novy 2014). However, while this cannot and should not replace traditional co-operative participation mechanisms, it can make it easier for co-operatives to reach out to different resident groups.

7. Conclusions: A future research agenda

The author and his supervisor believe that this fellowship report provides a good starting point for further research on co-operative and community-led housing in England. It has laid the foundations and institutional links required for a deeper comparative project. It has provided an external view of the emergence and evolution the English community-led housing field and its engagement with policy and enabling bodies during a period of destabilisation and challenge to incumbent actors in adjacent housing fields.

This comparative lens has clarified for us the common dilemmas and conflicting logics that growth strategies for community-led housing in England are likely to face and identified some specific points of difference where learning might be valuable.

It has demonstrated the relevance of similar processes of field construction in the better established co-operative field in Vienna where "public promotion" has provided important external support for co-operative models on the one hand, but led to forms of professional dominance on the other. This has enabled us to outline specific mechanisms such as site development competitions judged by environmental and social sustainability criteria that could provide a real and more "localist" alternative to large scale procurement of affordable housing in England.

Our next step will be to embark on a larger and deeper study at national level in the two countries including more organisational case studies with deeper consideration of the role of key actors such as residents, the wider community, organisational leaders and staff and policy and resource holders at city, regional and national levels. Greater attention will be paid to the impact and outcomes of different forms of governance and organisation on social capital, both vertical and horizontal, testing the extent to which mutual forms provide real alternatives to market based models (Lang and Novy 2014).

The emergence and evolution of community-led fields in England will be analysed more deeply to go beyond the construction of typologies of organisational models by applying

strategic action fields method (Fligstein and McAdam 2011) to consider the role of actors in constructing social fields and challenging incumbents (e.g. housing associations and umbrella organisations) during periods of destabilisation and perceived uncertainty.

We are grateful to the Plowden Fellowship for enabling us to do this and to the Mutual Housing Group and case study organisations for engaging with us and providing a platform for ongoing dialogue as our research develops. We recognise that interpretations and associated errors are ours alone and look forward to learning more in the next stages of this work.

Richard Lang
Institute for Innovation Management
Johannes Kepler University Linz

David Mullins
Housing and Communities Research Group
University of Birmingham

May 2015

8. References

Alcock, P. (2012). Big Society: a new policy environment for the third sector? TSRC Working Paper 82, Birmingham: TSRC.

Amann, W. (2008) Die österreichische Wohnungsgemeinnützigkeit als Europäisches Best Practice-Modell. In K. Lugger and W. Holoubek (Eds), Die österreichische Wohnungsgemeinnützigkeit – ein europäisches Erfolgsmodell, pp. 3-13, Vienna: Manz.

Amann, W., Lawson, J. and Mundt, A. (2009) Structured Financing Allows for Affordable Rental Housing in Austria. Housing Finance International, June 2009.

Barlow, J., Jackson, R. and Meikle, J. (2001) Homes to DIY for: The UK's self-build housing market in the 21st Century. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Beetz, S. (2008) Housing Cooperatives and Urban Development. German Journal of Urban Studies, 47(1), Available at www.difu.de/node/5929 - 1.

Birchall, J. (1991). The Hidden History of Co-operative Housing in Britain Department of Government Working Papers No. 17. London: Brunel University

Birchall, J. (1992). Housing Co-operatives in Britain, Department of Government Working Papers No. 21. London: Brunel University.

Bliss, N., Inkson, S. and Nicholas, J. (2013) Research into the potential demand for co-operative housing in Wales. Cardiff: Wales Co-operative Centre.

Bliss, N. and Lambert, B. (2014) New Co-operative and Community Led Homes. Confederation for Co-operative Housing.

Bourdieu, P. (1985) The forms of capital. In J. Richardson (Ed.), Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education. New York: Greenwood.

Brandsen, T. and Helderman, J. K. (2012). The Trade-Off Between Capital and Community: The Conditions for Successful Co-production in Housing. Voluntas, 23(4), 1139-1155.

Brech, J. (2003) Ohne Fremde keine Stadt. Integration durch Stadt- und Wohnbauplanung. In H. Ludl (ed.), Das Wohnmodell inter-ethnische Nachbarschaft, pp. 29-46, Vienna: Springer.

Bunker, S. Coates, C. and Field, M. (2011) Cohousing in Britain. A Diggers & Dreamers Review. London: Edge of Time Ltd.

CECODHAS (European Federation of Public, Co-operative& Social Housing) (2012). Co-operative housing: a key model for sustainable housing in Europe, Available at www.housingeurope.eu/file/84/download.

CCH, CIH & Co-operative Union (2003) Empowering Communities, Available at www.cch.coop/docs/cch-gateway.pdf, Coventry: CIH.

CCH, Commission on Co-operative Housing (2009) Report of the Commission on Co-operative & Mutual Housing, Available at www.cch.coop/docs/commission/bdh-commission-report.pdf.

Cairncross, L; Morrell, C: Darke, J and Brownhill, S (2002) Tenants managing: An evaluation of TMOs in England London: ODPM

Clapham, D. and Kintrea, K. (2000) Community-based Housing Organisations and the Local Governance Debate, Housing Studies, 15(4), 533-559.

Cohousing Association (of the United States) (2013) What are the 6 Defining Characteristics of Cohousing? Available at www.cohousing.org/six_characteristics.

Cole, I. and Flint, J. (2007) Addressing housing affordability, clearance and relocation issues in the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinders, Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

DCLG (Department for Communities and Local Government) (2010a) Local decisions: a fairer future for social housing. Available at

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/8512/1775577.pdf, London: HM Government.

DCLG (Department for Communities and Local Government) (2010b) Decentralisation and the Localism Bill: an essential guide. London: HM Government.

DCLG (Department for Communities and Local Government) (2011a) A plain English guide to the Localism Act. Available at http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/5959/1896534.pdf, London: HM Government.

DCLG (Department for Communities and Local Government) (2011b) Laying the Foundations. A Housing Strategy for England. Available at www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7532/2033676.pdf, London: HM Government.

Deakin N. (2005) Civil society and civil renewal. In Robb C. (Ed) Voluntary Action: Meeting the challenges of the 21st century, NCVO, 13-45.

Dekker, K. and Van Kempen, R. (2009) Participation, Social Cohesion and the Challenges in the Governance Process: An Analysis of a Post-World War II Neighbourhood in the Netherlands. European Planning Studies 17(1), 109-130.

Fligstein, N. and McAdam, D. (2011) Toward a General Theory of Strategic Action Fields. Sociological Theory, 29(1), 1-26.

Flint, J. and Kearns, A. (2006) Housing, Neighbourhood Renewal and Social Capital: The Case of Registered Social Landlords in Scotland. European Journal of Housing Policy, 6(1), 31-54.

Forrest, R. and Kearns, A. (2001) Social cohesion, social capital and the neighbourhood, Urban Studies, 38(12), 2125-2144.

Förster, W. (2002) 80 Years of Social Housing in Vienna. Available at www.wien.gv.at/english/housing/promotion/pdf/socialhous.pdf.

Gittell, R. and Vidal, A. (1998) Community Organizing: Building Social Capital as a Development Strategy. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Gleeson, B. (2012) Can Cameron's big society be a profitable place? Liverpool Daily Post, available at www.thefreelibrary.com/Can+Cameron's+Big+Society+be+a+profitable+place%3F-a0232183924.

Gooding, J. (2013, unpublished) An investigation into the potential of community-led initiatives, including CLTs, as an approach to regenerate older or other housing areas experiencing decline or lack of investment. Tees Valley Unlimited.

Gosling, C.G. (2012) Charity and the Coalition: Whatever Happened to the Big Society? Voluntary Action History Society Blog. Available at www.vahs.org.uk/2012/04/coalition-gosling/.

Granovetter, M. (1973) The strength of weak ties, American Journal of Sociology, 78(6), 1360-1380.

Groschopf, D. (2007) Qualitätssicherung im geförderten Wohnungsbau – Wiener Bauträgerwettbewerb. Presentation at the PT-Congress 2007, Technology Centre Aachen, Germany, 15/06/2007, available at www.pt.rwth-aachen.de/dokumente/tagung07/praesentationen/6_groschopf.pdf.

Gualini, E. (2002) Institutional capacity building as an issue of collective action and institutionalisation: Some theoretical remarks. In G. Cars, P. Healey, A. Madanipour and C. de Magalhaes (Eds), Urban Governance, Institutional Capacity and Social Milieux, pp. 39-44, Aldershot, UK: ABHGate.

Gulliver, K., Handy, C. and Morris, J. (2013) More than Markets: Mutual & Co-operative Housing in the UK. Birmingham: Human City Institute.

Handy, C and Gulliver, K. (2010) Mutualism rising? Housing's vital role in the 'Big Society'. Think Pieces, 65, London: Compass.

Harris, R. (1999) Aided Self-help Housing, a Case of Amnesia: Editor's Introduction, Housing Studies, 14(3), 277-280.

HCA (The Homes and Communities Agency) (2013) Community-led Development: Eligibility Criteria. Available at www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/394037/community_led_eligibility.pdf. London: HCA.

HCA (2015) Global Accounts of Registered Housing Providers. www.gov.uk/government/publications/2014-global-accounts-of-housing-providers.

Hibbett, K., Jones, P. and Meegan, R. (2001) Tackling social exclusion: The role of social capital in urban regeneration on Merseyside – From mistrust to trust?, European Planning Studies, 9(2), 141-161.

Hirschman, A. O. (1970) Exit, Voice, and Loyalty. Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Hooge, L. and Marks, G. (2010) Types of multi-level governance, In H. Enderlein, S. Wältli and M. Zürn (Eds), Handbook of Multi-level Governance, pp. 17–31, Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.

Housingforum.org.uk (2013) Available at housingforum.org.uk

Howard, E. (1998) *Garden Cities of Tomorrow. A Peaceful Path to Real Reform.*

id22: Institute for Creative Sustainability (2012) CoHousing Cultures Handbook for self-organized, community-oriented and sustainable living. Berlin, Jovis Publishing.

Inside Housing (2011) "Tribal sells social housing business" Inside Housing, 11 April 2011, Online, Available at www.insidehousing.co.uk/tribal-sells-social-housing-business/6514452.article.

Kemeny, J. (1995) From Public Housing to the Social Market. Rental Policy Strategies in Comparative Perspective. London: Routledge.

Kemeny, J., Kersloot, J. and Thalmann, P. (2005) Non-profit housing influencing, leading and dominating the unitary rental market: Three case studies, Housing Studies, 20(6), 855–872.

König, B. (2004) Stadtgemeinschaften: Das Potenzial von Wohnungsgenossenschaften für die soziale Stadtentwicklung. Berlin: Edition Sigma.

Lang, R., Novy, A. (2011). Housing Cooperatives and Social Capital: The Case of Vienna. SRE-Discussion Paper 2011/02. Institute for the Environment and Regional Development. WU Vienna. Available at epub.wu.ac.at/3207/1/sre-disc-2011_02.pdf.

Lang, R. and Novy, A. (2014) Co-operative Housing and Social Cohesion: The Role of Linking Social Capital. European Planning Studies, 22(8), 1744-1764.

Lang, R. and Roessl, D. (2011) Contextualizing the governance of community co-operatives: Evidence from Austria and Germany, Voluntas, 22(4), 706–730.

Leach, M. (2010) Living in the Future: The progressive housing association. London: ResPublica.

Liske, H. (2008) Property Developer Competitions as an instrument of social housing subsidies in Vienna - procedural and substantive evaluation. Available at www.wohnbauforschung.at/index.php?id=352&lang_id=en.

Ludl, H. (2007) Limited-Profit HAs in Austria. Vienna: Austrian Federation of Limited-Profit HAs. Available at www.iut.nu/members/Europe/West/Austria_GBVinfo_ENG.pdf.

Malpass, P. and Mullins, D. (2002) Local authority stock transfer in the UK: from local initiative to national policy, Housing Studies, 17(4), 673-686.

McCamant, K. and Durrett, C.R. (1994) Cohousing. A Contemporary Approach to Housing Ourselves. Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press.

Middleton, A., Murie, A. and Groves, R. (2005) Social Capital and Neighbourhoods that Work. Urban Studies, 42(10), 1711-1738.

Millonig, E., Deubner, H., Brugger, E., Kreyer, I. and Matosic, T. (2010) Evaluierung der Wohnform „Co-housing" am Beispiel von bestehenden Projekten in Niederösterreich F-2150. Vienna: ARGE Brugger/Matosic GesbR. Available at www.yumpu.com/de/document/view/5602880/evaluierung-der-wohnform-co-housing-am-beispiel-von-.

Mills, C. and Swarbrick, G. (2011) Social Housing: Made Mutual. Borehamwood, UK: Mutuo.

Minora, F. Mullins, D. and Jones, P. (2013) Governing for Habitability: Self-organised communities in England and Italy. International Journal of Co-operativeManagement, 6(2), 33-45.

Moulaert, F., Martinelli, F., Swyngedouw, E., and González, S. (2010) Can Neighbourhoods Save the City? Community Development and Social Innovation. London: Routledge.

Moore, T. and McKee, K. (2012) Empowering Local Communities: An international review of community land trusts, Housing Studies, 27, 1, 280-290.

Moore, T. and Mullins, D. (2013) Scaling-up or going viral? Comparing self-help housing and community land trust facilitation. Voluntary Sector Review, 4(3), 333-353.

Moreau, S. and Pittini, A. (2012) Profiles of a Movement: Co-operative Housing Around the World. ICA Housing.

Mullins, D. (2006) Competing Institutional Logics? Local Accountability and Scale and Efficiency in an Expanding Non-Profit Housing Sector, Public Policy and Administration, 21(3), 6-21.

Mullins, D. (2012) The Reform of Social Housing. In Raine, J. and Staite, C. (eds), The World will be your oyster? Perspectives on the Localism Bill, pp. 89-99, Birmingham: Institute of Local Government Studies, University of Birmingham.

Mullins, D., Jones, P. and Teasdale, S. (2011). Self-help housing – Towards a greater role. TSRC Working Paper 54, Birmingham: TSRC.

Mullins, D and Sacranie, H. (2014) Evaluation of the Empty Homes Community Grants Programme (EHCGP) - Midlands region. Baseline Case Studies Report. University of Birmingham.

Mullins, D and Sacranie, H. (2015) Building a Legacy: The impact of the Empty Homes Community Grants Programme in the North East and Yorkshie and Humberside. Housing and Communities Working Paper no 3, University of Birmingham.

Newton, R. and Tunstall, R. (2013) Lessons for Localism: Tenant Self Management. Urban Forum.

NFTMO (National Federation of Tenant Management Organisations) (n.d.) New to TMOs? What is a TMO? Available at www.nftmo.com/content/content.numo?ida=3&idas=19.

Novy, A., Hammer, E. and Leubolt, B. (2009) Social innovation and governance of scale in Austria. In D. MacCallum, F. Moulaert, J. Hillier and S. Vicari Haddock (Eds), Social Innovation and Territorial Development, pp. 131-48, Surrey, UK: ABHGate.

Novy, K. (1983) Genossenschaftsbewegung – Zur Geschichte und Zukunft der Wohnreform. Berlin: Transit.

Novy, K. (1993) Beiträge zum Planungs- und Wohnungswesen. In Stadt Wien (Ed.) Beiträge zur Stadtforschung, Stadtentwicklung und Stadtgeschichte, Band 41, Vienna: Magistrat der Stadt Wien.

OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) (2001) The Well-Being of Nations: The Role of Human and Social Capital. Paris: OECD.

Ostrom, E. (1990) Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action. Cambridge: University Press.

Ostrom, E. and Ahn, T. K. (2003) Foundations of social capital. UK: Edward Elgar Pub.

Pattison, B. (2014) Some key trends in the private rented sector in England. Analysis of Census. Available at www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-social-sciences/social-policy/CHASM/briefing-papers/2013/trends-private-rented-sector.pdf.

Pawson, H. and Mullins, D. (2010) After Council Housing: Britain's New Social Landlords. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Price Waterhouse (1995) Tenants in control: An evaluation of tenant-lead housing management organisations DoE: HMSO.

Putnam, R. (2000) Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Putschögl, M. (2013) Gemeinnützige: "Nicht mehr höchste Qualität für alle", derStandard.at, Available at derstandard.at/1363708261182/Gemeinnuetzige-Nicht-mehr-hoechste-Qualitaet-fuer-alle.

Reinprecht, C. (2007) Social housing in Austria. In C. Whitehead and K. Scanlon (Eds), Social Housing in Europe, pp. 35–42, London: School of Economics and Political Science.

Rowlands, R. (2009) Forging Mutual Futures - Co-operative, Mutual and Community Based Housing in Practice: History & Potential. Report to the Commission on Co-operative and Mutual Housing. Birmingham: Commission on Co-operative & Mutual Housing.

Rowlands, R. (2012) How do we plan community? Planning, housing and co-operative development. PhD Thesis. University of Birmingham.

SHHO (Self-help-housing.org) (2013) What is self help housing? Available at self-help-housing.org/what-is-self-help-housing/.

Somerville, P. (2007) Co-operative identity, Journal of Co-operative Studies, 40(1), 5-17.

Stoker G. (2005) New localism and the future of local governance: Implications for the voluntary sector. In Robb C. (Ed), Voluntary Action: Meeting the challenges of the 21st century, 47-68, London: NCVO.

Strauss, A.L. and Corbin, J. (2007). Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory, 3rd Edition. London: Sage.

Teasdale, S., Jones, P.A. and Mullins, D. (2011) Connecting the dots: the potential for self-help housing to address homelessness. Available at www.crisis.org.uk/research.php?fullitem=299, Crisis UK.

Wallace, A. Ford, J. and Quilgers, D. (2013) Build it Yourself? Understanding the Changing Landscape of the UK self-build market. Centre for Housing Policy, University of York.

WCC (Welsh Co-operative Centre) (2015) Co-operative Housing – for any community in Wales. Available at www.cch.coop/docs/coop-housing-for-any-community.pdf.

Westlund, H., Rutten, R. and Boekema, F. (2010) Social capital, distance, borders and levels of space: Conclusions and further issues, European Planning Studies, 18(6), 965-970.

wien.at (2013) Vienna wants to protect social housing against the EU. Available at http://www.iut.nu/FindOutMore/Europe/Vienna_protect_SocialHousing_against_EU_Nov29_2013.pdf.

Wohnfonds Wien (2015) Beurteilungsblatt 4-Säulen Modell. Available at www.wohnfonds.wien.at/media/file/Neubau/4-Saulen-Modell.pdf.

Woolcock, M. (2001). The Place of Social Capital in Understanding Social and Economic Outcomes. ISUMA Canadian Journal of Policy Research, 2(1), 11-17.

Yin, Robert K. (2009): Case study research: design and methods, 4th Ed., Thousand Oaks: Sage.

9. Appendix – Interview Details

Expert interviews

NE1…National Expert 1, June 12, 2013.
NE2…National Expert 2, April 30, 2013.
NE3…National Expert 3, May 5, 2013.
NE4…National Expert 4, June 3, 2013.
NE5…National Expert 5, May 10, 2013.
NE6…National Expert 6, May 10, 2013.
NE7…National Expert 7, May 10, 2013.
NE11…National Expert 8, June 10, 2013.

Email conversations with experts

NE2e… National Expert 2, May 4, 2014.
NE3…National Expert 3, May 8, 2014.
NE4e…National Expert 4, May 8,2014.
NE8…National Expert 8, May 18, 2014.
NE9…National Expert 9, May 1, 2014.
NE10…National Expert 10, May 1, 2014.

Case studies interviews

Organisation and Place Names have been anonymised using a well-known Midlands radio show!
CLT1.1… Executive Director of CLT, June 25, 2013.
CLT1.4…Board Member of CLT, June 25, 2013.
CLT2.3…Community members of CLT, June 25, 2013.
Coop1.1…Director of a Housing Co-operative, June 24, 2013.
Coop1.2…Tenant of a Housing Co-operative, June 24, 2013.
HA1.1… Chief Executive of a community-based housing association, June 26, 2013.

Self-help housing case studies interviews[19]

Interviews for this project took place between April and September 2013

SH1.1…Project Champion,
SH2.1…Project Champion,
SH3.1…Project Champion,
SH4.2…Apprentice,
SH5.1…Project Champion,
SH6.2…Resident,

---

[19] Our thanks to Halima Sacranie and Yoshinobu Kikuchi for access to interview transcripts used in Mullins and Sacranie (2014)