

**Press Release 16<sup>th</sup> March 2007**  
**Energy Efficiency – Implications for Housing Organisations**

The environment and climate change have never been higher up the Government's agenda or in the media spot-light as much as they are today. The end of 2006 and beginning of 2007 saw the publishing of a wealth of information, including reviews, policies, reports and new legislation all focused on the environment, energy efficiency and climate change. So Northern Housing Consortium's event, 'Energy Efficiency – Implications for Housing Organisations', at York Racecourse was well timed and well attended. The day covered a range of issues including renewable energy, building standards, sustainable housing developments & how to change the culture of an organisation to become 'greener'.

Anna Milner, Research Manager at Northern Housing Consortium, commented "It is widely accepted that we need to start taking action now, both as individuals and a nation, to combat the detrimental effects of carbon emissions on the environment. The role social housing providers and developers have in the battle against climate change is paramount. Many housing organisations are already leading the way and doing their bit to start reducing housing's carbon footprint. However, delegate feedback at this event also revealed there is still a belief that there is a lack of joined-up thinking from central government and a number of conflicting messages. There is a disparity between the standards for private and public sector developers, and this needs to be resolved."

The event also highlighted a significant gap in terms of those who are aware of and interested in the environment and saving energy and those who do not feel that it is an issue that impacts upon them. Anna added, "There is a challenge for our members in addressing this gap and increasing customer awareness through the provision of suitable information. Changes in services will be driven by cultural changes from within the organisation."

Npower, sponsors of the conference, were enthusiastic about the response they'd had, and commented, "The Northern Housing Consortium Energy Efficiency event has proved an excellent opportunity for networking with the principle players in this essential area of work, which impacts the Local Authorities and residents".

Feedback from delegates attending the event was equally positive:

"Highlighted some achievable goals for our organisation" Andi McLoughlin, Broadacres Housing

"Good subject matter – needs to be re-run annually", Tom Bell, Rotherham MBC

Northern Housing Consortium will also be publishing a new report this Spring. 'Accommodating a Greener Future' features a range of schemes, from new build developments to refurbishment projects, through to involving tenants and staff in the energy efficiency drive. This publication brings together some of these initiatives into a good practice case study guide intended to give

social housing providers ideas and inspiration for what they can do to protect the environment and prevent future climate change.

Case studies include:

- Rural Eco-Homes Development - Greenoak Housing Association
- Solar Panels - Places for People Group
- Home Energy Checks - The Gateshead Housing Company
- Earth Sheltered Scheme - Flagship Housing Association
- Composting Scheme - Westlea Housing Association
- European SunCities Project - Kirklees Neighbourhood Housing
- Underground Heating Pumps - Harrogate Borough Council
- Energy Efficiency Team - Wakefield and District Housing
- Car Sharing Scheme - Catalyst Housing Group
- Insulating Properties - Sunderland Housing Group

If you would like to receive a copy of Accommodating a Greener Future when it is published, please contact [enquiries@northern-consortium.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@northern-consortium.org.uk)

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