

The Northern Housing Consortium today welcomed the recommendations of the Quirk Review of community management and ownership of public assets. *'Making Assets Work'* sets out a vision for the future and a clear direction of travel aimed at unlocking the potential in our communities to own and manage community assets. The report highlights a range of case studies demonstrating how community ownership can foster a sense of belonging and play a role in enhancing the environment, alleviating poverty and raising aspirations in the community.

Sarah Mtango, Northern Housing Consortium's Policy Services Manager, commented "The link between community ownership, sustainable communities and social inclusion makes this an important area of policy development for the housing sector, and as such our members have a key role to play in supporting community ownership in the North. The benefits for the sector and the communities we work with are clear but as with any new partnerships there are risks. The Quirk Review demonstrates clearly and positively that the benefits outweigh the risks, and highlights the potential for community ownership to lead to higher levels of satisfaction through locally responsive services, greater confidence from community empowerment and cohesion, and financial strength and influence through the development of local businesses and social enterprises."

The Northern Housing Consortium Annual Resident Involvement Conference on 26-27th June 2007, in Blackpool, will feature a range of sessions on this important area of policy, including key messages from the Quirk Review, social enterprise in Manchester, the Goodwin Development Trust in Hull, and early thinking around community land trusts in the North.

The Northern Housing Consortium is also launching a new policy and research project on community ownership in the North. Using a series of case studies, the project will explore how models of community ownership are being developed in the North and how the outcomes are helping the North's communities achieve their aspirations. The case studies will be used to inform a policy and good practice publication to be published in the autumn. If you have an example of good practice and would be willing to share your experiences and learning please contact enquiries@northern-consortium.org.uk. We are also interested to hear from organisations with developing case studies.