

URBNG007 Community Participation in City Strategies: Final Report
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Alternative Forms of Housing and the Next London Plan

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Cover image: Co-operative housing in Coin Street, London
Source: <http://www.camlinlonsdale.com/residential/>

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1. Summary

The aim of this report is to consider amendments to the next London Plan that could support and encourage the growth of alternative forms of housing in the capital. In doing so, it defines what is meant by ‘alternative forms’, and assesses how each model might be of use in providing genuinely affordable housing for local people, as well as lessons that might be learned from other countries. In addition to recommendations specifically relating to the London Plan, the report sets out the wider context and other policy areas that could be considered, including the London Housing Strategy.

2. Introduction

2.1 What is ‘alternative housing’?

The term ‘alternative housing’ refers to a wide range of different typologies and practices, but can be broadly defined as falling into two main areas. The first is ‘mutual’ or ‘intentional’ schemes where a group of residents or a community has come together around a social model of participative or self-managed forms of housing, such as cohousing, or co-operative housing. The second area could be defined as ‘a range of material and technological innovations that can improve the form, quality and future sustainability of supply’ (Fernández, 2014), and in the context of this report is defined predominantly as self-build housing. The two definitions are not mutually exclusive, and it is common to find projects that use both innovative social or economic models as well as innovative construction approaches.

2.2 The situation in London

In recent years, there has been a growing housing crisis in London and the southeast, driven by a perfect storm of fast-rising population, an influx of speculative investment capital from overseas, restrictions on social housing budgets (further impacted by right-to-buy policies) and development restrictions in the surrounding counties. It is becoming increasingly difficult to live in the capital for those without substantial incomes or assets.

At the same time, successive national governments have claimed to encourage greater community participation in planning and housing policy — most recently through the

coalition's 'Big Society' agenda and the Localism Act of 2011. Yet the last 15 years of the GLA have seen the Mayor set the agenda, with community groups and the wider public invited only to comment. The result is a narrowing of the debate, and a stifling of the imagination of communities across London.

What housing agenda would community groups want to set if given the opportunity to challenge London's increasingly unaffordable and speculation-driven housing market? And what role can alternative forms of housing play in that agenda?

Since 2000, the Mayor and the GLA have gained increasing powers and budget, including a greater say over housing policy. Although the London Plan makes reference to alternative forms, for instance support for the community 'Right to Build' with the 'Build Your Own Home - The London Way' policy, the focus of the plan as a whole is on raising the quantity of housing output in the capital, rather than addressing the problems of a private developer-led delivery system.

2.3 Aims and Objectives

This report provides supporting information and recommendations to Just Space¹ with the aim to:

- Set out and define the range of alternative housing models that exists in the UK and abroad;
- Identify what benefits such alternatives might bring, in particular the role that each could play in the long term sustainable provision of genuinely affordable² housing for Londoners;
- Identify the barriers to the development of alternative housing in the London context;
- Explore international examples of alternative housing models and consider potential lessons that the UK and specifically London could draw from other national and urban policy contexts;
- Make recommendations for the next revision of the London Plan that could support the growth of these alternatives;

¹ JustSpace is an informal alliance of community groups, campaigns and concerned independent organisation and was formed in 2006 to act as a voice for Londoners at grass-roots level during the formulation of London's major planning strategy. See <http://justspace.org.uk/> for more information.

² With 'genuinely affordable' we refer to the affordability formula of rents not exceeding 30-35% of the local median household income, instead of the government's definition of 80% of market rents. For more information see the London Tenants Federation's *Affordable Housing Con* (<http://www.londontenants.org/publications/other/theaffordablehousingconf.pdf>) for more information.

- Consider other existing and potential Mayoral/GLA powers and policies, in particular the London Housing Strategy, that could be used to support the growth of alternative housing models.

2.4 Methodologies

The core methods used in compiling this report were:

- A wide-ranging literature review;
- Interviews with representatives of community organisations actively involved in different forms of alternative housing, as well as academics working in the field (see list below);
- Analysis of findings and drawing together by theme.

List of Interviewees:

- Andrea Hofling, Megan Doolittle, and Patricia Holland from the Policy and Public Relations Committee of the *Vine Housing Co-op*
- Greg Robbins from the London Federation of Housing Coops
- Kareem Dayes, *Rural Urban Synthesis Society* (<http://www.theruss.org>)
- Mark Allen, *Chisel Housing Association* (<http://www.chisel.org.uk>)
- Martin Field, *University of Northampton*
- John Gillespie, *Community Self Build Agency*
- Arie van Wijngaarden, *manager of self-build project in Amsterdam*
- Jonathan Rosenberg, *West Kensington and Gibbs Green Estate*
- Yvonne Rydin, *Bartlett*
- Colin Lock, *Phoenix Co-op*
- Melissa Fernandez, *LSE, year long alternatives project*
- Maria Brenton, *UK Cohousing Network and project manager for OWCH*

3. Housing Policy Context - Existing GLA Policies, Programmes and Funds

In accordance with the London Housing Strategy adopted in October 2014, the GLA launched a series of programmes and funds aimed at stimulating additional housing provision in the capital, and largely intended for large-scale developments and major developers. However, some of the funds directly or indirectly relate to alternative forms, and the summary below illustrates the scale of housing funds available to the GLA overall.

- *The London Housing Bank* is not a financial institution, but a programme that in its first phase allocated £200m of cheap loan funding, intended to enable more homes to be brought forward faster than would otherwise be delivered, particularly on large multi-phased sites. Loans are made to developers of schemes that have already obtained planning consent, but are delayed due to financial issues (GLA, 2014a). The homes will be let as Intermediate Rent (80% of the market rent) for the whole duration of the outstanding GLA loan, and for a minimum of seven years. At the end of this period, several exit routes are envisaged and the loan has to be repaid (including annual interest). The London Housing Bank's second phase, launched in January 2015, allocated £180m to deliver additional shared ownership homes, and its *First Steps Challenge Fund* aims to support delivery of 3,000 shared ownership homes by March 2020. Funding will be provided on a recoverable basis (GLA, 2015d). According to the Mayor, the investment scheme should make available homes sooner than they would otherwise have been, and at a more affordable rent (PropertyWire, 2014).
- The *Build your own home – the London Way* programme allocates £3m of revenue grant funding to support the *Community Right to Build* and £5m of repayable development finance for custom build housing. Nationally, the *Community Right to Build* fund is aimed at community groups or parish councils that are considering applying for a Community Right to Build Order or planning permission. (GLA, 2015a). The GLA has also introduced the *Custom Build Serviced Plot Loan Fund*, which allocates £150 million of short term loans to bring forward 'shovel ready' serviced plots for the development of custom build housing. The fund intends to help address the primary difficulty faced by many custom builders of securing a suitable plot for their project (GLA, 2015b). Of all the recent funding initiatives, this is the most relevant to alternative forms of housing, specifically self-build, and is noted in that context later in this report.

- The *Housing Zone* programme offers funding of £400m for a programme to deliver 50,000 new homes in 20 housing zones across London over the next ten years. The first round of over £260m of funding (of which £154m is in the form of loans) aims to attract more than £9.4 billion of investment and to accelerate the building of 28,000 new homes, 9,000 of which would be affordable (GLA, 2015c). The fund is designed to unlock or accelerate housing delivery, with Londoners purchasing as owner-occupiers given priority. The prospectus issued by the GLA outlines three options: new long-term market rent homes, affordable homes for rent, and low cost home ownership. Housing Zones have been predominantly located in designated Opportunity Areas, but boroughs may apply for them in other locations, with transport accessibility a key consideration (GLA, 2014b).
- The Mayor of London allocated £60 million from the *Targeted Funding Stream* to bring empty homes back into use (GLA, 2015e). There is great potential here for the use of community-based alternative models; one example is the Granby Four Streets project in Liverpool - a community land trust which took over and renovated a whole neighbourhood of vacant properties (Wainwright 2014).
- The *Mayor's Care and Support Specialised Housing Fund* allocates £30 million to stimulate the private market and encourage private developers to deliver purpose-built affordable homes for older people and disabled adults. There is the opportunity to bid for loan and equity finance and grant funding where it is applied to the affordable element of a mixed use private and affordable scheme (GLA, 2015f). Although alternative forms of housing are not included, the GLA recognises the need for the range of alternatives for older people to be expanded (GLA 2012) and as noted later in this report, there is a strong potential role here to be played by senior or mixed-age cohousing.

In addition, the GLA's *Affordable Homes Programme* takes control of funding for the London area previously administered by national government. It aimed to provide allocations of over £627m to 60 investment partners to deliver homes for affordable rent and home ownership across the capital from 2011 to the end of March 2015." No reference is made to it in either the London Housing Strategy or the London Plan, but has clearly played a significant role in the provision of affordable housing.

4. Alternative and Mutual Forms of Housing: Definitions, Advantages and Barriers

4.1 Key models for alternative forms

Alternative and mutual forms of housing do not fit into a simple set of definitions; rather, the terms cover a broad spectrum of approaches and models, sometimes but not always including elements of shared communal facilities, trust-held ownership, community management, self-procurement, self-build and self-help. Approaches and models often overlap in practice (see Figure 4.1.1 below); for example, a Community Land Trust (CLT) can be founded on a cohousing model as it may include communal space shared by the group - although conversely cohousing need not be a CLT.

However, this report identifies a small number of key models, which together represent a 'definable' set of approaches that are, or could be, recognised in legal and planning terms. The selection of these models is also informed by the extensive discourse around alternative and mutual forms of housing, as well as national planning policy and legislation, most notably the Localism Act 2011.

Among the different models, which are presented in greater depth below, it is possible to distinguish between two main groups: legally established, community-led housing forms on the one hand, and delivery tools on the other. More specifically, co-housing, Community Land Trusts and housing co-operatives belong to the first category, whilst self-build, self-commissioned and self-help housing are included in the latter. The main operational difference between the two is that the former have a well-defined legal status which incorporates a necessary community-led approach to housing production, ownership and/or management, whilst the latter are techniques that can be used for producing either mutual, collectively owned homes, or private, individually owned homes. Nonetheless, as various experiences have demonstrated (for example Walter's Way in Lewisham), delivery tools such as self-build can be a powerful means to create or strengthen the sense of community belonging to a neighbourhood, as well as to establish a positive collaborative climate that allows residents to establish a wider common vision and objectives.

Each alternative housing model is set out below, giving a definition and an assessment of its advantages, with a particular focus on its potential to respond to London's crisis in housing affordability and to provide genuinely affordable housing for low-income households in London. This section of the report will also outline potential barriers to

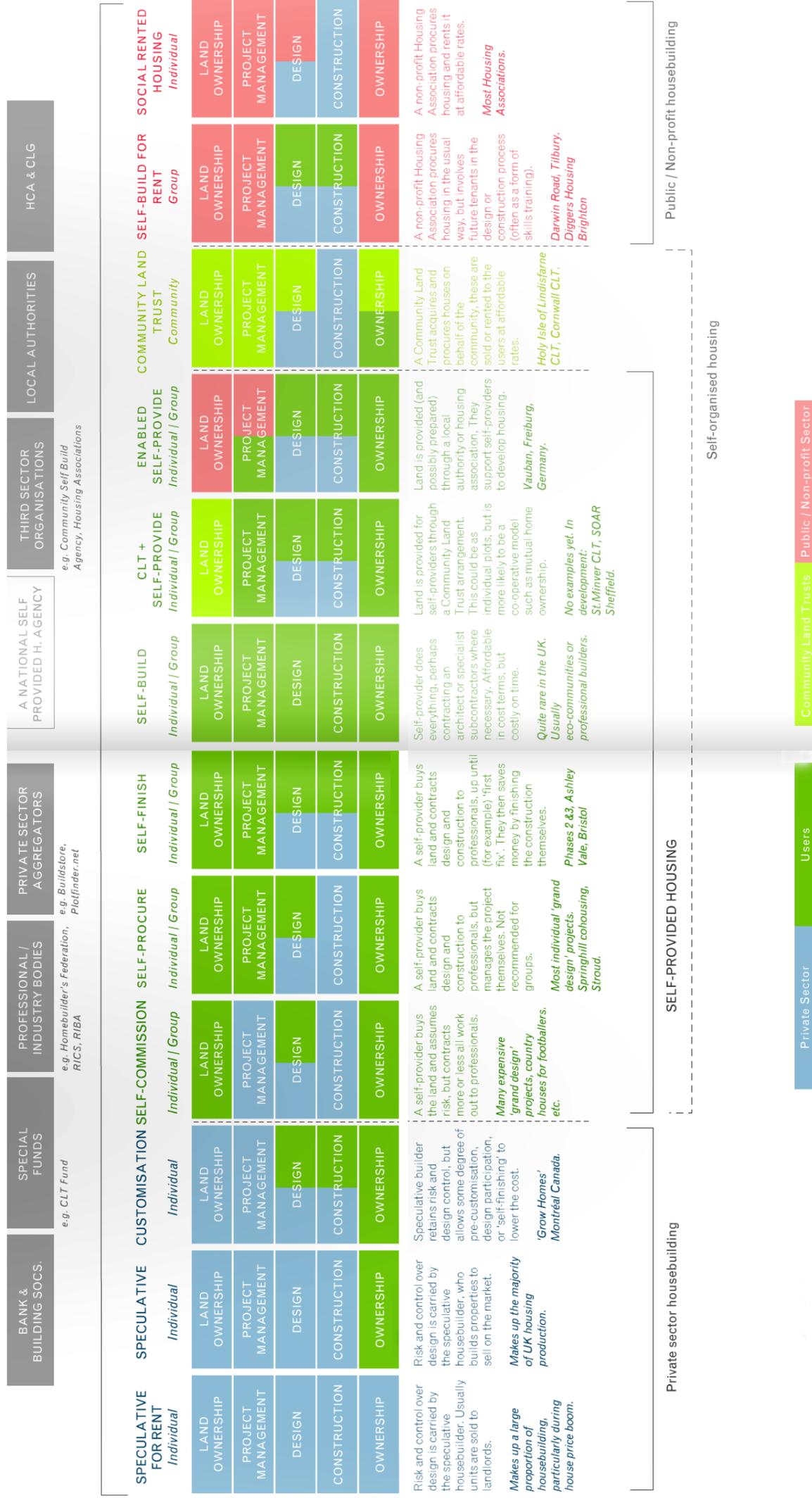


Figure 4.1.1 Forms of housing production, ownership and management. Source: Parvin and al. (2011)

establishing and scaling up community-led housing schemes in London, as well as propose some tentative recommendations.

4.2 Cohousing

Cohousing currently has no strict legal or planning definition in the UK, although it has many factors in common with co-operative housing and other forms of mutual housing. Martin Field (2011) notes that there is some confusion over the term 'cohousing', often including small developments of only three or four homes, which he regards as too small a number to create the necessary group dynamic. He suggests that the idea of creating a *neighbourhood* is key to the cohousing ideal, and defines cohousing's core characteristics as:

- Designed in order to create intentional neighbourhoods;
- Having a minimum provision of essential private and common facilities;
- Being of a size and scale suitable to foster and sustain the necessary community dynamics;
- Cohousing residents having the final say about all aspects of their neighbourhood.

Although these definitions are key to the cohousing model, it would be difficult to interpret all of them in terms of legal planning definitions. However, the provision of common facilities - perhaps the most most important of the core definitions - certainly could be, and inclusion of additional definitions into the London Plan and other documents might be possible, for instance via recognition and membership of the UK Cohousing Network.

Although numbers in the UK are still very small compared to cohousing in the USA, where it has its roots, and equivalent models in northern Europe, cohousing appears to be fast gathering momentum, with new groups emerging across the UK. Thus far, there is a tendency for groups to acquire land and develop sites outside the larger cities and in less-developed areas, the biggest barrier being land costs, particularly in London. The Loco cohousing group, for instance, draws its membership from the Greater London Area, but made the decision to acquire a development site near Colchester in Essex, an acceptable compromise between proximity to the capital and affordability (Loco 2015).

It should be noted that alternative housing projects are often built to very high standards of environmental sustainability; this may be due in part to the nature of a community-minded group coming together with idealistic aims. But an additional advantage with some cohousing schemes is the ability to share facilities such as washing machines and

garden tools, with direct and indirect energy savings as a consequence (Williams 2012:61).

In themselves, cohousing developments need not provide any element of affordable or social housing, and indeed in purely private examples of cohousing, the group's members are required by necessity to jointly raise capital to buy land and build the development, while still living elsewhere.

However, this is not to say that cohousing cannot seek to provide this role. Low Impact Living Affordable Community (LILAC) in Leeds is a member-led, not-for-profit Co-operative Society. The group is pioneering a new model for affordable housing, known as a Mutual Home Ownership Society (MHOS), which ensures the properties remain permanently affordable: every household has a shareholding in the Society, to which they pay 35% of their net income. The MHOS owns the homes, and repays the equity; this means that there are fewer deductions when that household leaves. The land is owned by a Community Land Trust (see section on CLTs in this report) which grants a lease to the MHOS at a peppercorn rent. The outcome is in effect to remove the potential of speculation from joining or leaving the community (Chatterton 2011). It could be argued therefore that although cohousing can provide affordable housing, the affordable dimension is built on a CLT or similar financial model, rather than inherent to the nature or definition of cohousing itself.

However, the area where cohousing might be able to make a key contribution in its own right is in housing provision for older people. Policy 3.8 of the current London Plan requires that 'account is taken of the changing age structure of London's population and, in particular, the varied needs of older Londoners, including for supported and affordable provision.' Cohousing has the potential to provide significant benefits, providing older people with the option to live sociable but independent lives for longer. Brenton (2008) notes that one of the benefits of senior cohousing is not to provide an alternative to elder care or more intensive support where this is needed, but to reduce the need for such care in the first place, through social contact and support between individuals.

But there is a further potential positive outcome from widening the range of choices for older people themselves: the release of so-called 'under-occupied' homes into the supply pool. Older people do not necessarily perceive themselves as 'under-occupiers' (Pannell, Aldridge and Kenway 2012) but may be more likely to do so when they have the option of joining a community of peers (Brenton 2011).

A previous GLA report has already assessed how housing provision for older people could be improved through planning policies (GLA 2012), and as a high priority includes

the recommendation that the GLA and the London boroughs ‘should consider how the planning process can be used so that those older households in both the market and the affordable sectors who wish to downsize have a choice of attractive alternative accommodation to move into, thereby freeing up family housing.’

There are currently three senior cohousing groups in London, at various stages of development with the furthest advanced - the Older Women’s Cohousing group (OWCH) likely to complete on site late this year. All the groups have found the process of site location, financing, and negotiating the planning process difficult and challenging. It is clear that cohousing as a choice is no easy option, and this may be a deterrent in scaling up the model to play a significant role in London’s alternative housing provision.

Nonetheless, recognition through the London Plan and the London Housing Strategy may well prove a significant boost to unlock the potential benefits of a greatly increased number of cohousing projects.

4.3 Community Land Trusts

According to the legal definition provided by the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008, Community Land Trusts (CLTs) are corporate bodies that are established ‘for the express purpose of furthering the social, economic and environmental interests of a local community’ (Section 79). In particular, CLTs have to:

- Provide benefit to the local community;
- Ensure that the assets are not sold or developed except in a manner which the trust’s members think benefits the local community;
- Use profits from its activities for the benefit of the local community;
- Ensure that individuals who live or work in the specified area have the opportunity to become members of the trust;
- Be controlled by the members of the trust.

In short, CLTs are mechanisms for creating community ownership and management of land, and ensuring that any profits are reinvested in the local community (Diacon et al. 2005). CLTs employ a variety of legal structures and carry out a wide range of activities in response to the needs of the local community (Rosenberg and Yuen 2012). The CLT model can be applied to different forms of housing, as well as commercial and community spaces, including: social rented housing, limited-equity co-operative housing, mutual housing, affordable homeownership, small businesses, office buildings, and

community centres. The model is thus incredibly flexible, enabling CLTs to respond to their local context.

Despite the great variety in how the model has been applied, arguably the defining characteristic of CLTs is that the assets remain permanently affordable (Diacon et al., 2005; Moore and Mullins 2013). This is because the value of the land is legally separated from the value of the buildings and the improvements of the land. However, as Marcuse (2013) suggests, it is not this separation which is radical, but instead the restrictions on the permitted sale price. When it is time to sell the buildings there are resale restrictions, preventing them from being sold at market value. If the price of the buildings only increases to the extent of the occupants' own investment of money or labour in the unit, the CLT model is radical.

Although most CLTs in the UK and abroad are situated in rural areas, largely due to the greater availability of land, CLTs are increasingly becoming an urban phenomenon. For example, the first CLT in London has been given planning permission and is in the process of being built: East London Community Land Trust (ELCLT). Arguably the most well known CLT in the UK, ELCLT will build 23 homes on the site of the former St Clement's hospital in Mile End, East London, with the support of the Greater London Authority (see Figure 4.3.1). ELCLT emerged out of a 10-year community organising campaign by London Citizens and has a membership of over 1000 East London residents. ELCLT will offer genuinely affordable homes to local people, as they have developed a price formula that is directly linked to local median incomes rather than market values of properties (Rydin 2013). The lower-income households will gain the stability and security that are normally the reserve of traditional homeowners.

Whilst ELCLT seeks to offer housing to those who are unable to afford market values, favouring lower-income households, not all CLTs have social justice aspirations. Indeed, at the other end of the scale there are CLTs that are simply an expanded form of co-operative homeownership used by those protecting an already privileged position within the housing market (Marcuse 2013). Therefore, although most CLTs aim to provide genuinely affordable housing for lower-income households, in practice they can also become exclusionary. ELCLT has even set minimum requirements on income for future residents (Howard 2014).



Figure 4.3.1: A photograph of the former St Clement's hospital in Mile End, the site of London's first CLT. Source: <http://www.theguardian.com>

Another organisation that is attempting to set up a CLT in London is the Rural Urban Synthesis Society (RUSS). RUSS is a non-profit community organisation based in Lewisham that is seeking to procure land from Lewisham Council so as to set up a CLT (see Figure 4.3.2). Its members have encountered various problems over the six years since RUSS was incorporated. The three main barriers they have experienced are:

- Lack of understanding of the CLT model among both Lewisham Council and the local community;
- Difficulty of procuring land - RUSS does not have the resources to go through the same procurement process as developers, as it relies very heavily on volunteers and the donated time of local professionals;
- Difficulty of accessing funding – RUSS has to rely on ethical banks as traditional banks do not understand the financial model and are reluctant to develop new mortgage products to accommodate what remains a rare phenomenon.

We must nonetheless recognise that Lewisham Council has designated a particular site in the borough for a community-led housing scheme and so although RUSS has to go through a lengthy and expensive procurement process, they are not competing with commercial developers.



Figure 4.3.2: Proposed plans for the CLT that RUSS is attempting to establish in Lewisham.
Source: <http://www.theruss.org/church-grove>

CLTs represent a potential solution to London's housing crisis, as they are able to act as a buffer against escalating land values and subsequent gentrification by providing homes that are genuinely affordable on a permanent basis for lower-income households. CLTs treat homes as consumer durables rather than speculative investments. However, there is not currently sufficient public and political understanding of, and support for, the model, leading to a difficulty among community groups in accessing both land and funding. If CLTs are to be scaled up across London and actually respond to its crisis in housing affordability, at least in part, these barriers need to be addressed through planning documents such as the London Plan and the London Housing Strategy.

4.4 Co-operatives

In accordance with the UN's definition, a co-operative is 'an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise' (UN

2012). When applied within the context of housing it creates a housing model which hinges on an approach of self-help and self-responsibility from its members.

Similarly to other European nations, many of the housing co-operatives within the UK developed as a subsidiary of the squatting movement taking place in the 1970s. A culmination of like-minded individuals and a common need for accommodation was often the catalyst for the formation of housing co-operatives during this period; as such, democracy, equality and solidarity were values that founding members of these housing cooperatives strove to achieve.

Moreover, during the 1970s and 1980s conditions in the UK proved favourable to encourage and cultivate emerging housing co-operatives primarily by government policies and an abundance of government funding – an example of which was the Housing Association Grant (otherwise known as HAG). However this was immediately followed by a period of austerity and subsequently housing co-operatives have been primarily experiencing a deceleration of activity. As such it is important to discern how housing co-operatives can develop in a more abstemious climate.

Despite housing co-operatives being the most established of all the alternative housing models discussed in this report they only account for 0.6% of the UK's housing stock and evidence suggests that in spite of growing support for alternative housing models as a result of the government's 2011 Localism Act there has not been a significant changes in the number of housing co-operatives being formed (CDS; Robbins 2015). Conversely, there has been serious oversubscription for what little housing is available. Against a backdrop of rapidly increasing house prices, co-operatives provide a housing model that is more affordable and allows for greater security and control. In addition to this in the tradition of their founders, co-operative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others; this makes it truly attractive to members and non-members alike.

There are 4 types of housing co-operatives, all of which encompass the principles of Voluntary and Open Membership; Democratic Member Control; Member Economic Participation; Autonomy and Independence Education, Training and Information; Co-operation among Co-operatives; Concern for Community. As the diagram below shows the types of cooperatives are as follows:

- Tenant ownership co-operatives (often called par-value co-ops);
- Tenant management co-operatives;
- Short-life housing co-operatives;
- Self-build co-operatives.

HOUSING CO-OPERATIVES

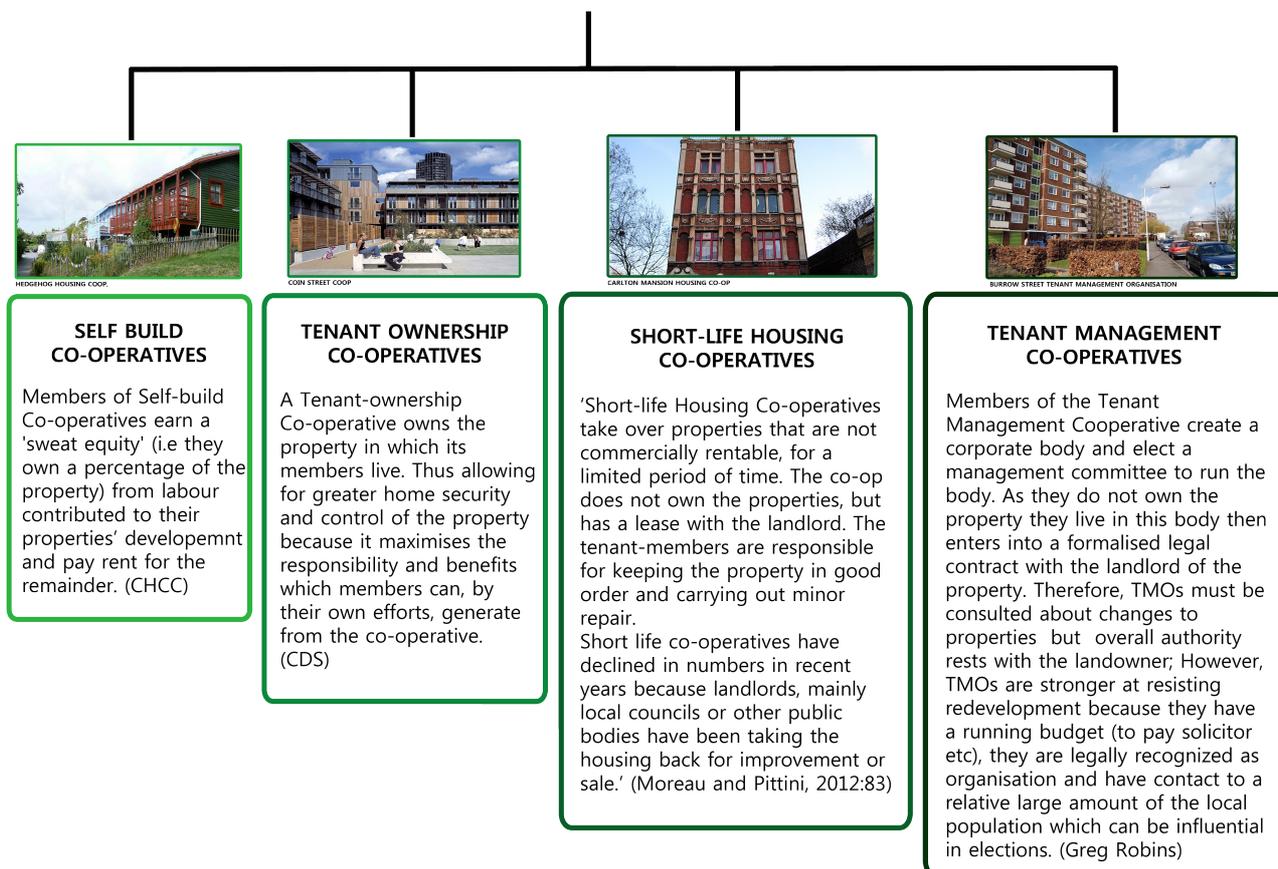


Figure 4.4.1 Types of housing co-operatives

Images available at: www.selfbuild-central.co.uk; www.brixtonbuzz.com; burrowesstreettmo.co.uk; <http://www.coinstreet.org>

Lang asserts in his work that 'co-operative initiatives in the field of housing are considered increasingly important for social cohesion in European cities' (Lang and Novy 2014:1744). Beyond this, housing co-operatives have many other significant benefits.

Financial:

- Within their financial framework, tenants (co-op members) control their rents;
- Tenants control service charges;
- Tenants control value for money (i.e. the balance between the quality and cost of a service);
- Tenants control rent arrears;
- Revenue made by the co-operative can be reinvested back into the co-op to improve the housing.

Quality of service:

- Tenants control the quality of repair service by choosing the contractor who carries out repairs;
- Tenants control the quality of management because managers are directly accountable to them.

Social:

- Housing co-ops build communities where people know and assist each other;
- Co-ops can reduce vandalism and anti-social behaviour;
- Housing co-ops often organise other services and social activities for members, e.g. child care or wellbeing workshops;
- Co-ops often have societal objectives – for example Vine co-op strive to accommodate disabled people and refugees.

Personal:

- Co-ops are inclusive;
- They create opportunities for members to develop new skills for personal betterment and for the good of the wider community;
- Housing co-ops reduce dependency and give their members a stake in where they live;
- Co-ops are often active in other areas, such as sustainability, or support of small-scale local businesses.

With all this in mind, we engaged with several housing co-operatives across London in order to investigate the problems facing housing co-operatives and to discuss the future aspirations of these housing co-operatives in London. The following representatives were consulted: members of Vine housing co-operative, Phoenix housing co-operative and Jonathan Rosenberg on behalf of Walterton and Elgin Community Homes. The following constraints were addressed during our conversation:

- Members of co-ops unanimously voiced concern that society's view of housing in the UK as a commodity coupled with a heavy reliance on a market system increased the value of housing beyond affordability, and meant that co-ops are left swimming against the tide of a speculative property buying and rapidly increasing house prices.

- It is increasingly difficult for co-ops to fulfil the complex regulatory requirements designed for larger social landlords.
- Living in a housing co-operative has negative consequences in the fields of other social policies, such as pension systems (because they all assume homeownership) and put co-op residents into marginal positions.
- Having paid off the cost of the housing they developed in the 1970s, co-operatives are now faced with a choice of whether to reinvest surplus into making housing cheaper (and thus even more affordable for its members) or to expand by developing more housing.
- Land scarcity is a major problem in London. Therefore co-operatives are trying to determine whether to seek to expand geographically beyond London where there is more land availability.
- Demand far outweighs supply for genuinely affordable housing and housing security means that many co-operatives have low turnover of their homes; this has proven to be difficult as their cooperative community expands. Co-operatives have to figure out how to prioritise housing needs.

We went on to discuss the ways in which co-operatives could be assisted in combating the constraints they face. The suggestions which are now being put forward fall into three broad categories: changes that need to occur within government, society and within the housing system.

- Change in political will – many local authorities recognise themselves as co-operative councils. However these claims should translate more into partnerships between local authorities and co-operatives;
- More control - Localism has shifted a lot of responsibility to a local level but without much power to effect change. Perhaps this calls for a redistribution of housing powers, for example through reintroducing the Right to Manage legislation (the predecessor of Right to Transfer) which would allow for more tenant control;
- Regulation which reflects co-operative ownership and management rather than large housing associations and other social landlords;
- Introduction of more government subsidies (like HAG) and leniency clauses for community groups when they are developing houses;
- Development funding to expand, update and adapt genuinely affordable housing stock to meet diverse and changing needs of Londoners who wish to live in co-operative managed housing;
- Increasing public awareness about the co-operative movement;
- An extensive database and increased information on land availability;
- A suppression of land values and protection of land for 'common' use;

- Stronger support system from other co-operatives, housing developers and government;
- Providing specific expertise at low cost to cover skills and experience not available in small co-operatives.

Some of these changes will be harder to implement than others, especially those that involve altering society's mindset. However, as Moreau and Pittini mention 'ironically, the financial crisis may prove to be a stimulus for new housing co-operative development. Large housing associations, the main developers of new affordable housing in recent years, can no longer subsidise development from profits on homes built for sale. Also co-operatives have a unique status in UK law which should enable them to access investment from long term investors, which may lead to the development of a new wave of co-operatives in which members have an equity stake similar to the co-ownership societies of the 1960s and 70s' (Moreau and Pittini 2012:81). Therefore we may yet see a revival in the housing co-operative movement.

4.5 Self-build and self-commissioned housing

Self-build housing is defined as 'conceptualization, design and building of a home through undertaking all or some of the activities directly, or indirectly, through the management and sub-contracting of the work' (Brown 2008). According to the definition by Parvin (2011), self-build is actually a sub-category of a delivery tool based on self-provision that encompasses three types which are self-build, self-procure and self-commission. The main distinction between self-build and self-procured housing is at the stage of construction: in self-build, in addition to securing land, finance and planning permission the end user also carries out the actual construction process.

When we refer to self-build or self-commissioned as alternative forms of housing, we want to encompass all these sub-categories. Although self-build housing only accounts for 7-10% of all new housing provision in the UK (Wilson and Heath 2014), much lower than many other countries, the UK is increasingly recognising the potential of self-build to tackle UK's crisis in housing affordability. Indeed, as Brown et al. (2013) suggest, the housing built in the UK is 'unaffordable, unsustainable, undesirable, unsociable or simply unavailable and much of the crisis is attributable to the way that most housing is built by a few large companies, who build products speculatively for sale, rather than individual households or groups of people building homes for themselves'. But this recognition does not come along with an understanding of the conditions that led to crisis and it also provides no agenda that empowers self building.

In the past, there have been examples of self-build projects on a significant scale in London, notably in the borough of Lewisham, which has a strong tradition of self-build and self-commissioned housing, with more than 200 self-build projects built in the 1980s and 90s. The Council provided sites, which it continued to own throughout the building process; it provided each of the self-builder households with a mortgage, and transferred the properties to them at the end of the build process. Self-builders volunteered and were selected by straw poll from the council's own housing waiting list; a documentary made at the time makes it clear that those involved were by no means middle class, and in fact were those who would otherwise not have been able to obtain mortgages (BBC 1982). Unfortunately, the model pursued by the council gradually became more bureaucratic, and eventually was eroded by the transfer of self-build projects to housing associations, whose own more limited funding models effectively brought an end to the experiment in the mid 1990s (Benson forthcoming).

Given the costs and lack of assistance from the state or local authorities (Benson 2012), self-build and self-commissioned housing tend to remain an isolated, and predominantly middle-class endeavour. Nonetheless, self-build in particular still potentially offers a way for those with less capital or disposable income to use their 'sweat equity', i.e. their own labour, towards the total cost, and there are examples of significant recent success. The Headway Self-build group, comprising existing social housing tenants who were seeking less cramped accommodation, is currently completing a development of 10 family homes on a site owned by Circle 33 Housing. The development is backed by the Community Self-Build Agency, and designed by John Broome Architects, who have a history of self-build projects including many of those in Lewisham previously noted. The Headway project is a 'shell and fit-out' scheme, where a main contractor builds the basic building shell, which is then completed by the self-builders (Broome 2014). Critical in this example is that Circle 33 as the owner of the site - a run-down block of garages - were persuaded to make it available for the self-build group.

The *Community Right to Build* is one of the instruments for neighbourhood planning provided by the Localism Act 2011. It allows local communities to build new homes or other facilities without passing through the regular planning process. However the proposed projects must be approved by more than 50% of local people voting in a referendum and be in line with national and local planning strategies. In recent years the government created a special fund, managed by the Homes and Communities Agency, that has given support to those groups that had identified land, complementary sources of finance and had received local support for their proposal. However, the funding programme is site-specific and provides help only to those groups that have already managed to secure land, an aspect which could prove to be especially challenging in urban areas affected by great market pressure, such as London. Therefore this tool

should be combined with policies that allow easier access to land for communities, such as the *Community Right to Reclaim Land*.

In 2014, planning minister Nick Boles suggested that under the *Right to Build*, provisions, self-builders have the *right* to demand that local councils provide suitable sites for sale (The Guardian, 7 May 2014). Further, the London Plan in its current form notes (clause 3.57A) that the Mayor has refined the National Housing Strategy's support for "custom build" and the "Community Right to Build", by supporting this through his "Build Your Own Home – The London Way" programme. The Mayor is keen to work with local communities and other partners to expand the concept so that self-build can be developed on a greater scale, and make a significant contribution to the evolution of a London vernacular.

Increased demand in the future may put these policies to the test more thoroughly, though for the model to be successful there will need to be a fundamental shift in the way local authorities think about their remaining land assets.

4.6 Self-help

Self-help housing refers to 'bringing back into use empty properties that are in limbo and awaiting decisions over their future redevelopment and use' (Moore and Mullins 2013). Those usually comprise properties owned by:

- Local authorities or housing associations;
- Other public bodies;
- Private landlords.

In the last few years self-help housing in London has included the refurbishment of former industrial buildings (or, sometimes, offices) and their conversion into creative live-work spaces, occupied especially by young people and artist collectives. The major concentration of these can be observed in Hackney Wick, Fish Island and Tottenham, where, taking advantage of the many spacious and under-used buildings, groups of creative practitioners have tried to give an answer to the lack of affordable work and residential space in London (Brown 2012).

This phenomenon is becoming more relevant since the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 (LASPO) was introduced, making squatting in residential properties illegal and subject to imprisonment and fines.



Figure 4.6.1 One of the live-work spaces in Hackney Wick. Source Brown (2012)

In some cases the occupation of vacant factories has been formalized through case-by-case agreements between the occupants and the private landlord. The increasing presence of this phenomenon has determined the creation of a more standardised model and business for external agencies that act as an intermediary between owner and tenants, that become 'property guardians'. In this way the problems of a lack of affordable rented accommodation, illegal squatting and vacant property are addressed at the same time (Brown 2014).

This type of approach has potential especially because, in Rydin's words, 'markets tend not to deliver the lowest value property, at least in terms of new development, leaving it to adjustments in the existing stock to meet this demand' (Rydin 2013:116).

4.7 The Role of National Umbrella Networks

There are a number of national umbrella networks that exist to support and promote specific alternative forms of housing through sharing information, acting as a voice for their members, and developing connections between community groups. Together they have played an important role in the broader housing sector, and have often worked together to contribute to national and London housing policy debate and legislation, for instance the 2009 Commission on Co-operative and Mutual Housing produced the report *Bringing Democracy Home* (CCMH 2009).

Links to the key organisations are as follows:

<http://www.cohousing.org.uk/>

<http://www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk/>

<http://www.cch.coop/> ; <http://coophousing.org>

<http://www.communityselfbuildagency.org.uk/>

<http://self-help-housing.org/>

5. The International Policy Context

By international comparison, the UK lags behind with regards to alternative housing. In many countries, the share of cohousing, CLTs and housing co-operatives is substantially bigger. In Austria, for instance, one out of six residents lives in housing that was either built or is 'managed by a limited-profit housing association' (Moreau and Pittini 2012:9). Besides the previously emphasised importance of definitions for legal and financial purposes, other aspects of a policy context are crucial with regards to the establishment and provision of alternative forms of housing. A consideration of different policy contexts sheds lights on the measures that are taken in Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Canada, and highlights possible lessons to be learned for the UK.

The first crucial aspect that many countries with a high share of alternative forms of housing have in common is the strong involvement and support by public, and specifically local, authorities. The institutional context, in which a housing project is embedded, has indeed been found to highly influence its success (Ganapati 2010). In Germany, for instance, local authorities use their power of land allocation to achieve 'wider policy objectives beyond providing housing' (Brown et al 2013:8). On municipal land, they can create "serviced plots" that are distributed to the local community below market prices (Brinkley 2013), in line with the German urban development act 'Städtebauliche Entwicklungsmaßnahme', §165 BauGB (Brown et al 2013). The act allows a municipality to remain in control of the development process, serving the 'public needs' where 'conventional contracts' (with a developer) cannot achieve this end (Brown et al. 2013). Via 'land banks', many municipalities ensure that serviced plots will be at disposal at a discounted price to 'local people, families or those on low incomes' (NaSBA 2011:22). Similar measures are implemented by the communes in Switzerland, which can provide land and even form public-co-operative partnerships, granting co-operatives the 'right of use' (Moreau and Pittini 2012:73) of public land. Moreover, both Swiss federal and local authorities respect and collaborate with housing co-operatives in processes of urban renewal and planning (Ibid.). In the Netherlands, municipalities pursue their planning goals by buying and selling land by themselves while they designate zones for affordable housing, ensuring lower costs for self-builders. Moreover, some local governments stimulate self-build initiatives by providing infrastructure, whereas others allocate building land specifically for self-build purposes or reserve plots for low-income households in self-build initiatives (Lloyd, Peel and Janssen-Jansen 2015).

Closely related to the involvement of the public sector, the financing of alternative forms of housing turns out to be a second vital influencer. In settings where alternative forms are less prominent, finding adequate financing can often turn into a challenge. For this

reason, specific funding schemes and financial benefits such as tax relief have been established, with the aim to diminish the obstacles for community groups to access funding for their projects. In Germany, readily available mortgages for the purchase and the construction of the property exist for example for self-build projects (NaSBA 2011). Furthermore, the federal state offers assistance in the form of corporate tax reliefs for rental co-operatives (Moreau and Pittini 2012). If co-operative or limited-profit housing associations still run into financial troubles, the government provides respective support (Baker 2012). In Austria, a tax relief exists as well, combined with large public financing of alternative housing projects (90% of housing cooperatives for example receive some sort of public financing) and low interest rates for public grants and mortgages (Moreau and Pittini, 2012). A similar system applies in Canada, where special government mortgages, subsidies and rent support systems provide financial assistance (Ibid.).

Furthermore, it emerges that large umbrella organisations play a substantial role in advocating, education and promoting alternative forms of housing. In Switzerland, for instance, three main umbrella housing organisations are lobbying ‘the federal state to ensure housing co-operatives continue to prosper and that their successes are recognised to their fullest value’ (Moreau and Pittini 2012:73). In that way, they contributed considerably to the success of housing cooperatives in the country (Ibid.). In Germany, research found that umbrella organisations assist small cooperative startups, contributing to their success (Droste 2015). In the UK, similar networks exist as outlined in the previous section. However, through interviews undertaken for this report (see above), it is apparent that these networks’ influence on - and cooperation with - local and national authorities remains limited so far, when compared with international examples.

It is clear that in the countries referred to here, the key mechanisms supporting the success are strong government involvement and support, specific funding schemes and influential umbrella organisations. A further factor that perhaps underlies the existence of such mechanisms in these countries is a different culture around the provision of housing and its purpose; housing is seen in many countries as primarily a place to live rather than an investment asset. The Netherlands for instance has a strong ‘folk memory’ around communal living and concepts of community management and ownership (Brenton 1998:14). In the Netherlands and several other north European countries, there is a strong tradition of social housing provision not just for a minority of the population in greatest financial need, but also for better off working and middle class households - an entirely different concept to the ‘residualist’ model of social housing in the UK (Czischke 2014).

Taking the city of Zurich as an example, one can see that the common argument that London's housing crisis is too unique to learn from international comparisons, holds no foundation. In fact, Zurich found itself in a similar situation. As a fast growing and wealthy

city, which frequently scores one of the best quality of life indexes and attracts increasing numbers of people, the pressure on Zurich's housing market is growing as well. Therefore, the city council decided to become strongly involved in the housing sector and particularly support the establishment of non-profit housing schemes (Bamert 2012). Thereby, the city council's main objectives are the creation of affordable living space and social mix through eco-friendly and sustainable solutions (Ibid.). Important measures include:

- the transfer of land development rights to not-for-profit housing groups under beneficial conditions;
- the offer of low-interest mortgages to non-profit housing providers;
- the acquisition of shares in cooperatives and provision of capital for the formation of housing trusts;
- and the creation of municipal, non-profit housing estates (Ibid.).

And the measures turn out to be successful: between 2001 and 2003, for instance, 23% of newly built housing units comprised housing co-operatives and 1000 new units in co-operatives were alone built in 2008 (Moreau and Pittini 2012).

6. Conclusions

Essential to any proposed further amendments to the London Plan, or indeed other GLA policies or documents that relate to housing, is to set out what the benefits are, in this case from the perspective of providing genuinely affordable housing.

A brief summary of the key challenges and barriers for scaling up alternative models is also included.

6.1 What are the benefits of alternative housing?

Alternative forms of housing can:

- Create housing that safeguards genuine and permanent affordability, and can offer lower-income households the stability and security that are normally the reserve of traditional homeowners;

- If pursued on a significant scale, act to limit the property speculation that is such a major factor driving house price inflation in London. This is achieved by preventing the sale of the land that any buildings stand on, by keeping it permanently in community ownership, or by negating its potential profitability through long-term restrictions on rent rises;
- Have the potential to represent *real* community power - people doing for themselves what the politicians and the market have not done;
- Encourage social and technical innovation;
- Help build communities: many cohousing, self-build and other mutual housing groups have formed strong communities and social links through the process of planning and building;
- Provide support, especially to the elderly, in a longer and more productive old age - the example of senior cohousing responds directly to the London Plan's emphasis on the quality of housing for older Londoners;
- Make better use of small, difficult and awkward sites, where commercial housebuilders may be less interested;
- Provide a higher standard of design and energy efficiency in comparison with volume housebuilders; the community-led nature of many new-build cohousing and CLT projects have environmental sustainability at the heart of their agenda;
- Give a much greater weighting to the design quality of social space as a physical part of the development;
- Achieve relatively high densities - and given pressure on overcrowding in London, some models (such as cohousing) may suggest ways that using communal facilities could reduce the total accommodation area while minimising the impact on quality of life;
- Particularly in the case of cohousing, offer a model for intentional communities of older people (or mixed-age groups including older people) to live together in a self-supportive environment; two key advantages are that older people are likely to live longer without the need for more intensive care services, and also that older people are given an additional choice that may encourage the release of large 'under-occupied' properties;

- In the case of CLTs, offer a very flexible model that can respond to the specific needs of a local community.

6.2 Key Challenges and Barriers

The most obvious key challenge in London is the acquisition of land. For alternative housing schemes to be successful there needs to be a transfer of land from other ownership at below market prices. However, this already occurs for conventional social housing production with land transfers from local authorities, but also from private owners via S106 agreements.

At present, a second barrier is the lack of knowledge of alternative and mutual forms of housing among planners and other professionals involved in the development process in the capital. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that the various strands of the alternative housing 'movement' are growing, and with this will hopefully come greater publicity and promotion.

The third barrier is the difficulty of accessing funding. Indeed, community groups often have to rely on a handful of smaller 'ethical' banks such as Triodos, as traditional lenders do not understand, or are unwilling to consider, the complex financial models of alternative forms of housing. This significantly limits potential avenues of funding; some suggested remedies to this are included in the recommendations below.

6.3 Upscaling alternative forms of housing in London?

Although only one CLT has been given planning permission in London and this occurred as a result of a 10-year community organising campaign as well as specific support from the GLA, there is a sense of hope among community groups that if the barriers are addressed this form of alternative housing can be scaled up to provide genuinely affordable housing to a much larger proportion of the population. With greater understanding of the model and subsequent political and financial support, CLTs could, in conjunction with other alternative forms, respond to London's crisis in housing affordability.

From the reviewed forms of alternative housing, co-operatives seem like the easiest to scale up in a short amount of time. Short-life co-ops, for instance, can be used as

temporary solutions and take over new apartments, for instance those of overseas investors, within days. Moreover, existing housing stocks can easily be turned into tenant-management co-operatives.

John Gillespie (from Community Self Build Agency) thinks that self-build will remain as a small operation even though it might become bigger in the ownership sector.

7. Recommendations

Fundamental to many of the alternatives discussed in this report is that they are 'bottom up' models, that is conceived or pursued by community groups and organisations. Our recommendations therefore focus on how the GLA and its policies can provide an enabling and supporting role.

7.1 Proposed as amendments to the next London Plan

- Policy 3.8 (Housing Choice) to be expanded to make reference to alternative forms of housing, to require that the planning system provides positive and practical support to alternative forms of housing, and setting out further definitions and detail in the Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG), to enable London boroughs to facilitate its provision through the planning process.
- Consideration should be given to making alternative housing projects exempt from CIL and S.106 where otherwise applicable, on the basis that such alternatives are in themselves a public or community benefit.
- The London Plan to include a requirement for the GLA to maintain a sites list suitable for alternative housing, compiled from information supplied by the London boroughs.
- Any provisions for alternative housing in the London Plan should follow the principle of 'additionality'; this means that they should not take the place of any other requirement for affordable or social housing through the planning process.
- Since housing delivery on large sites in London is often slowed down by developers' wish not to saturate the local market and thus lower realised sales prices (Adams and Leishman 2008), the GLA could ensure that parts of large

housing sites be allocated for alternative forms of provision to accelerate build-out rates.

- For cohousing, including senior and mixed-age cohousing:
 - The GLA and the London boroughs should consider how the planning process can be used so that those older households in both the market and the affordable sectors who wish to downsize have a better choice of alternative accommodation, thereby freeing up family housing.
 - The clarification of use classes between C2 (residential institutions) and C3 (private dwellings) should be investigated. Currently cohousing is categorised as C3 only.

7.2 Other policy areas and tools, including the London Housing Strategy

Further recommendations beyond the London Plan itself are that:

- The GLA should encourage a better understanding of the economics of the development of alternative forms of housing, including sometimes longer timescales, and challenges to viability. The GLA should work with the London boroughs and where appropriate with developers to establish a common understanding of the economics of alternative models of housing and how they differ from general housing, including affordable housing.
- The GLA should provide a dedicated team and/or resource for alternative forms of housing provision, to support the London boroughs, who are unable to resource this individually. Its tasks to include:
 - Maintaining close contact and coordination with existing umbrella organisations such as the national cohousing and CLT networks;
 - Ensuring that the GLA coordinates all available grant allocations and other funding for alternative forms from the national government, and monitors how these funds are spent.
- The GLA should investigate the development of a separate urban investment bank or MIC (Municipal Investment Corporation), linked to a British Investment Bank (BIB) which could support the development of public social housing and alternatives (Falk 2014).
- The London boroughs should set up regulations which reflect small scale (co-operative) ownership and management rather than large housing associations and

provide specific expertise at low cost to cover skills and experience not available in small community projects

- For senior cohousing, close co-ordination is needed between the GLA's existing strategy for increasing housing choices for older people, and strategies it adopts to support alternative forms of housing, in particular senior cohousing.
- The London boroughs should support tenants who wish to form a Tenant Management Organisation.
- Short life co-ops should be promoted, which can take over additional properties relatively quickly and thus offer an opportunity to scale up the provision of affordable living spaces in a short amount of time.

As previously noted, there are a number of budgets and programmes that form a part of the Housing Strategy or are under the control of the GLA, where future policy could potentially be amended to address alternative forms of housing. A detailed analysis is beyond the remit of this report, but further investigation is recommended for the following:

- The London Housing Bank programme
- 'Community Right to Build' funding under the Mayor's *Build Your Own Home - the London Way!* programme
- Funding associated with the Housing Zone programme
- The Targeted Funding Stream for bringing empty homes back into use
- The Mayor's Care and Support Specialised Housing Fund
- The GLA's Affordable Homes Programme budget

7.3 Looking to the Future

The conclusions and recommendations in this report, although addressing alternative forms of housing production and organisation, in a sense still represent a reactive response to the situation, whereby the Mayor sets out policy and invites responses from the public.

In his recent report, Stephen Hill sets out an alternative vision, proposing that the increasing number of organisations and protest groups seeking change in the way housing is provided come together as a 'Citizens' Housing Alliance', as one of three new community organised institutions (Hill 2015):

“... through which civil society can play a more direct and instrumental role in the shaping of housing and planning policy, and lead a change in the political and popular culture about the operation of land and housing markets”.

Hill sets out a series of aims for the Citizens' Housing Alliance as changing the *culture* of housing in Britain:

- Creating an effective voice of the demand side in housing policy, for ordinary citizens and communities of place and interest across the UK, directly influencing government and the supply side about what should be built where, by whom and at what cost;
- Enabling and supporting the state to develop a pro-housing narrative, and to gain the consent of the public to building 'more homes near them';
- Developing a strong shared identity and set of common good values and objectives;
- Gaining recognition for citizen inspired housing as an expression of both the demand side... 'what people really need and want', and as part of the supply side... 'we will do it our way';
- Creating a more open culture in councils and housing providers to include citizen inspired housing as a normal choice in the building of new homes and reusing empty properties;
- Ensuring that the resources and opportunities needed by citizens to create their own housing solutions are included as a matter of course in policy initiatives that support other already established supply side institutions.

Such aims may seem ambitious given the increasingly dysfunctional UK housing situation, particularly in London and the southeast. However, with signs that the crisis is pushing housing toward the centre of national discourse, perhaps there will in the future be a greater receptiveness to alternative ideas which had previously existed only at the margins.

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9. Appendices

9.1 Resources and contacts

Person	Role/Area of Interest	Organisation	Contact
Mark Allan	Background in self-build housing projects in Lewisham, now works for Chisel HA, who manage many of the self-builds originally set up by Lewisham council.	Chisel Housing Association, Brockley	involvement@chisel.org.uk
Dr Michaela Benson	Senior lecturer in sociology, interest in urban sociology, currently researching self-build	Goldsmiths, Dept of Sociology	michaela.benson@gold.ac.uk
Maria Brenton	Aging and social care, cooperative living arrangements among older women (OWCH), lifetime homes and neighbourhoods.	London based independent senior cohousing advocate.	mariabrenton@safeserve.com
John Broome	Architect heavily involved in self-build and sustainable housing over the last three decades in London.	John Broome Architects, http://www.jonbroome.co.uk/	jon@jonbroome.co.uk
Robin Brown	Hayes Community Forum and Just Space Treasurer	Just Space	http://justspace.org.uk/about/contact
Dr. Paul Chatterton	Sustainable communities, urban regeneration, community self management, popular protest cultures and social movements, low-post carbon cities	University of Leeds, School of Geography, also LILAC, Leeds	P.Chatterton@leeds.ac.uk www.lilac.coop
Michael Edwards	Teaching fellow at Bartlett School of Planning, also writing and campaigning on planning and housing in London	Bartlett School of Planning, UCL	m.edwards@ucl.ac.uk
Dr. Melissa Fernández	Reviewing the group formation process of Featherstone cohousing project.. Intention is to review findings in a national context.	Research Officer LSE London	M.Fernandez1@lse.ac.uk

Person	Role/Area of Interest	Organisation	Contact
Dr Martin Field	Cohousing in Britain, a Diggers and Dreamers review (with Chris Coates); (2011) What is cohousing? (conference paper). Housing cooperatives and other 'mutual' housing models. Deconstructing UK's housing speculation.	Senior Lecturer, University of Northampton, Social Sciences - Inst. of Urban Affairs	martin.field@northampton.ac.uk
Daniel Fitzpatrick	Reviewing how mutual / community asset owning organisations interact with larger institutions/policy makers during 'set up' phase & how governance evolves.	Bartlett School of Planning, UCL	d.fitzpatrick@ucl.ac.uk
John Gillespie	National development director	Community Self Build Agency	johngillespie@communityselfbuildagency.org.uk
Catherine Harrington	Director of the Network since establishing it in 2010. Responsibility for the Network's fundraising as well as building and maintaining relationships with key organisations.	National CLT Network	catherine@communitylandtrusts.org.uk
Stephen Hill	Forty years experience in housing and planning, author of report 'Property Justice & Reason', board member of National CLT Network and UK Cohousing Network	Independent public interest practitioner	stephenhill@futureplanners.net http://stephenhillfutureplanning.blogspot.co.uk/
Richard Lee	Co-ordinator of the Just Space network, and long-term housing campaigner	Just Space	http://justspace.org.uk/about/contact/
Owain Roberts	Role in alternatives co-ordination for GLA	GLA	owain.roberts@london.gov.uk
Greg Robbins	Secretary of the London Federation of Housing Coops, general council member of the Confederation of Co-Operative Housing and member of the Dennis CLH Co-op	London Federation of Housing Coops	gregrobbins@wesupporthousing.co.uk
Kathleen Scanlon	Group formation, economics and finances of co-housing communities	Research Fellow, LSE London, London School of Economics	k.j.scanlon@lse.ac.uk