OUR POWER LIST OF THE HEAVY HITTERS DRIVING THE DELIVERY OF NEW HOMES

WHO'S WHO IN LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING DEVELOPMENT
Introduction

Local authorities have a crucial role to play in the development of much-needed new homes, from strategic leadership through to planning and development. The hurdles they face are significant, but up and down the country individual officers and politicians are persevering, and finding ever more creative solutions.

At a time when these solutions are being invented and implemented across the country, the new government continues to shape its own view on whether it wants to champion or discourage council development. There couldn’t be a more important time to focus on councils’ achievements and champion the people who are helping to ensure that more people have a quality home to live in.

That is Inside Housing’s Who’s Who in Local Authority Housing Development all about.

Of all the skills and traits exhibited by these individuals, and all the challenges they must overcome, it is the commitment that is more important than anything else: leadership. Clever solutions to funding and market conditions are important. But it is the personal leadership at all levels and across all parts of the organisation that makes housing development happen. For that reason, Inside Housing’s Who’s Who project focused on leadership.

We asked our expert panel to consider more than 100 nominations submitted by readers in councils, housing associations and the private sector, and some additional suggestions put forward by the panel and from Inside Housing.

They looked for vision, innovation, ambition, success and influence. They looked for leadership across councils and arm’s-length management organisations, from politicians and officers at all levels. Those on the list come from most parts of the UK, a variety of organisation types, and fulfil a spread of different roles. Of the individuals on the list, 35% are women and 65% are men. Where there are two people from the same authority showing significant leadership, both are included on the list as a joint entry.

Success and positive results look different according to local context, so our list is quite varied. Some on the list operate in places delivering impressive volumes of new homes, others have overcome challenges to start delivering. Some are developing directly, while others are enabling or working with others. Many are forging impressive partnerships to deliver more than the sum of the parts. Some names will already be known; others less so.

“It is the personal leadership that makes housing development happen.”

All are making an important contribution to leading the development of new homes. The panel felt that ranking those on our list would be arbitrary, but to reflect the different types of leadership shown they have highlighted four categories: the visionaries, accelerators, performers and influencers. They also wanted to specially recognise the leadership shown by two of the panel members. You can read their profiles on the following pages.

This project is intended to promote awareness and discussion of the achievements led by those on our Who’s Who list. I hope you will join me in congratulating them, continuing the discussion in the coming months, and perhaps nominating in the future.

emma.maier@insidehousing.co.uk

The expert panel

Inside Housing worked with field-to-examine what local authorities and those leading housing development were thanking them for their contribution and unrivalled knowledge.

Emma Maier, editor, Inside Housing

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Performers

Helen McHale
Chief executive, Stockport Homes
Helen McHale is praised by colleagues for combining a commercial approach to housing growth with a socially responsible commitment to meeting local needs. She has lobbied for funding to build homes for market rent and sale. There is now a deal on the horizon that could result in loans for all housing types. Helen says being an arm’s-length management organisation (ALMO) “can be a vulnerable place to be, you constantly need to prove yourself”. She is proud of her recent achievement in securing a 27-year management contract with the local council that allows the ALMO to build both within and outside the borough, and cements its role as the council’s development partner.

Tracey Lee
Chief executive
Nick Carter
Housing delivery team leader, Plymouth City Council
Plymouth was felt to be an impressive council by our judges and the executive team was praised for persevering in trying to regenerate the city. An example of this regeneration is the Georgian docks. The site was turned into a mixed-use residential scheme, which our judges were particularly impressed with.

Nick Carter has led a “dynamic and ambitious” programme to deliver 1,650 new homes in Plymouth, half of which will be affordable. He has secured cross-party support for developments. Tracey Lee is proud of the 5,000 new homes delivered in Plymouth over five years. She has also overseen the arrangement of a £50m affordable housing loan facility to support registered providers, housing co-operatives and community land trusts to deliver new homes at a time when the council faces a difficult financial climate.

Alison Butler
Cabinet member for homes, regeneration and planning, and deputy leader
Colm Lacey
Director of development, Croydon Borough Council
In a local government world where the obstacles to housing delivery are legion, Alison Butler is praised for her proactive and supportive approach. She has taken a lead across many areas in housing, including private rental, welfare reform and temporary accommodation shortages. Her proudest moment has been helping to establish the council’s housing development company, Brick by Brick, which aims to deliver 50% affordable housing.

CoLm Lacey’s own words, his “sheer stubborn bloody-mindedness” has helped to kick-start developments other people have written off. In one particular example developers, valuers, the council and funders were all convinced a site had no delivery potential. Colm persuaded them otherwise and the council subsequently sold it at one of the highest land values it had ever achieved.
Steve Pearce
director of regeneration,
East Hampshire District Council
East Hampshire has been praised by our judges for its hard work trying to make the best use of Ministry of Defence land in a rural area in which new development can be frowned upon.

Steve Pearce has worked hard behind the scenes to promote the area’s new eco town, including reaching out to the local county council. His team has also done a lot of work on building up transport connections.

Scott Cardwell
director of development,
Doncaster Council

Scott Cardwell is a name to remember, according to a senior colleague. He works with developers in an “engaging and enthusiastic way”, and despite Doncaster facing challenges attracting developers he has promoted a development-friendly culture that has led to a rise in housebuilding.

Scott “stands out” because of his “passion for Doncaster”. He is proud of his team delivering the best building figures for 15 years in the city after they revised the planning system and embarked on major regeneration and infrastructure projects.

Paul Derrien
housing enabling team leader,
Dorset Councils Partnership

The three Dorset councils have worked well together to boost housing delivery in the region. Paul Derrien from West Dorset District Council oversees the development of an extra care scheme, a long-standing council ambition. This development came about through joint working between the Duchy, Homes and Communities Agency, the county council and Varnham Homes.

Paul has experience in working with community land trusts and says that while such developments are time-consuming, they are also rewarding. As an object lesson, he cites a project in a small village that required numerous landowners, community groups, the Charity Commission, village hall committee and a small number of opponents to work together.

Julie Whittaker
housing, health and economic development manager,
Pendle Borough Council

Pendle Borough Council is credited with surviving a brutal 18% cut in revenue support grants from the government, and even though the top team has had one eye on the finances, it has always been careful to keep communities together in its housing schemes. The judges praised the council for being prepared “to go against the grain to get new housing delivered”.

This is evident from Julie Whittaker’s proud moment. When the council was denied permission for a compulsory purchase order to demolish housing, she and her team worked over the next 10 years with public agencies, pressure groups, funders and the local community to deliver a heritage-led regeneration of the area. This included mending relationships between the council and heritage organisations and coming up with innovative funding sources at a time when public sector grant funding was significantly reducing.

There are now 120 houses being fully refurbished on the site for a mixture of owner-occupation and affordable rent as well as a new school.

Carl Brazier
director of housing, Stoke-on-Trent City Council

Our judges said Carl Brazier has been “shaking the tree” at Stoke-on-Trent City Council to boost the number of houses it delivers through self-build, custom build and extra care housing, among other tenure types.

The council has set up a housing company to build all types of tenure, including market sale, which is particularly welcome in an area where house prices have risen by 19% in recent months.

In his previous job at Stroud District Council, Carl kick-started the first council housing development programme in 30 years. Carl says his personal mantra is to make sure he always has great people around him “which is the most valuable commodity any organisation can have”.

Gary Josey
director of housing and communities

Robert Lawton
councilor (housing portfolio),
Bournemouth Borough Council

Gary Josey “brings energy and passion” according to our judges. He joined Bournemouth Borough Council in 1977, where he started out as an apprentice carpenter. He is described as a “great motivational leader” by colleagues and his leadership in setting up the council’s housing companies has been highlighted.

Robert Lawton was felt by our judges to “really own and drive the agenda” when it comes to housing in Bournemouth.
Influencers

**Manjeet Gill**
Chief Executive, West Lindsey District Council

Manjeet Gill has established a strong national reputation in her role as deputy housing spokesperson for the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives. She has worked with national organisations to boost housing supply and helped the sector gain a greater understanding of housing demand. West Lindsey District Council is a proactive authority and has taken steps to build more homes by investing its New Homes Bonus back into development, delivering housing with high environmental standards, reducing the number of empty homes in a commercial way that avoids grant subsidies and creating opportunities for smaller developers through the use of brownfield sites.

**Nick Walkley**
Chief Executive, Haringey Borough Council

Nick Walkley is a well known name in the world of local government, and has been unafraid to make bold decisions both during his time at Barnet Borough Council and now at Haringey. Haringey was the first council in the country to launch a private sector lettings agency through its arm’s length management organisation, Homes for Haringey. Nick has been outspoken about the need for the city’s borough leaders to work together to boost supply. He was an instrumental member of the London Housing Commission which set out the case for new powers in London to deal with the housing crisis.

**Pat Ritchie**
Chief Executive, Newcastle City Council

Pat Ritchie arrived in Newcastle with a wealth of housing experience under her belt, having once been part of the team pushing through a 500-home development in the west end of Newcastle, a part of the city that had suffered high levels of deprivation over the years. Owing to the low value of the land, the development would not have got off the ground without the council taking a leading role in acquiring the land, clearing it, finding partners to work in partnership with developers, the local community and the HCA to make it viable.

**Eamonn Boylan**
Chief Executive, Stockport Council

Eamonn Boylan has been instrumental in driving the housing agenda during the Greater Manchester devolution negotiations. Our judges said he was responsible for making sure all the councils worked together to hone their housing ask from government.

He cites the revamp of an estate in Moss Side as one of his career highlights: “We helped an embattled community take control of their neighbourhood once more.” Eamonn arrived at Stockport to head up the council six years ago, having come via a stint at the Homes and Communities Agency and as deputy chief executive at neighbouring Manchester City Council.

**U.S. and International Housing Development**

As the key annual event for the public sector housing sector, Who’s Who in Local Authority Housing Development offers a unique opportunity to meet the influential leaders shaping the future of the industry.

**About the Author**

Jon Enoch is the Editor of Who’s Who in Local Authority Housing Development, the leading annual guide to the key players in the sector.
WHO’S WHO
IN LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Clare Budden
chief officer – community and enterprise,
Flintshire County Council
Clare is described by her colleagues as a champion for housing development and regeneration across Wales, influencing all aspects of housing policy through her advisory role with the Welsh Local Government Association. She established the first Welsh local authority housing company, doing so in response to a problem with providing homes at affordable rents to meet the needs of the “squeezed middle”. She describes herself as “always a cup half full person” and says she remains persistent about getting things done.

Stephen Hills
director of housing,
South Cambridgeshire District Council
South Cambridgeshire District Council is known for punching above its weight in an area where the housing crisis is particularly acute. Stephen has expertly guided the housing team through budget cuts, regeneration hiccups and new developments. A testing time came during the regeneration of a large estate, where one homeowner refused to move out, leading to coverage in the local press. Stephen worked with local councillors to ensure they had compulsory purchase order powers at the ready if necessary, but skilful negotiation meant the owner was happy with the final settlement.

Elaine McHugh
head of housing services,
North Lanarkshire Council
North Lanarkshire Council is a leading light when it comes to helping the Scottish Government achieve its ambition of delivering 50,000 affordable homes. It recently announced it will build 1,800 new council homes by 2026 to help reduce the size of its waiting list and has earmarked £160m for the work. Elaine McHugh has been a key driver behind the council’s exciting development plans. She has also spearheaded a successful anti-social behaviour scheme, which was set up in partnership with the local police.

Clive Skidmore
head of development,
Birmingham City Council
Birmingham City Council has devised a clutch of interesting policies to boost housing numbers in recent years and at the bottom of every report seems to be the name of Clive Skidmore. Clive was nominated because his “strong leadership” has propelled the council to become the biggest developer in the city. He led the team responsible for setting up the Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust, which has delivered 2,300 new homes since 2010. He is also respected for offering advice to other local authorities and for promoting local authorities as house builders.

Paul Beardmore
director of housing,
Manchester City Council
Our judges unanimously felt that any list of the main players in council development would be incomplete without Paul Beardmore. Paul has been director of housing at Manchester City Council since 2009 and has played an important role in pushing housing up the agenda as Greater Manchester steamed ahead with its landmark devolution deal with the government.

Paul has taken a lead in Manchester by helping to reinvent the deprived Axons area in the city centre as New Islington, where more than 1,700 homes will be built. His proudest achievement was when he persuaded the council to offer equity loans to homeowners rather than grants. In his words: “Why should we give grants to enhance properties that were going up in value and the only people benefitting were the owners?” Other councils followed where Manchester led and are now benefitting from repayments on the equity loans “in an era when capital receipts are in short supply”. Paul points out.

Jon Mallen-Beadle
managing director,
The Gateshead Housing Company
According to his colleagues, Jon has been at the “forefront” of local authority development since 2009, when he set up Keepman Homes, a not-for-profit charity that aimed to regenerate parts of Gateshead. The judges felt that Gateshead was often more innovative than its higher-profile neighbour, Newcastle. The regeneration of the village of Kibblesworth was praised by the judges and cited by Jon as his proudest housing achievement. This project involved demolishing a number of properties and replacing them with a mix of houses and bungalows for a range of tenures. The council also set up an arts project to local schoolchildren and residents so the history of Kibblesworth would be remembered.

The development led to the halving of energy costs for tenants, leading people to move back into the village following years of population decline.

Accelarators

These individuals are moving at pace. Some are early in their journeys; others are scaling up. All have ambitious plans and are making a step-change.

Paul Kerly
chief executive
Gerry Clarkson
leader, Ashford Borough Council
Having made the unusual move from head of housing to chief executive of the council, Tracey Kerly is credited with driving the housing agenda at Ashford Borough Council.

She has extended her reach outside of her immediate remit to work closely with private developers and county level politicians in an effort to deliver more housing. Under Gerry Clarkson’s leadership, the council has set up a property company and lettings agency. In an effort to deal with the shortage of affordable housing in the area, the council is taking steps to open up its policy on who can develop this housing to try to boost numbers.

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**Visionaries**

These people are showing true transformational leadership. They see housing as a driver of social and economic growth and well-being. They are thinking differently and creating new solutions for a new future.

**Who’s Who in Local Authority Housing Development**

**John Lumley**

director – regeneration, Hackney Borough Council

John Lumley is credited with leading one of the largest estate regeneration projects ever completed, with 9,000 new homes delivered. By using self-funding programmes he has successfully turned around schemes with a history of failure. These have delivered a substantial number of homes for social rent and shared ownership alongside market rent. He has also led negotiations with private sector partners to consistently deliver 45% affordable housing on sites.

He says when he left L&Q to join the council in 2012 he was told he would not be able to get anything done because Hackney had a history of failed regeneration schemes. His proudest achievement is proving those people wrong.

**Nick Murphy**

chief executive, Nottingham City Homes

Nick Murphy has turned around this arm’s-length management organisation’s relationship with the local council.

His leadership is impressive, according to our judges, and his ambitions for Nottingham City Homes (NCH) are delivering results. In an unusual step for an arm’s-length management organisation, NCH recently set up a registered subsidiary to build private rented sector homes.

**Ian Davidson**

chief executive, Tendring District Council

In 2012 the deprived area of Jaywick flooded and the council bought acres of land. Now major investors are vying to get exclusivity on the site. Judges hailed Ian Davidson as a great leader, heading up one of the best coastal council teams.

The council purchased land using money from its Housing Revenue Account rather than relying on receiving grants from the Homes and Communities Agency.

One of the judges said the council is impressive because it is “not just providing new homes but using housing market renewal to improve the life chances and opportunities for residents”.

**Michael Thain**

housing and development manager, Edinburgh City Council

Edinburgh City Council has recently announced that it hopes to deliver 16,000 affordable homes over the next decade in partnership with six local housing associations.

Such ambitious plans would be pie in the sky without the sort of strong relationships between the council and local housing associations that Michael Thain and his team have managed to build.

According to Michael, Edinburgh is the “most pressured, dysfunctional, high-cost housing market in the UK”, outside of London, and this explains the need for “one of the biggest local authority-led housebuilding programmes in the country”.

He says with 4,000 affordable and low-cost homes under construction and a pipeline and strategy to deliver the remaining 12,000 “we might just make a difference”.

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Visionaries

Jeremy Grint
Divisional director of regeneration and economic development
Darren Rodwell
Leader, Barking and Dagenham Borough Council

Our judges praised Barking and Dagenham as a “visionary” council. Jeremy Grint is described as a “catalyst for change” by his colleagues. He has delivered a large number of new homes and cares about “great design, social investment and building homes that people will enjoy living in for years to come”.

Darren Rodwell is a “brilliant, charismatic, great leader” according to our judges. The council has come through a difficult period and has achieved success with its alternative to Right to Buy that better fits its local community. In the words of one of our judges, “they have ploughed their own furrow”. The team has a “consistent track record rather than being a flash in the pan. If more councils could be like this we would be in a much better place.”

WHO’S WHO
IN LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Martin Swales
Chief executive, South Tyneside Council

Under his stewardship, South Tyneside has secured £1bn of investment from the public and private sector over the past seven years. Martin has overseen the creation of two housing companies since 2010, the first delivering 340 houses for social rent and the second a commercial enterprise that will generate income for the council.

Karen Curtin
Commercial director
Sue Smith
Chief executive, Cherwell District Council

Karen Curtin trained as an accountant and was previously head of finance and procurement at Northamptonshire and Cherwell councils. She has successfully tackled Section 106 disagreements that were delaying development without compromising any of the environmental aspects of the design. She has led on the work to develop self-build housing in Cherwell and managed to speed up the planning consent for landowners wanting to self-build. She also successfully argued for Bicester to become a garden town.

Sue Smith has overseen the UK’s largest self-build and custom build development, which included buying 200 hectares of land from the Ministry of Defence. She says the journey “hasn’t been smooth, but we have all learned an enormous amount, and shared with others the successes and the pain.”

Andrew Wood
Project director for the Exeter and East Devon Growth Point, East Devon Council

Andrew has overseen an ambitious development in East Devon, which now has more than 1,000 occupied homes and is gearing up for a new school. Building a new town is a formidable undertaking and Andrew has handled it adeptly. He is a planner by background with experience in regeneration projects. This grounding means he considers infrastructure needs alongside housing, something which has befuddled similarly qualified local government figures.

SPECIAL MENTIONS

The expert panel also wants to note the achievements of two of the judges

Lewis Herbert
Leader, Cambridge City Council

Lewis Herbert has provided political leadership around the city’s growth and has helped ensure the collaboration with neighbouring South Cambridgeshire District Council works well, according to his colleagues. He is credited as the key person keeping the city deal and infrastructure delivery ambitions on track.

Alongside Peterborough City Council, Cambridge has persuaded the Treasury to give them a £170m affordable housing fund as part of their devolution deal. At a time when most other devolution deals are a pretty thin on housing this is an impressive achievement.

Keith House
Leader, Eastleigh Borough Council

A leading light as longstanding leader of Eastleigh Borough Council, Keith House is also a national figure in housing delivery. He visits councils up and down the country, not simply talking about the excellent housing achievements in his own council, but taking the time to work with other local authorities to develop solutions in their areas. His practical tips and guidance give other councils confidence to take a full role as housing delivery enablers.

Karen Curtis
Commercial director
Sue Smith
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Jeremy Grint  
divisional director of regeneration and economic development, Barking and Dagenham Borough Council  
My outstanding memory of overcoming a hurdle relates to a mixed-use scheme on council land, which involved building just over 500 homes in the centre of Barking. It was at a time when there was little appetite from the private sector for high-density flats because local values were too low. The scheme started, but the developer ran out of money. I knew one of the shareholders on the board of a company that was a big house builder, working mainly in the Midlands and the North. I invited the chair, who was also the chief executive of the company, to come and visit Barking town centre to look at the opportunities for housing development.  
As a result of extensive negotiations with the new developer, building started up again the following March. The key point here was about realising the opportunity and being able to sell it. It was about being able to have the authority to directly negotiate without having to constantly refer back to seniors and councillors, which involves quite a lot of trust. It was also about being willing to meet people at short notice to resolve the deal.

John Lumley  
director – regeneration, Hackney Borough Council  
At one of our estate regeneration schemes, 15 years of setbacks meant that some children in the adjacent blocks had essentially spent their entire lives growing up on a stalled construction site, playing among rubble. Winning the trust of those residents and getting that scheme off the ground is the thing I will remember most. Hundreds of new homes are now due to complete on that site in just a few months’ time. It is part of a programme we have successfully devised to deliver thousands more. That definitely counts as getting something done in my book.

Clive Skidmore  
head of development, Birmingham City Council  
In 2009, the country was in recession and the housing market in the doldrums. The council had just started building new rented homes again after a break of 30 years but we were keen to build new homes for sale as well - the question was: how? We came up with a risk-sharing model that would balance risk and reward between the council and the private sector and would ensure the public sector took on more risk than it traditionally would. We asked private sector developers if they would build using this model, even in tough market conditions, and they said that they would. We launched the model in 2010 and since then we have sold more than 1,000 homes using this approach.

Sue Smith  
chief executive, Cherwell District Council  
Shortly after I took up my post in 2011, I realised there was a real risk of the Bicester eco-town project failing. There was intransigence on the part of a number of players key to ensuring that the development was delivered. This included two tiers of local government, the facilitator and the developer. They had all been involved with the project from its inception in 2008, whereas I was new to it. Once I had spotted the danger, I met with and listened to the views from each party and then invited everyone to a ‘lock-in’, during which we would take as long as we needed to resolve the outstanding issues. It was a hot summer’s day, so I made sure the room was not too comfortable and we ended up with an agreement that meant delivery could commence. Five years on and the first 100 houses are occupied, with 5,000 to follow soon. When I attended a recent ministerial visit to the site, I could not help smiling when I recalled that lock-in, which by then was more than five years ago.

Eamonn Boylan  
chief executive, Stockport Council  
When Michael Heseltine announced the Hulme City Challenge award in 1990, launching a five-year programme, I thought: “At last, a long-term approach to regeneration.” Twenty-five years later, I stood outside in the newly opened university campus at the heart of the new Hulme and today I drove past the latest home building projects continuing the regeneration of the area. Now that’s what I call long-term.
What type of housing leader are you?

Our Who’s Who of Local Authority Development trailblazers is categorised according to their leadership traits. But which one best describes you? Take our lighthearted quiz to identify your style.

On your desk you always have...
A. Nothing. I am surgically attached to my smartphone; I can get in touch with anyone from my extensive network at a moment’s notice, wherever I am
B. A book/blog on continuous improvement
C. A copy of our key performance indicators to keep focused
D. Desk? I spend as much time as possible looking out into the real world to get new ideas

It’s lunchtime: what are your plans?
A. I’m meeting a stakeholder to show them around our new launch
B. I’m hosting a workshop on improving communication
C. I’m eating a sandwich at my desk as I plough through my latest set of reports
D. I’m visiting a start-up café around the corner to chat to the founder about our digital strategy

What would your colleagues say about you?
A. I’m well connected and I take advantage of every opportunity to share and explain our work
B. I’m content but not satisfied – I am always looking to the next challenge
C. It’s sometimes hard to keep up with my high standards and relentless focus
D. They don’t always appreciate the importance of the big picture. I sometimes operate on a different plane from everybody else

What animal are you?
A. Fox: persuasive, instinctive, active
B. Lion: independent, tough, ambitious
C. Owl: wise, effective, hardworking
D. Dolphin: a creative, sometimes playful-problem solver. Likes fish

Quiz: who are you?

Mostly As
You are an influencer
In a world where you work across boundaries with multiple partners and stakeholders, your ability to convince others is your secret weapon. It enables you to engage partners and policymakers and secure their commitment.

Mostly Bs
You are an accelerator
You thrive on scaling up successful ventures and taking your organisation to the next level. You are most likely to be heard asking: “But what next?” In your hands, only one trajectory is acceptable, and that is up.

Mostly Cs
You are a performer
You are known for leading by example. Your experience, knowledge and hard-working nature engender confidence. You can think creatively to overcome hurdles, and thanks to your work ethic, commitment and perseverance, you make things happen.

Mostly Ds
You are a visionary
Status quo is not in your vocabulary. You have an ability to see the world differently and an ambition to achieve a new future. Change is the only certainty in your world. You don’t merely find solutions to existing problems, you reimagine the problem itself.