New ideas for community-based living: the potential contribution of community-led housing

Monday 16th December 2019

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Challenges to housing and health

• Significant changes to the UK’s housing market in recent decades: growth of the private rented sector, residualisation of social housing, and difficulties in accessing and securing a decent home.

• We know these challenges create problems for many households, particularly those on lower incomes…
  • Access – cost, welfare reform, stigma
  • Quality/condition – fuel poverty, health hazards
  • Affordability
  • Security of tenure
  • Adaptable and accessible needs
Growth of solo living

• Recent research by the Community-Led Homes Alliance found that…
  • 1 in 4 adults agree they feel lonely because of their living situation
  • A further quarter say it is not good for their mental health
  • 44% say they would like to feel more connected to people in their neighbourhood
  • Over a third of people who live on their own agree they feel more lonely due to their living situations

Community-led solutions?

• In recent years there has been a resurgence of interest in community-led housing, typified by:
  • Community ownership and delivery of price-protected housing
  • Local control and determination, with groups formed and democratically managed by local people in communities
  • Managed through ongoing community-based governance encouraging inclusive and collaborative decision-making
  • Developing innovative housing designs that can bring residents and communities together, including shared communal amenities
Four types

• Co-operative housing – housing that is controlled, managed and owned by residents

• Co-housing where residents have their own private homes but shared spaces and amenities to encourage interaction and community

• Community land trusts, where residents develop price-protected affordable homes and are managed through democratic governance structures

• Self-help housing, where empty homes are brought back into use through community self-help and volunteerism
Perceived benefits of community-led housing

• They aim to **enhance security of tenure** and **protect affordability**, which we know can impact poorly on mental health.

• They aim to encourage feelings of ‘community’ through housing design, community-based decision-making and empowerment of residents, and building community-based support networks to help with things like care in older age, loneliness, and changing housing needs.

• Can CLH help to address the loneliness agenda?
Welcome to Older Womens Co-Housing

WE'VE BUILT OUR OWN COMMUNITY

'supporting each other to have the best rest of our lives'

School of Environmental Sciences
Government support

• There is national government support through a Community Housing Fund available to CLH groups, local authorities & Registered Providers

• There are numerous regional and national support bodies set up to help CLH develop

• But while there appear to be many positives, it remains a marginal form of housing provision.

• Can we think creatively about how we design and manage our homes?
Continuing the conversation

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