

The new ALMO on the block – keeping our house

By Mike Kay

Chief Executive, Northampton Partnership Homes



As the newest housing ALMO on the block, the progress Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH) has made in its first year shows that the ALMO model is still a viable option for councils looking to improve housing services. ALMOs who are flexible local housing companies; that work with their councils to build new homes, support communities and continue to provide excellent housing management and related services to all their tenants.

We faced a number of challenges when NPH launched – there was no permanent executive team in place, over 50% of positions were filled with temporary staff and no long term investment programme was in place. What we did have however was a team of dedicated board members, employees and involved tenants who were committed to working together to improve performance and shape the future of council housing in Northampton.

Despite the difficulties of a massive restructuring and recruitment programme, NPH has already delivered a number of successful projects. These include the installation of energy-saving PV solar panels on over 1200 properties for the benefit of elderly residents; achieving 100% health and safety compliance; the launch of a brand new website; implementation of a comprehensive tenant involvement strategy and a new training programme that offers employability skills free of charge to tenants.

Our ambitious improvement plans will continue despite the 1% reduction in rents over the next four years. We are facing up to this challenge by implementing our Value for Money strategy and carrying out service reviews to increase efficiency. We plan to deliver significant savings through improved procurement and careful management of our staffing establishment. We are also looking to commence a number of new initiatives such as a new council house build programme for the Local Authority. Our key aim is to safeguard services for tenants well into the future.

As Chief Executive, I am extremely proud of the energy and commitment of the whole NPH team in achieving so much in such a short period of time. This has only been possible as a result of the unwavering support of Northampton Borough Council and our tenants.

For further information please contact Northampton Partnership Homes Communications Manager, Hannah Bensusan via HBensusan@northamptonpartnershiphomes.org.uk.