

# November 24<sup>th</sup> 2015 The MAC, Edgbaston, Birmingham



## Local Housing Groups - leading the way to low carbon sustainable communities

### Event with a focus on the positive

The day before the Chancellors' Spending Review from a government that has already significantly impacted on this sector, the event managed to retain a focus on the positive with 16 presentations and a market-like group of information stands. Presentations were from a mix of local housing groups that are leading the way to delivering low carbon, sustainable communities and finding new ways of doing business differently, and from businesses with innovative products and services. The event, chaired by Andrew Eagles, MD of Sustainable Homes, was organised by DMC and Climate Change Solutions.

Typifying the positive "we can do" theme of the day in the face of serious challenges to the sector, Charlie Baker of design consultants RED said "we face massive problems to reduce our emissions. Our target should be a 95% reduction by 2035, not 80% by 2050." And in a wide ranging vision of how this can be achieved, including advocating different financial models, he concluded by saying "we need to help and encourage people to invest in the future of their own communities. We're in a war-like environment and it's time we sorted it out!"

(see audio report and slides below)

### Headline Outputs from Debate

The Andrew Eagles led end of day group exploration of questions raised during the event. Some headlines from it included:

Q: Who defines what "well" is? How do we do "well" without costly bureaucracy?

- A:
- Avoid economically led short termism
  - Have clear objectives and measure outputs properly
  - Survey customer satisfaction
  - Ban tick box methodologies

Q: How can we make best use for renewable energy of green space in housing villages, parks, etc?

- A:
- Much depends on planning regime
  - Biomass linked to green waste; smalls scale hydro; geothermal; local community group activity etc

Q: How do you usefully measure performance in retrofit projects? How do we avoid costly duplication?

- A:
- Energy usable data
  - Access to energy providers' analysis of performance change
  - Use open access data.

Q: Is there a link between climate change and events such as those in Paris?

- A:
- Syria location of first water war 4500BC.
  - Smithsonian Institute records lack of water forcing urban dwellers into cities and causing cultural clashes that have escalated to present day situation.

Q: Who should lead on sustainability?

- A:
- Government should set framework. Business community provide innovative products and services to help society change the way it functions.



*One of the several groups of delegates in end of day discussion about key issues.*

Q: What should housing groups do to provide more sustainable products?

A:

- Get the values right from the start in new built to avoid paying again later. Focus on end user needs and deliver tenant-friendly solutions.

## Quotes from attendees

"What a great and interesting day it was yesterday with a terrific range of speakers on different topics and a splendid opportunity to network with people and share knowledge", **Mark Huelin, Technical Sales Director, The Energy Savers Ltd.**

"The variety of topics were exceptional and inspiring and all delivered in a professional and timely manner. If only all events were run so proficiently as this one. For me I now have 2 strong opportunities to pursue. A truly inspirational experience."  
**David Cole, Account Director, Smart Innovations Grid Ltd.**

"The coming together of like minded individuals and organisations that have practically tackled social, economic and environmental challenges head on both corporately and in the community was refreshing and so positive. The development of a 'cooperative' supply chain where sharing knowledge, learning, and experiences both good and bad is in my opinion as important as the conventional way of doing business". **Steven Davis, Facilities and Environmental Manager whg.**

## Slides and recording

Thanks to Ian Ewan of Techlink who provided the technical support to the event and compiled the main PowerPoint show and that shown on the plasma screens. Via Dropbox (see below) Ian has provided a full recording of the presentations (divided into four files) and slides from all the presentations.

[View folder](#)

**DMC**



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