

The Housing Plus Academy at Trafford Hall

Supported by the London School of Economics and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation

In partnership with the National Housing Federation, Chartered Institute of Housing and the National Communities Resource Centre

Main sponsors:

- | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------|
| ◆ Affinity Sutton | ◆ Genesis | ◆ Riverside | ◆ Orbit |
| ◆ Circle 33 | ◆ Home Group | ◆ Southern Housing | ◆ L&Q |
| ◆ Poplar HARCA | ◆ Incommunities | ◆ Bolton at Home | ◆ Curo |
| ◆ PlaceShapers | ◆ Tower Hamlets
Homes/Council | ◆ Joseph Rowntree
Housing Trust | |

Housing Plus: Summary

The LSE Housing and Communities **Housing Plus knowledge exchange programme** ran from 2012-2015 in partnership with Trafford Hall and the National Housing Federation. The programme included roundtable discussions at LSE linked directly to policy makers and think tanks at Trafford Hall, including special events for tenants. All events were incredibly well supported with about 350 staff and 140 tenants participating in all. Themes included welfare reform, work and skills, energy saving, community resilience, private renting alternatives, the future of social housing, and the value of mixed communities in expensive neighbourhoods.

Housing Plus is about the work that social landlords do and the value they add in disadvantaged communities, over and above their core landlord role. Housing associations are driven by the urgent need to retain their business viability while at the same time depending on tenants coping and paying their way. They have a strong ethical purpose, and often are the most significant organisation within a low income community. Local authorities are also involved but their role and responsibilities are significantly different because of their much wider political remit. But this agenda is very relevant as many have a direct involvement in the key Housing Plus themes, particularly through their role as landlords or through transfer associations. Social landlords have called for the Housing Plus knowledge exchange model to continue.

The Housing Plus Academy at Trafford Hall

One very positive idea that has come out of the programme is to set up a Housing Plus Academy, based at Trafford Hall, supported by LSE, in order to develop knowledge exchange and to offer peer learning, accredited training, think tanks to explore areas needing action and support to social landlords, particularly helping their front line staff and tenants to respond to welfare reform, financial pressures, energy costs, community and social needs. The core rationale is to help housing associations remain viable social businesses and help all landlords support the communities where they work in a period of austerity. The Housing Plus Academy will be both hands on and action oriented at locally and at a wider policy level.

So far, fifteen leading social housing providers have agreed to become partners and sponsors of the Housing Plus Academy, alongside the NHF, CIH, LSE and National Communities Resource Centre. Joseph Rowntree Foundation is also supporting our work to include small, community based organisations and vulnerable minorities. Amicus Horizon, Octavia, Family Mosaic, Gentoo and Arawak Walton are supporters of the Housing Plus Academy.

Social landlords will cover the basic costs of staff and tenants participating from their organisations. The costs are small for each association and the gains significant, as the experience of the think tanks to date has shown. LSE's involvement is particularly helpful as this opens the door to research information and evidence and also offers a national and international reach, by linking practice with policy.

For more information visit <http://www.traffordhall.com/housing-plus-academy/> or contact Philippa Meehan at p.meehan@traffordhall.com

The Housing Plus Academy aims to reflect the diversity of social housing, its staff, tenants and customers. We welcome representatives from ethnic minority backgrounds, a wide range of ages, and those with disabilities. We also welcome small community-based organisations including Tenant Management Organisations, Community-Based Housing Associations, Community Land Trusts, and tenant co-operatives.