

## Housing: An international challenge

### Part Three

## Building quickly

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### About:

The LGA's People and Places Board commissioned a short project to share good practice taking place internationally on housing. Examples are drawn from academic research, CECODHAS Housing Europe (the European Federation of Public, Cooperative & Social Housing) and through LGA international contacts.

Five themes were chosen to reflect key issues facing policy and lobbying priorities for local government:

- Raising finance to invest in affordable housing
- Land for building
- **Building quickly**
- Quality of building and quality of life
- Making the best use of existing building

### Building quickly: the context

England has a backlog of sites where planning permission has been granted but building has not been started. The LGA is calling for incentives for developers to build, and powers to intervene when sites remain unused.

The case studies in this chapter consider the use of housing zones to encourage fast track development, options to reduce process and incentives to ensure that sites with planning permission are built out swiftly.

## International examples

1. Housing Accords and special housing areas were created in legislation passed by the **New Zealand** government in 2013. For example, Auckland Council and the NZ government have agreed a housing accord to allow special housing areas to be designated for fast track agreement covering brownfield and greenfield sites. A housing accord grants the council additional powers to create special approvals and consent new land and housing developments. In the designated areas these take precedent over other planning powers including those held by central government. Both council and central government commit to work together on the cost of building materials, skills provision and infrastructure. Developers benefit from a speeded up process.

Auckland Council Housing Accord

<http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/en/ratesbuildingproperty/housingsupport/pages/aucklandhousingaccord.aspx>

2. Social housing forms 18% of the housing stock in **Sweden** and is owned by municipalities. SABO is the Swedish Association of Public Housing Companies. A response to rising demand and the second highest building cost in Europe was to develop SABOs Kombohus, a national procurement framework. The original framework set a fixed price for 2-4 floor apartment blocks and 5-8 floor tower houses, cutting building costs by 20%.

[http://www.sabo.se/om\\_sabo/english/Sidor/default.aspx](http://www.sabo.se/om_sabo/english/Sidor/default.aspx)

3. The **Netherlands** offers compensation to residents in areas of new development, due to loss of value when the land use plan changes. Compensation is paid when planning permission is approved. It is paid by the municipality, but is often actually paid for by the developer. Municipalities in the Netherlands act as land buyers and infrastructure providers.

<http://www.government.nl/issues/spatial-planning-and-infrastructure/spatial-planning-in-the-netherlands>

## Further reading:

International Review of Land Supply and Planning Systems, JRF 2013

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/international-review-planning-systems>

Delivering Large Scale Housing: Unlocking Schemes and Sites to Help Meet the UK's Housing Needs, RTPI 2013

<http://rtpi.org.uk/media/630969/RTPI%20large%20scale%20housing%20report.pdf>

Delivering Large Scale Housing, RTPI 2013

<http://www.rtpi.org.uk/media/630969/RTPI%20large%20scale%20housing%20report.pdf>

From Canada:

Housing Affordability and Choice: A Compendium of ACT solutions

[http://www.fcm.ca/Documents/tools/ACT/Housing\\_Affordability\\_and\\_Choice\\_A\\_Compendium\\_of\\_ACT\\_Solutions\\_EN.pdf](http://www.fcm.ca/Documents/tools/ACT/Housing_Affordability_and_Choice_A_Compendium_of_ACT_Solutions_EN.pdf)

Commonwealth Local Government Forum

<http://www.clgf.org.uk/index.cfm>