



People Housing And Social Enterprise Scheme

# Local Authorities



**Your Guide to Working with PHASES**

# Local Authorities:

## Construction for the community

PHASES is a charity and social enterprise focused on construction. We run projects that maximize social and community value from the construction process. We build affordable new homes, we renovate empty properties and we train local unemployed people.

This prospectus looks specifically at how local authorities might collaborate with PHASES in creating desperately-needed affordable housing. It is aimed at local authorities who are open to diversifying the ways in which they develop housing, whether through new build, renovation or conversion, whatever the project size.



## The power of social enterprise

As a social enterprise, we apply business principles to social problems. And since there are no shareholders in a non-profit organisation, any profits we generate are ploughed back into the work we do.

We're committed to adding sustainable social value throughout our enterprise: in our construction projects, through our training programmes, and right across our supply chains. Our projects are all about giving people a chance to succeed, to learn new skills and put down roots. We want to see the local communities you serve flourish.

# how we do business

## What makes PHASES different?

- ✓ We're a trustworthy non-profit-making charity
- ✓ We have the expertise to develop tricky sites
- ✓ We take all the risk up to planning stage – no cost to you
- ✓ We have a team of professionals to provide low-cost advice
- ✓ We take all the responsibility for raising finance
- ✓ We manage the project from start to finish
- ✓ We provide construction training for local people
- ✓ We work with local tradespeople to boost the local economy
- ✓ We provide affordable settled homes for local people



## New possibilities

We'd like to help local authorities generate new affordable homes for rent, by developing difficult sites or converting underused buildings for residential use. These brownfield or infill sites can often be overlooked by bigger developers, but they could provide decent affordable homes for local people.



*“ At PHASES, we aim to unlock the potential of small plots and infill sites that larger developers might dismiss. And by training homeless and unemployed local people on site, we can create affordable homes while adding social value to the construction process.”*

*The PHASES Team*

# The UK housing crisis:

## Why it matters

The shortage of decent, affordable homes is affecting people right across the country, but this problem is particularly acute in London. In June 2016, there were over 73,000 households in temporary accommodation, with over 58,000 of these having dependent children.

As household budgets are squeezed, more and more families are struggling to pay their rent and bills. As evictions and homelessness rise, we need to find imaginative ways to help prevent this crisis from escalating. By developing difficult sites and underused land, or by converting existing buildings, we can create the decent, affordable homes that local people deserve.



## Every bit of land counts

We'd like to see every possible empty plot or building brought back into use. But we know that smaller, more difficult brownfield and infill sites are often of little interest to large developers. At PHASES, we have the expertise to get complex projects quickly and efficiently off the ground and through to completion.

And we know from experience how a well-designed development can transform an area. Apart from the vital affordable homes it provides for local people, this type of regeneration improves neighbourhoods, boosts the local economy and promotes proud and connected communities.

# diverse solutions

## A distinct approach

When considering social housing development, most officers will turn to the registered providers, who may have considerable resources at their disposal. Housing Cooperatives or Community Land Trusts may also be perceived as a good option to ensure that long-term affordable housing is developed for local people, but getting these projects built can be protracted.

PHASES is a small and agile community housing organisation which can reliably deliver affordable housing projects in partnership with local authorities. We create projects that deliver social value for local people through the construction process itself. With over ten years' experience of community building projects, PHASES offers an alternative approach. We offer training for the long-term unemployed, we help homeless people get a fresh start and we safeguard affordable housing for the future.

## Positive benefits

At PHASES, we believe that with sensitive design, a dedication to sustainability and a real commitment to community, development can be a powerful force for good. That's the kind of positive change we want all our stakeholders to be part of, in every PHASES project.



*“Some providers describe smaller sites as ‘unviable’. But these small plots could help address the challenges of residualisation, to deliver more sustainable mixed communities. By casting the net a bit wider, local authorities can find diverse partners, like PHASES. They don’t just deliver affordable housing. They’re also actively contributing to wider social goals through construction training and employment, bringing multiple benefits to the local economy.”*

*Tim Mallory*

# The PHASES approach:

## Community housing

As a not-for-profit community housing organisation, PHASES is committed to building sustainably, placing social value at the heart of our construction process.

And while housing associations, cooperatives and Community Land Trusts are making important contributions to the sector, they can sometimes lack the agility and responsiveness that our development model can offer.

Our experience and in-house expertise enables us to get tricky projects off the ground and through to completion quickly. We generate affordable housing for people who have been homeless or in temporary accommodation. And we maximise benefits to the community, by creating opportunities for local people and local business.



## Local opportunities

Our projects create training and employment for local people. Our trainees have often been homeless, or long-term unemployed. Whatever their background, they are drawn from the local community.

Depending on the scale of a project, we'll try to use smaller local builders. We're keen to stem the recent decline in the sector, to ensure that their skills are transferred and that the local economy prospers.

On bigger projects, we'll partner with larger contractors. But they'll still be working with our trainees and coordinators to deliver our promises on social and community value.

# how it could work for you

## No-cost feasibility & planning

As a charity, we draw on a valuable bank of professionals to provide free or very low cost services. This unique resource includes architects, surveyors, structural engineers and lawyers who'll help us assess the viability of a project. And our status as a charity has often enabled us to engage with local people to unlock sites which might otherwise have faced opposition.

Our general approach is to take all the risk at the feasibility and initial planning application stages of a project, so that there is no cost to a partner if a project does not proceed. We are often able to access grants for feasibility work and our in-house expertise means that fewer local authority resources are likely to be tied up in the early stages of a scheme. We can get projects quickly and efficiently off the

## Project finance

We usually take full responsibility for the loan finance. Over the years we've built excellent credit records with social lenders, like The Big Issue Invest and our own bankers, Unity Trust. Both are likely to lend on favourable terms due to our excellent track record. There are also many social lenders ready to provide finance on our property-based projects.

## Maximising value

We regard engaging the local community as fundamental to the success of our enterprise and our total focus is on locality. We've worked with the boroughs of Southwark, Lewisham and Newham on projects that engage local people, work with local suppliers, employ local builders, recruit local trainees and house local people. And to ensure that people with a local connection will benefit from our work in the borough, this crucial aspect of our work is agreed with the local authority at the planning stage.

## Affordable housing

Our key aim is to create sustainable, affordable housing for local people. As we're not a housing association, recent legislation extending the 'right to buy' to tenants doesn't apply to us. That's why we're able to guarantee that the homes we build will remain available at affordable rents.

On larger developments, we may partner with another local community housing organisation for the future management of the properties. Any management partner would be carefully selected with the agreement of the local authority.

# Want to know more?

## Read our case studies

You can learn more about how PHASES projects make a difference by visiting our Case Studies page online. Here, you'll see our values in action and learn how social enterprise can transform people's futures.

Click the link to find out more:

[www.phases.org.uk/case-studies](http://www.phases.org.uk/case-studies)



## Check out our video

Our video shows how a joint venture with the owner of an empty property in South London brought benefits to all our stakeholders. It shows how social enterprise adds value at every stage of a project.

Click the link to explore:

[www.phases.org.uk/video](http://www.phases.org.uk/video)

## Find us online

[www.phases.org.uk](http://www.phases.org.uk)

# get in touch with us

## We're waiting to hear from you

Our team is ready to assist you with your development. So if you'd like to help solve the housing crisis through a joint venture with PHASES, we'd be delighted to hear from you.



## In total confidence

Any discussions we have with you will be conducted in the strictest confidence, so if you'd like an informal chat about a project idea, then please get in touch.



## Contact us

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