

Example Local CLH manifesto

Utopia CLT is a Community Land Trust aiming to build and renovate affordable homes for local people. We are currently negotiating on our first project at Harrington Lane, to build 12 homes for social rent. The 267 members of Utopia CLT have drawn up the following manifesto, and would like Utopia District Council to adopt these asks.

We believe that community led housing can bring many benefits to Utopia:

- New affordable homes to help address our serious housing crisis, and keep local people in the area.
- Greater community support for new house building, because the community controls what homes we build, where and how.
- Community cohesion, as anyone who lives or works in Utopia can join our CLT and get involved, and because we are putting community at the heart of our projects.
- Local apprenticeships and jobs that we hope to create.

Asks

Strategic Support

- Include CLH in your housing strategy, including recognising it as an approach to deliver affordable housing, bring empty homes back into use, regenerate existing homes and communities, and promote community cohesion.
- Set a target for the number of CLH homes you will facilitate within a defined timescale, and identify how this will be met.
- Appoint CLH champions from the cabinet and among senior officers, with the authority to link up your ambitions with relevant strategy and processes.

Planning and affordable housing

- Adopt specific planning policies for CLH for example planning development policy.
- Make use of section 106 and self/custom build opportunities to include CLH projects within schemes.
- Permit CLH groups to develop local lettings policies for social/affordable rented homes that balance their autonomy with your allocations policy.

Finance and assets

- Make funding available to CLH groups from sources such as Right to Buy receipts, prudential borrowing, second homes Council Tax, commuted section 106 sums and the New Homes Bonus.
- Support groups making applications to the Community Housing Fund, and in issuing community shares, providing match-funding where possible.
- Make underused and surplus land and buildings available to CLH groups, using best consideration powers to sell, lease or transfer the assets at values that make policy objectives such as affordable housing viable, and ring fencing suitable sites (with covenants) for bids from CLH groups.

Support groups

- Provide or obtain CLH training for officers in areas including housing and planning, and ensure they are able to advise and support groups as appropriate.
- Appoint a first point of contact for CLH groups, able to signpost within the council and to provide hands-on support with tasks such as identifying land/buildings.
- Support the disposal of the site at Harrington Lane to Utopia CLT at a price that makes genuinely affordable homes viable.