London’s DIY housing groups set to boom thanks to multimillion European fund

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A London community housing group has received European funding to share its knowledge and inspire more communities to become ethical housing developers.

London Community Land Trust was formed by Londoners in 2011 to address the need for genuinely affordable homes in the capital. **In 2017, their first 23-home project in Mile End was completed.** They are now working on their **second project** in Sydenham, south east London.

The Community Land Trust (CLT) approach is gaining in popularity with communities across England and Wales, to help people who are being priced out of areas they have deep connections with. **This February, the Mayor of London announced that ten TFL sites will be made available for development, with the two largest designated specifically for CLT developments.**

At London CLT prices are linked to what people actually earn in their local area - this meant their **CLT homes are sold and let at around a third of the average property prices.**

‘Sustainable housing for inclusive and cohesive cities’ is a **£2.9million project** which has been funded by the Interreg North-West Europe Programme. London CLT will join other CLT schemes from Brussels, Ghent and Lille as pilots to support more communities to set up their own groups.

The aim is for 33 new urban CLTs to be established by the end of this three-year project. For more information on London’s mentoring scheme and how to get involved, community groups should contact: hannah@londonclt.org

Hannah Emery-Wright, Membership and Stewardship Manager at London CLT, said:

“London CLT grew out of the community organising efforts of Citizens UK. We believe that when communities come together they are powerful and can bring about real and lasting social change.

“We are proud to be a part of this wider project working with European partners to promote innovative housing approaches. We look forward to sharing what we’ve learnt on our journey with communities to help them transform their own futures.”

Catherine Harrington, Director of the National CLT Network, said:

“London CLT has proven that the Community Land Trust model works in cities. In an area where 2-bed flats were selling for over £550,000, CLT 2-bed homes sold for £182,000.

“We’re delighted to be working with London CLT and our European counterparts on this project. It’s a significant investment that will support the delivery of thousands of new CLT homes - our huge thanks to the Interreg NWE programme.”

Notes to the editors:

- More than 26million people across the European Union are living in overcrowded and inadequate housing. (DRESS Study, French Health Ministry, 2014)

- The ‘Sustainable housing for inclusive and cohesive cities’ project will deliver four core outputs:
  • Four successfully established CLTs in NWE;
  • A voucher scheme leading to the start-up of 33 new urban CLTs;
  • A shared online platform and;
  • A policy paper on financial gaps and a financial guide for CLTs
  More details can be found here. The project will involve regions from across NWE. As well as England and Wales, Belgium and France are also involved.

- London CLT are the first Community Land Trust in the capital to sell homes. Residents moved into their flagship project in Mile End in 2017. They are now working on projects in Lewisham, Croydon, Southwark, Lambeth, Redbridge and Haringey. For mentoring enquires, community groups should contact Hannah Emery-White on hannah@londonclt.org

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- The National CLT Network is the national charity for Community Land Trusts (CLTs) in England and Wales. It supports and promotes the work of CLTs, representing 229 CLTs. CLTs are local organisations set up and run by ordinary people to develop and manage homes that are genuinely affordable for now and in perpetuity. To date, CLTs have developed more than 800 homes.
- 'Small Sites, Small Builders' is a new initiative from the Mayor of London to boost the capital's small homebuilders sector and increase the supply of new and genuinely affordable housing.
- Technical support is also available to community groups in London through the newly established London Community-Led Housing Hub.

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