

Great housing around the world



Our history	3
Our mission and objectives	4
Our strategy	5
Our achievements: The World Habitat Awards Promoting innovative housing	6
Our achievements: Build a world-wide community of housing practice	8
Our achievements: Reports and publications	9
Our programmes: Scaling up Community-Led Housing in the UK	10-11
Our programmes: Ending Chronic Homelessness in Europe	12-13
Our future plans	14
Overview of the year: financial review	15-17

Foreword



It was the determination of just a handful of soldiers, after the end of the Second World War, to play their part to rebuild a world that had faced so much destruction. These were our founders.

And yet - 70 years later - they would be dismayed that there are still billions of people who lack a safe home due to conflict, natural and preventable disasters, and a disregard for the right of housing for all.

This challenge is why there is a need for us to provide greater clarity about our purpose and mission. That is why in 2017 we will be changing our name from BSHF to World Habitat. The new identity of World Habitat represents and reflects our work.

We will continue to look for, to highlight and to share the many groundbreaking and innovative ideas and solutions from across the world. Some are detailed here in this report.

We look forward to working with you to ensure everyone, everywhere has somewhere safe and secure to live.

Angus Kennedy
Chair,



“There is no shortage of housing problems - what is needed are solutions.”

Peter Elderfield, founder,
Building and Social Housing Foundation (BSHF)



BSHF is a catalyst for change. We aim to help bring the best housing to the people who need it most.

We do this by:



Our current strategy was launched in 2015. It is built on our previous work; identifying the very best housing practice from around the world and helping transfer it to where it is needed most.

Through our research work, the World Habitat Awards competition and our wider networks we are in a great position to spot innovative housing ideas and discover the best housing projects from around the world that deliver that positive change for people.

We aim to bring the benefits of these ideas to the people who need them most. To do this we promote and publicise the best and most innovative housing projects. We find and build networks of people best able to implement those ideas and practice.

For a few priority areas we go further. We proactively help transfer the best ideas into new contexts. These programmes involve in depth work and require significant extra resources so we undertake no more than three at any one time. During 2016 we developed two such programmes: Empowering Community-Led Housing in the UK and Ending Chronic Street Homelessness in European cities.

Our strategy has five core aims

1. Identify and promote the most innovative housing ideas and best practice from around the world

To achieve this we are committed to operating and improving the World Habitat Awards.

2. Build a world-wide community of housing practice

We aim to improve our communications to help inform and influence a growing audience for our work.

3. Empower communities to solve their own housing needs

We aim to build an alliance of Community-Led Housing in the UK with an aim to help more communities develop their own homes.

4. Establish a movement to End Chronic Homelessness in European cities

We aim to build a movement of organisations that are committed and empowered to end chronic street homelessness in cities in Europe.

5. Responsibly manage our assets

We will manage our assets responsibly so that they provide the funds needed to enable the charity to carry out its work.

We will manage our assets so that they are an asset to the local community.

The World Habitat Awards Promoting innovative housing



The World Habitat Awards is a global housing competition run in partnership with UN-Habitat. The awards identify and reward the very best housing projects around the world. We set the competition up in 1985 as our contribution to the UN International Year of Shelter for the Homeless and have operated it every year since.

Each year we give two awards to projects that provide practical, innovative solutions to current housing needs. In 2016 the two winners were:

Caño Martin Peña, Puerto Rico

The first Community Land Trust in Latin America and the first anywhere to use the model to regulate informal settlements and secure housing conditions for communities under threat from land speculators.

Self-Help Housing in the North of England, United Kingdom

The award was given jointly to Canopy (Leeds) and Giroscope (Hull). These two charities train homeless and vulnerable people to renovate abandoned properties and bring them back into use. The completed houses provide low cost homes.

The awards were presented by Leilani Farha (UN Special Rapporteur in Adequate Housing) at Habitat 3 conference in Quito, Ecuador and were simultaneously broadcast to a worldwide audience on UN Live TV.

The purpose of the awards is to fuel innovation and inspire others to adopt the best housing practice from around the world. There are many examples of this happening. In 2008 the award was won by a Community Land Trust; Champlain Housing Trust in Vermont, United States.

Our work following the awards helped transfer the principles of the project to Europe and inspired the development of Community Land Trusts in Brussels.

In addition our work with 2012 World Habitat Award winner FUCVAM - (Federación Uruguaya de Cooperativas de Vivienda por Ayuda Mutua, Uruguayan Federation of Mutual Aid Housing Co-operatives) led to the model being adopted in other countries in Latin America.

“For FUCVAM the experience was extremely positive. Both the award and the following peer exchanges. It showed us that the world is one, and even if distance separates us the struggle for decent housing unites us and requires the commitment of all of us”

**FUCVAM winner
of 2012 World Habitat Awards.**



“For us in Gram Vikas, winning the BSHF World Habitat Award was a watershed in the journey of Gram Vikas. We realised that our habitat approach with an all-inclusive emphasis was the right way to go. We have a long way to go but are now more clear about the way ahead.”

Joe Madiath, Chairman,
Rural Housing and Environment Programme,
Gram Vikas India (Winner 2003).

One of the ways we encourage transfer is by organising and funding peer exchanges to winning projects to encourage others to learn from our award winners.

During 2016, we ran a peer exchange to Leeds and Hull in which housing practitioners from around the world learned about the successful Self-Help Housing Programme. This is a subject BSHF had been involved in for many years.

In 2011 we published research on the subject “Self-Help Housing: Supporting locally driven housing solutions” and submitted evidence and ideas to the UK department of Communities and Local Government that helped shape and influence the government’s Empty Homes Community Grants Programme through which Canopy and Giroscope both scaled up their operations and property portfolios.

BSHF meets travel, accommodation and conference costs for the participants to attend our peer exchanges, thus enabling people who could not otherwise afford to attend to learn at first hand from the good practice identified through our work. We also publish reports of the peer exchange, which are available freely to enable others to learn and benefit from the material and information the peer exchange produced.

Build a world-wide community of housing practice



We believe that knowledge sharing works best in a community where people have different perspectives. We communicate with our community through media networks, by publishing reports and speaking at events. Digital technology now allows us to connect with ever more people in and between our networks. 2016 saw significant improvements to our digital output with the launch of a new BSHF website. This replaced the previous BSHF.org and WorldHabitatAwards.org websites and brought all of content into a new much improved and more interactive website. We have significantly improved our reach through social media. During the year we reached over 7 million people through our Twitter accounts.

In October 2016 the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat 3) took place in Quito, Ecuador. This huge conference with over 40,000 delegates occurs just once every 20 years and sets the urban agenda for the next 20 years. The New Urban Agenda is the outcome document that was endorsed at the end of the conference. BSHF played a role in contributing to the development of The New Urban Agenda and planning the conference itself. BSHF ran a busy stall, organised two side events and contributed speakers to a number of important debates.

“I want to say how much I respect all of BSHF's efforts in lifting up worthy organizations and innovations that few people would otherwise notice, often because they occur in the most impoverished places.”

John Davis,

Advisor to Caño Martín Peña Community Land Trust, Puerto Rico (Winner 2015) and Vice President of Champlain Housing Trust (Winner 2008).

During 2016 BSHF published a number of important reports and publications to disseminate our work. These included:



Community-Led Housing Studies - These case studies, featuring a cross-section of projects from across the UK, demonstrate real life stories, key messages and positive outcomes.



Power House Nearly Zero final report - Key findings, conclusions and recommendations identified by Europe's social, cooperative and public housing providers on working towards a low-carbon economy and delivering affordable and energy efficient homes.



From Halving Homelessness to Ending it - Finland is the only county in Europe where homelessness has reduced. The country is on a clear path towards ending it. This report describes how the successful strategy has unfolded over the past 25 years.



2016 World Habitat Awards Winners and Finalists - This booklet includes information about the award-winning projects and finalists from the 2016 competition.



Submission to the New Sources of Supply Work stream (National Housing Taskforce, Housing and Planning All Party Parliamentary Group) - BSHF provided evidence to the Housing and Planning All Party Parliamentary Group, on proposals to address the UK's chronic shortage of housing.



There is no shortage of housing problems, what is needed is solutions - This booklet took its title from a quotation from BSHF founder Peter Elderfield. It celebrated 40 years of BSHF and looked back on the impact of the World Habitat Awards, Peer Exchanges and our programmes.



Liter of Light, Lighting up homes and lives one bottle at a time - Liter of Light won the World Habitat Awards in 2014. It uses cheap, readily available materials to provide lighting to homes in poor communities in the Philippines. This publication takes a closer look at the impact the project has had in the Philippines and its replication to 20 countries around the world.



World Habitat Awards 2017 - This booklet introduces the 2017 competition, providing information about the awards and details of how to enter.



European End Street Homelessness Campaign Pilot External Evaluation Report - This report evaluates the first year of the campaign. It includes summaries of the experiences of participating cities, key lessons/ findings and recommendations for the next steps in the campaign.

Scaling up Community-Led Housing in the UK



BSHF have long supported the development of Community-Led Housing. 2016 saw very significant and positive developments in the Community-Led Housing Sector in England culminating with the announcement of major government funding for developing Community-Led Housing.

Community-Led Housing is where people and communities play a leading role in creating their own homes. In doing so they help create more sustainable, more affordable and longer lasting homes than the traditional ways of developing housing. It helps people build resilient confident local communities, and it helps people to develop skills they never knew they had.

We think the current house building system in the UK is dysfunctional and is failing to deliver the numbers or types of homes people need at a price they can afford. We believe Community-Led Housing can be scaled up to help provide an alternative and additional form of housing. In 2015 we launched a programme to create a Community-Led Housing Alliance. The programme involves working with many organisations and individuals to support the growth of Community-Led Housing in the UK. The Nationwide Foundation as part of their Alternative Housing Models support this work.

“At the moment the Community-Led Housing movement provides about 1% of all the homes in England. But it can grow significantly. In so many other places across the world people doing housing for themselves isn’t just more common; it’s normal.”

David Ireland
BSHF



The emerging alliance grew significantly during 2016. At the end of the year 30 organisations had signed up to the alliance. Public awareness has been helped by a successful media campaign managed by BSHF. This grew throughout the year with numerous items of local and trade media coverage, a full page spread in the Sunday Times and Daily Telegraph. Social media coverage grew with almost 1,000 followers on a new @CommLedHousing Twitter account.

In May the UK Chancellor of the Exchequer announced a £60 million a year grant programme to scale up the development of Community-Led Housing and support the sector. Final details of this were released by government at the very end of the year revealing a five year programme which aims to establish a significantly scaled up Community-Led Housing sector.

A potentially problematic development was the UK government's introduction of a right to buy for housing association tenants. This, if applied to Community-Led Housing, could undermine efforts to ensure that Community-Led Housing was available in perpetuity to the community. BSHF took a leading role in campaigning for an exemption for Community-Led Housing. The campaign was largely successful with the government applying exemptions for community land trusts and cooperative housing.

Ending Chronic Street Homelessness in Europe



Chronic street homelessness (or rough sleeping) is on the rise in most cities across Europe. A problem that once felt as if it was resolved has returned. We believe that housing is a human right; chronic street homelessness is the most extreme and manifest failure of this right. A lack of affordable housing, cuts in public services and in some countries a dramatic increase in poverty have manifested themselves in this most extreme expression of housing need.

But we believe that it does not have to be like this. Whilst one organisation cannot end homelessness by itself, a movement of many organisations just might. We aim to bring together partners from cities across Europe with the aim of creating such a movement. 2016 saw the first full year of this programme and a highly promising start to the campaign.

Inspired by the successful 100,000 Homes Campaign in the United States (winner of the 2014 World Habitat Award) and the work of Y-Foundation in Finland (winner of the 2015 World Habitat Award), we believe it is possible for cities to end chronic street homelessness, not just manage it. Both of these inspiring programmes demonstrated that it is possible to do this within existing homelessness budgets.

“I really liked the opportunity to get involved in this project to save lives. So many people need help and I could see and feel that I can do that. I was inspired by all of you to sign up and help more. I could met few rough sleepers and they said how much more comfortable they were speaking with us. It was a great experience.”

Connections week Volunteer
Spain



During 2016 we worked with FEANTSA (the network of European homelessness organisations) and Community Solutions (The USA based organisation behind that 100,000 Homes Campaign) to bring together organisations in seven cities across Europe to adapt and apply approaches pioneered in the United States and Finland. This work involved intense support in four cities Barcelona, Croydon, Valencia and Westminster, where BSHF helped local communities and organisations run “connections weeks” This important first stage of the campaign is an intense activity based on the simple idea that communities should get to know every homeless person by name by going onto the streets to find them and assess their needs and vulnerability so that they can be prioritised for housing.

In total the campaign engaged over a thousand local volunteers who spent successive nights interviewing homeless people giving a detailed picture of the vulnerability and needs of the homeless population. Importantly the activity mobilised volunteers into a strong local voice to campaign for changes to be made and homes provided.

The data provided compelling often shocking new information which helped local organisations campaign more effectively. In some cities the campaign engaged senior politicians in a positive way. In Valencia the connections week helped engage the Mayor and regional government of Valencia and secured commitments to a joint housing first pilot.

In Croydon an event following the connections week was attended by the Mayor, cross-party local MPs, the Deputy Council Leader, the GLA, DCLG and the English housing minister Gavin Barwell MP. The minister used the opportunity to give his first speech on the government's approach to homelessness.

“I think it was really important to have a few key facts that would shock people and there were a few facts in there that shocked me...There are some real hard-hitting facts there that we can use to really push the message that this isn't acceptable.”

Local homelessness sector campaign lead

UK



Last year we announced that we would be reviewing our brand in 2017.

The most immediate difference is we will be known as World Habitat. However, becoming World Habitat is more than just a change of name. We now have a fresh identity which provides more clarity to who we are, to what we do and to what we are trying to achieve.

World Habitat describes our work more completely than BSHF does. It allows us to better position ourselves - and what we want to achieve - in a world where increasing numbers of people have to exist without even basic housing. And we hope that the greater clarity and recognition of our work will mean more people and organisations wanting to work with us.

Our activity will continue, including the World Habitat Awards, the Peer-Exchanges, our role in the European End Street Homelessness Campaign and promoting community-led housing.

Our work in operating and promoting the World Habitat Awards aims to fuel innovation and inspire others to adopt the best housing practice and enable the best housing projects to scale up, expand and transfer to where they are needed most. This we believe will enable more people in housing need to be better housed.

Our scaling up Community-Led Housing programme aims to create the conditions in which Community-Led Housing can scale up and expand. This will provide a greater provision and greater choice of low cost housing benefiting people on low incomes.

Our Ending Chronic Homelessness program aims to help end street homelessness in participating cities in Europe. Street homelessness is the most extreme form of social exclusion. People living on the streets have dramatically worse health, lower life expectancy and lower life chances than others in society. Our programme aims to create the conditions in which people living on the streets are permanently and quickly housed. Trustees believe undertaking our main activities described above fully meets the requirements of section 17 of The Charities Act 2011 to deliver public benefit.

Overview of the year

In 2015, the trustees carried out a detailed review of the charity's activities and produced a strategic plan for the direction and activity of the charity for the following four years (until December 2018) implementation of the plan started during 2015.

The total income for the year was £1,226,820. This represents a 10.93 per cent increase on the income in 2015 of £1,105,932. The increase is primary due to additional Investment income generated through having a larger investment portfolio, which has continued to perform well, even during uncertainty in the markets due to the US election and Brexit result. The increase is also because the Foundation received a grant of £88,795 from the Nationwide Foundation for the Community-Led Housing project. The principal funding source is income received from financial investments (£1,092,864 i.e. 89.1 per cent), with the remaining 10.9 per cent coming from grants, Nationwide Foundation, rental income, interest and sales. Expenditure in the year was £1,058,223. This was lower than income by £168,597. This was mainly due to staff vacancies during the year and the timing of expenditure, with certain items falling into 2017.

During 2015 BSHF received project funding from the Nationwide Foundation in respect of the Community-Led Housing programme. We will continue to seek external funding in the future, when such opportunities coincide with our anticipated future work plan. Funds have been applied in respect of research costs and in the governance and administration of the organisation, with 92 per cent of funds expended relating to research and 8 per cent to governance and administration.

Investment powers, policy and performance

Under the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the charity has the power to make any investment that the Members of the Council of Management see fit. Investments are held to provide an income to further the objectives of the Foundation, both now and in the future and the investment policy has been amended to reflect the slight shift in emphasis towards income rather than capital growth.

Capital appreciation of the investments continues to ensure that the value of the original gift is maintained in real terms in the longer term, recognising that there will be short-term fluctuations due to changes in the stock market values. BSHF seeks to ensure that a sufficient income stream is generated to cover its current activities without incurring undue financial risk for the charity. The income from the charity's investments' increased by 8.23 per cent from £1,002,940 in 2015 to £1,092,864 in 2016. There was an increase of £2,628,462 in the valuation of the BSHF total investment portfolio at the year end from £27,567,437 in 2015 to £30,195,899 in 2016. This increase was due to good capital growth across the year and has been reflected in the accounts.

Key management personnel remuneration

The trustees consider the board of trustees and the director and deputy director as comprising key management personnel of the charity in charge of directing and controlling the charity and running and operating the charity on a day to day basis. All trustees give of their time freely and no trustee remuneration was paid in the year. Details of trustee expenses are disclosed in note 8 to the accounts.

Trustees are required to disclose all relevant interests and register them with the Director and in accordance with the charity's policy withdraw from decisions where a conflict of interest arises. The pay of the senior management personnel is reviewed annually and normally increased in accordance with average earnings and set at market rates. The remuneration is also bench-marked with charities of a similar size and activity to ensure that the remuneration set is fair and not out of line with that generally paid for similar roles.

Reserves policy

The Building and Social Housing Foundation operates within a comparatively low-risk funding environment, as it does not rely on any external financial support in delivering its charitable objectives and funds virtually all of its activities from the revenue generated from the financial investments, land and property that it received as a gift in 1976.

As at the 31st December 2016 the BSHF investment portfolio is currently managed by three investment managers, M & G (38.7%), Newton Investment Management (NIM) (34.0%) and Schroders (27.3%). BSHF is committed to maintaining the value of the original gift in real terms. During the first quarter of 2017, the trustees closed the M&G Charibond and moved the funds to the CCLA, to be invested in the COIF Charity Property Fund.

This reserves policy has been developed as part of an ongoing integrated financial governance process which includes development of a strategic plan, a risk management policy and an investment policy.

In 2015, the trustees carried out a detailed review of the charity's activities and produced a strategic plan for the direction and activity of the charity for the following four years (until December 2018) implementation of the plan started during 2015. As a result of this review, business plans are developed which identifies specific levels of anticipated income and expenditure in each year, together with details of the expected outputs and outcomes of the activities.

In the event of a collapse of the international financial markets, the organisation retains sufficient resources in readily accessible funds to meet its current operating obligations.

The value of reserves held by BSHF as at 31st December 2016 was £30,983,333. This was made up of the following:

- Designated Funds £22,408,793
- Revaluation Reserve £7,969,889
- General Unrestricted Funds £556,238
- Restricted Funds £48,413

Designated Funds

Designated funds are made up of the income maintenance fund and gift maintenance. An income maintenance fund has been created to provide the charity with a portfolio of investment assets that will be managed to provide a sufficient level of income to finance the expenditure of the organisation in carrying out its objectives.

Transfers are made to this reserve of surpluses generated from activities after providing for a level of unrestricted reserves reflecting six months planned activity. The gift maintenance fund has been created to maintain the original gift from East Midlands Housing Association in real terms value.

Revaluation Reserve

A revaluation reserve is maintained in respect of those amounts by which investments and other assets exceed their historical cost.

General Unrestricted Funds

General unrestricted funds should represent approximately six months planned activity.

Restricted Funds

Restricted funds represent funds provided by an external body to be used for specific expenditure.

The reserves of BSHF are held as a form of endowment in order to generate income for the foundation. The income provided should be sufficient to cover the charitable activities of the foundation so the capital is not diminished. BSHF requires a minimum level of reserves of £25m to allow the charity to fund its core activities, any additional income generated above the required level will increase the money spent on the charitable aims of the foundation.

The Business Plan is reviewed on an annual basis, with both income and expenditure projected forward on an on-going basis. This reserves policy is also subject to review on an annual basis and the BSHF trustees will carry out this review after giving due consideration to its planned programme of activity and the advice of its financial advisers as to likely income levels, any associated risks and the broader investment climate.

**This annual report is issued on behalf
of the board of trustees:**

Pat Elderfield
Jill Gibbs
Angus Kennedy (Chair)
Stuart Macdonald
Geoff Payne
Alan Pearson
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