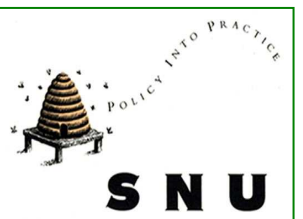




SNU

RESIDENT DEMOCRACY

Resident-led solutions



Consultancy
services

About SNU

Our mission

SNU has been at the forefront of neighbourhood development for more than 20 years and has worked to change the way neighbourhoods are managed, resourced and made secure. Our principal aim is to make neighbourhoods places where people want to live and work and where they feel they have some control over what is happening.

What we believe

- Local people need to be involved in the development and management of their neighbourhoods.
- Design and demography have important implications for managing neighbourhoods.
- Evidence of what works should underpin neighbourhood renewal but should not preclude innovation.

What we offer

We provide consultancy and research services for residents' organisations, local authorities, regeneration schemes, housing associations and central government.

Our services are available nationally. They are provided by a committed team with extensive experience gained from working in over 300 neighbourhoods in Britain and Europe.

We offer services in the following fields :

- Neighbourhood renewal
- Resident democracy
- Community safety
- Environmental management

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Our approach to resident democracy

SNU's major aim is to promote the involvement of residents in the decisions which affect their lives and to help develop organisations and structures which give residents a real stake in their neighbourhoods. Much of our work has centred on disadvantaged neighbourhoods, often council estates, where services have failed to meet residents' aspirations.

Our resident democracy services

Tenant management

- setting up TMOs (SNU is TSA accredited agency);
- negotiating changes to management agreements;
- providing stock transfer advice to TMOs;
- providing tailored management training;
- reviewing the performance and potential TMOs
- providing interim management services

Tenant participation

- helping to establish and strengthen residents' organisations;
- reviewing estate agreements and borough-wide participation structures;
- acting as residents' advisors where regeneration or stock transfer proposals are being put forward.

Governance

- carrying out audits to assess the performance and effectiveness of resident-led organisations;
- providing tailored training on governance for resident-led organisations.

Resident
democracy

Our clients

Our main clients include :

- Communities & Local Government department
- Local authorities
- Registered social landlords
- Tenant Management Organisations
- Tenants' & Residents' Associations

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Tenant Management

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Our tenant management experience

SNU has been involved in tenant management since 1994, when the Government issued the Right to Manage regulations enabling council tenants and leaseholders to establish tenant management organisations (TMOs) to take over the management of housing services on their estates. We have helped to establish more than a dozen TMOs, with more on the way, and have also worked with TMOs, after they are established, on a range of management and development issues.

We have also helped to develop TMO policy through, for example, helping to prepare the new modular management agreement published in 2005.

Examples of our work

Establishing TMOs : We have helped to set up TMOs on small estates of less than 100 properties, on large estates with 1,000 or more properties and estates varying in design and location (ranging from inner-city to the outer suburbs).

Negotiating changes to agreements : We have begun to help TMOs introduce the new modular management agreement and have been working with TMOs in Camden and Hackney.

Stock transfer advice : We have been working with Friday Hill TMO in Waltham Forest and others to investigate the potential for TMOs to take over their stock. We have also developed a simplified financial modelling process for stock transfer.

Training : We have developed a modular training course which covers all aspects of running TMOs and can be used for refresher training as well.

Performance reviews: At CTR Triangle in Newham, we helped the TMO to expand to a neighbouring estate in order to compensate for falling income from losing tenancies to the Right to Buy.

Interim management: We provided an interim management service for a newly developed TMO in Lambeth, helping to establish the office and running the tenancy management and repairs service prior to recruiting permanent staff.

Our tenant participation experience

SNU has worked with residents on hundreds of estates on a range of neighbourhood issues and has helped to establish new tenants' and residents' associations and support the development of existing ones.

We have helped to set up community organisations, such as community associations, and community-run facilities such as youth clubs, parent and toddler groups and health related projects.

We have reviewed council participation strategies for estates and borough-wide and helped to develop new strategies.

We have also acted as advisors to residents where regeneration proposals are being put forward for consultation.

Examples of our work

Establishing/strengthening organisations : We have helped to establish more than 100 tenants' and residents' associations and a range of other community-based organisations such as community associations and charitable companies.

Reviewing participation structures : In Tower Hamlets, we worked with the St Peter's Square T&RA and local agencies to develop an Estate Agreement for the St Peter's Estate.

Independent residents' advisors : In Stratford, we have been contracted by the LDA to act as independent tenants' advisors for residents at Clays Lane who are being rehoused as a result of the Olympic Village redevelopment.

Tenant-led stock options : In Bury, we were appointed to act as financial and business planning advisors on a tenant-led stock option appraisal for Springs TMO. In Chingford, we have been commissioned to act as advisors to the Friday Hill TMO on a tenant-led stock transfer.

Tenant Participation

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Our governance experience

Governance issues are at the forefront of central government and local authority current thinking about community-led organisations and their role in regeneration and managing local services.

In many respects, there are higher expectations being placed on residents involved in community-led organisation than on those, such as local authority councillors and quango board members, who are responsible for very large amounts of public sector expenditure.

SNU has a great deal of experience of working with resident-led organisations, helping to establish them, train Board members and staff, review their performance and advise on new developments.

Examples of our work

Governance audits : In 1994 residents of Walterton & Elgin estates in Westminster fought off unpopular redevelopment proposals and formed their own company to take over the stock, and manage and improve it. To mark the tenth anniversary of its foundation, Walterton and Elgin Community Homes (WECH) commissioned SNU to assess the impact of this resident-led initiative on the quality of the housing stock and levels of resident participation and to review the operation and representativeness of the WECH Board.

Governance training : We have developed a governance course for Board members of resident-led organisations, with support from the ODPM and Chartered Institute of Housing. The 30 hour course is designed to be delivered on site and is broken down into modules which can be used individually and covers issues such as getting started as a new organisation, legal requirements, financial management, performance management, customer care, business planning, risk management, human resources and health and safety.

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The Safe Neighbourhoods Unit (SNU) was originally established as a London-based organisation in 1982 but became independent in 1990 and, since then, has developed a national service in the fields of neighbourhood renewal, resident democracy, community safety and environmental management.

Our principals

John Farr BSc (Hons) MSc FCIH

John Farr heads up SNU's resident democracy services. He is a housing and resident participation specialist, formerly a housing professional and a consultant to the former ODPM and its predecessors. He has particular expertise in localised housing services, tenant management, developing resident-led stock transfer proposals and mediation.

Steve Osborn BSc (Hons)

Steve Osborn is a regeneration specialist and evaluator, formerly with the Cambridge University and NACRO. He has particular expertise in community development, community safety and monitoring and evaluation.

David Birley MSc

David Birley is SNU's principal trainer. He has worked with residents' organisations throughout south east England, including Ealing, Lambeth, Southwark, Harlow and Basildon. He also has particular expertise in the environmental field.

Our company

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Providing research, training and management consultancy services for residents' organisations, local authorities, regeneration schemes, registered social landlords and central government departments.

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