

# Autumn 2009 Newsletter

**CENTR>L**  
Consultancy & Training

We are people and organisational development specialists providing consultancy and training to housing, health and social care

## Governance – are you ready?

We are pleased to announce our partnership with the Governance Forum, a new third sector initiative designed to provide a 'benchmark' of governance practice. Founded by Karl George MBE, the Forum is currently offering up to 10 Housing Associations the opportunity to participate in a Governance Assessment Process (GAP) at a specially negotiated price.



"The Forum's diagnostic process and its experience of working with a range of agencies should offer both the methodology and the understanding to provide a clear analysis of an organisation's performance."

**Roger De La Mare,**  
Assistant Director Risk and Assurance – Tenant Services Authority

"The governance forum has developed a robust procedure of diagnostic assessment, planning and actions. Organisations that follow this process will benefit from its comprehensive and practical applications."

**Sir Adrian Cadbury –**  
Cadbury Code

### What do you get with our Governance Assessment Process (GAP)?

- Two diagnostic sessions to include a governance refresher, developing an action plan and a graded self assessment
- A comprehensive electronic version of your Governance Development Plan
- Presentation of the Plan to your Board or relevant sub committee
- Access to tools and resources to fulfil your governance requirements

### So why consider this assessment process?

- You will receive information for marketing purposes about your association from our case studies

- A comprehensive development plan of your governance requirements linked to expert consultancy to help you put your plan into action.
- An indication of your standard of governance on our three stage assessment
- An opportunity for you to get expert advice on best practice and a refresher on governance
- Diagnostic includes governance risk assessment questions and self assessment considerations
- Media interaction as we publicise the first 50 profiles. Let your Stakeholders see what action you're taking to benefit the association and ultimately them

## Have you booked your place for this seminar yet?

ARE WE 'PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST' NOW? - Current social policy agenda and the impact on RSLs and ALMOs

November 27th 2009

£199.00

10.00am – 2.00pm

Including networking lunch, Birmingham

Do you rely on care and support income streams?

Are your people on board with the personalisation agenda?

Have you had the hard conversations about what it means for your business and what amazing opportunities and challenges it might present for new ways of working?

This seminar offers the opportunity to crystallise what it is all about and explore the next steps for you and your organisation in embracing the change.

It will be particularly relevant to Executive and Senior Managers, Housing Directors and Board Members.

# Meet our people...

## Mairi McLean

Mairi Mclean DBA, MA Social Science & Psychology, CQSW

Mairi's expertise is in management and leadership, particularly in the management of change. She has particular knowledge of Corporate Governance and work with Boards, Trustees and Politicians.

Her 8 years in business consulting is complemented by 34 years' experience in local government and health; she was Chief Executive of Wavely District Council and Northampton Borough Council.

Until 2006 she was Chair of the Ministerial Taskforce on Bullying and Harassment in Local Government, and of the Northamptonshire Children and Young People's Partnership Board and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership. She is also a board member of the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers and Network Rail.

Mairi holds visiting lecturer posts at three British universities, and undertook doctoral studies around leadership and action learning.

## Susan Reizenstein

MBA, MA, Solicitor of the Supreme Court

Susan specialises in strategy, governance and troubleshooting in the not-for-profit sector, principally social housing, higher education and charity sectors;

Previously a Senior Solicitor, responsible for the development of a national Urban Regeneration and Affordable Housing practice.

Susan was appointed by The Housing Corporation in 2002 as a Statutory Appointee and prior to this was Chair for Newlon Housing Group.

She founded the Forum for London Housing Association Chairs and speaks at national housing conferences on governance, regulatory enforcement and cultural change.

She completed the Advanced Diploma in Coaching and Mentoring with the Oxford School of Coaching and Mentoring (accredited at Masters level to Oxford Brookes University).

## Skills investment maintained by employers

**A recent Institute of Directors survey challenged "the received wisdom that training is the first victim of recessionary retrenchment".**

Not only had most organisations maintained investment in training over the course of the last six months, more had actually increased skills spending than had reduced it.

As reported in the Financial Times in June, "companies see training as a way of boosting staff morale, increasing productivity and preparing to take advantage of an upturn.

Nearly 90 per cent of directors said their businesses planned at least to maintain investment over the next six months.

The majority said they were reducing expenditure such as hospitality and staff bonuses and cutting jobs, rather than decreasing training budgets."

'Training in the recession: winner or loser?' is available to download from the Institute of Directors website.

## Central Consultancy and Training

We offer bespoke consultancy & training services to help you develop your people and your organisation. Based in the West Midlands with a national profile and a reputation built over 30 years, we work with statutory, independent, voluntary & community sectors.

### Contact us for:

- Cultural change & service transformation
- Change management
- Governance improvement & Board development
- Director development
- Senior, middle & first line management development
- Human Resources
- Equality & Diversity
- Care & Support
- Training & Development

### What do our customers say about us?\*

#### In independent research our customers said:

- Central consistently offers excellent service
- We create value for customers & build strong relationships
- We deliver more value than they expect
- We tailor services to individual requirements, and have the flexibility to adapt as customer requirements change
- What differentiates us from our competitors is our ability to meet identified need

\*Independent customer research conducted by Birmingham City University 2008