

# Analytical Services Analytical Programme 2008-2009

## Introduction

Most of Communities and Local Government's analysis is commissioned through analytical programme areas as part of our Science and Innovation Strategy. These areas can be viewed on our website and via our Research Database (see section 4 for details). Analytical Services Directorate's external programme mostly covers analysis and data collection on housing, planning, urban/regional, economic/social inclusion and the environment. The ASD analytical programme also includes some important cross-cutting areas, and in-house analysis that complements the external programme.

Most of the new projects will be commissioned by competitive tender and we would welcome Expressions of Interest from organisations who wish to be considered as potential contractors for any of the new projects. Those projects where Expressions of Interest are not sought are marked in red directly under the project title.

*Expressions of Interest forms should be returned (preferably by email) to:*

Russell Colley  
Analytical Services Research Programme Officer  
Floor 2/B6  
Communities & Local Government  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London SW1E 5DU

Tel 020-7944 3278

Fax 020-7944 3109

**E-mail:** [Research@Communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Research@Communities.gsi.gov.uk)

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## Contractors Expressions of Interest

If your organisation wishes to be considered for any of the new projects listed in Section 1 please complete an *Expression of Interest* form providing a short statement of any relevant experience and capabilities in that particular area and how you would address the research. An electronic version of the form can be found with this newsletter.

**It is recommended that Expressions of Interest are returned by 15th August 2008 unless an earlier date is stated.** *In addition it should be noted that some projects may be taken forward before that date on the basis of Expressions of Interest forms received to that point.*

Potential contractors should be aware that the tendering and contracting process is competitive. This Newsletter is read by a large number of organisations and projects often receive many *Expressions of Interest* from potential contractors. You will appreciate that to minimise abortive work, only a small proportion of these are invited to tender.

## Small-Scale Research Projects

We are inviting potential contractors to express an interest in undertaking small-scale research studies as they arise. The streamlined contractual arrangements for commissioning these studies are designed to improve the responsiveness of the Programme to emerging policy issues. Section 3 describes the contractual process used for small-scale research projects. If your organisation is interested in being considered for such a commission, please complete a *Small-Scale Research Projects Expressions of Interest* form and return it to Russell Colley. **As this is a 'rolling' programme, Expressions of Interest can be submitted at any time.** There is a downloadable form available on our website, next to the entry for this newsletter.

Please return the form to [Research@Communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Research@Communities.gsi.gov.uk)

Organisations which have previously expressed an interest in carrying out these small-scale research projects do not need to restate it.

## Section 1: New research projects to be commissioned in 2008-09, by subject area

*(All projects will build in diversity issues)*

Our new analytical programme has been divided into broad themes. We also have comprehensive in-house analysis that complements our external programme, and so **not all themes will have projects**. In addition, it is recommended that you also look at our other research programmes, (sited next to this programme on our website), which together will cover all these areas.

Theme A: Affordable Housing

Theme B: Local Governance and Empowerment

Theme C: Cohesion and Preventing Extremism

Theme D: Environmental Sustainability

Theme E: Fire, Resilience and Recovery

Theme F: Regeneration and Renewal

Theme G: Improving Value for Money/Effectiveness

Theme H: Future Challenges and Cross-Cutting

# Theme A: Affordable Housing

## 1. MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE ENHANCED HOUSING OPTIONS TRAILBLAZERS PROGRAMME.

**Project Manager:** Julie Wilkinson  
e mail: Julie.Wilkinson@Communities.gsi.gov.uk

**Description:** The purpose of this project will be to evaluate the forthcoming Enhanced Housing Options Trailblazers programme, in which a number of local authorities across England are being supported by Communities and Local Government and DWP to develop innovative approaches to delivering enhanced services to people in housing need, following a competitive bidding round.

The Trailblazers are an important policy development, and it is important that Communities and Local Government and DWP assemble robust evidence on the process issues connected with setting up the trailblazers, and the costs and benefits of running the enhanced services. It is very important that we track the immediate and the longer term outcomes for the different client groups who approach the service to assess the added value of the new trailblazers.

An important purpose of the evaluation will be to help identify the good practice lessons which can inform the possible further roll out of the programme, as well as to identify approaches which are less effective.

**Outputs:** Regular reports on emerging findings, particularly in relation to good practice, evaluation report and summary, good practice guide.

## 2. DECENT HOMES RECONCILIATION

**Project Manager:** Gary Gant  
e-mail: Gary.Gant@communities.gsi.gov.uk

**Description:** Communities and Local Government is considering whether to commission a project to investigate the differences between landlord reporting on decent homes delivery and the English House Condition Surveys estimates of progress, and make recommendations for improvements in data capture. A seminar with local practitioners in April identified several key areas where landlords were using discretion when interpreting and applying the Decent Homes Standard and these findings have proved helpful in framing the Department's current views on how best to proceed.

**Outputs:** Research report providing an assessment of why there are data differences, what the implications are for Decent Homes reporting, and recommendations for improvements in data capture. A decision on whether to conduct the research will be made in July.

### 3. NEW ANALYTICAL WORK TO SUPPORT THE ONGOING HOUSING REFORM AGENDA

**Project Manager:** Lesley Smith

e mail: Lesley.Smith@communities.gsi.gov.uk

**Description:** The Hills Review of social housing raised a number of key challenges for future housing policy and Communities and Local Government is now leading on a housing reform programme that responds to the challenges raised. The key principles around the housing reform debate are around providing housing services and options that help and encourage people towards greater economic independence and social mobility; that matches responsibility with opportunity; and are delivered fairly whilst making best use of our resources. A key output from the programme is the delivery of a housing reform green paper towards the end of the year.

We are ring-fencing a flexible resource within the research programme to support any emerging analytical work which is needed to support the reform programme and housing green paper. We are keen to receive expressions of interest from individuals and organisations who have an interest in working on this theme.

**Outputs:** To be determined – linked to the scoping of individual commissions.

### 4. REVIEW OF COUNCIL HOUSING FINANCE

**Project Manager:** Nick Wyatt

e-mail: Nick.Wyatt@communities.gis.gov.uk

**Description:** Communities and Local Government has now started a fundamental review of council housing finance. We are ring-fencing a flexible resource within the research programme to support any emerging analytical work which is needed to support the review. At this stage we are keen to receive expressions of interest from individuals and organisations who would be keen to work on this theme.

**Outputs:** To be determined – linked to the scoping of individual commissions.

## 5. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND HOMELESSNESS REVIEW

**Project Manager:** Helen Smith

e mail: Helen1.Smith@communities.gsi.gov.uk

**Description:** Research to inform policy in relation to homelessness and domestic violence, looking at a number of questions:

- Whether there is evidence that people without dependent children who are at risk of violence are failing to get the help they need; to what extent does this happen?
- What is the current provision of supported housing for people experiencing domestic violence and how well does it meet the demand?
- What is the impact of recent homelessness prevention initiatives, including Sanctuary and Move-on schemes?

**Outputs:** Reports and summary reports.

## 6. THE ROLE OF SUPPORTED HOUSING IN IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR YOUNG VULNERABLE PEOPLE

**Project Manager:** Helen Smith

e mail: Helen1.Smith@communities.gsi.gov.uk

**Description:** This study will inform policy in relation to homelessness and worklessness among vulnerable young people. The study will investigate:

- The extent and appropriateness of current supported housing provision for homeless young people, e.g. Foyers, supported lodgings and supported accommodation such as hostels.
- The costs and benefits associated with the different models.
- Which approaches are most effective for the most socially excluded young people?

**Outputs:** Report and summary.

## 7. BENCHMARKING THE COST OF MAKING A PLANNING APPLICATION

**Project Manager:** Scott Dennison

e mail: [scott.dennison@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:scott.dennison@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

**Description:** This work is designed to provide Communities and Local Government with a better understanding of the costs of making a planning application for a number of different ‘types’ of developments. We are interested in the net cost to applicants and the resulting benchmark estimates will help us in policy development and in Impact Assessment for those policies.

**Outputs:** Report, summary and presentation

## 8. THE USE AND VALUE OF PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

**Project Manager:** Rosie Jaffer

e mail: [rosie.jaffer@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:rosie.jaffer@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

**Description:** The objective of the study is to provide additional data and analysis on use of planning obligations in England through an in-depth study of the obligations entered into in a given year for a sample of planning authorities. The study will build on an existing study in this area (by Sheffield University) and will help to fill improve the evidence base for a number of important planning policy areas such as the proposed Community Infrastructure Levy.

**Outputs:** A report on the use and value of planning obligations, including the nature of developments, their infrastructure needs, the timing of payments, the beneficiaries of agreements and delivered versus agreed developer contributions.

## 9. MONITORING THE CODE FOR LEASING BUSINESS PREMISES

Expressions of interest for this project are required by **7th August 2008**.

**Project Manager:** Lee Dobinson  
e mail: Lee.Dobinson@communities.gsi.gov.uk

**Description:** The Code for Leasing Business Premises (launched in 2007) is the response by the property industry to continuing Ministerial concern about the need for more flexibility in the commercial property market and for prospective tenants to be better informed about the market and the implications of contractual terms.

This initial round of research is intended to establish how far the Code has disseminated, especially among prospective small business occupiers, and how far parties are aware of its contents and are using it in practice. It possibly will be supplemented by more substantive research to be carried out in 2010-11 on the impact of the Code on leasing patterns, against the background of trends in the property market.

**Outputs:** Short report.

**Theme B: Local Governance and Empowerment  
(No Projects)**

**Theme C: Cohesion and Preventing Extremism  
(No Projects)**

**Theme D: Environmental Sustainability  
(No Projects)**

**Theme E: Fire, Resilience and Recovery  
(No Projects)**

# Theme F: Regeneration and Renewal

## 10. WORKING NEIGHBOURHOODS FUND – INTERIM EVALUATION

Expressions of interest for this project are required by **7th August 2008**.

**Project Manager:** Lucy Spurling  
e mail: [lucy.spurling@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:lucy.spurling@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

**Description:** The Working Neighbourhood Fund (WNF) was launched in December 2007, to provide Local Authorities with an additional resource to tackle pockets of high worklessness within their local areas. The WNF reforms neighbourhood renewal funding, focusing more exclusively on worklessness and low levels of skills and enterprise.

Communities and Local Government, working with the Department for Work and Pensions, wish to commission an independent interim evaluation of the Working Neighbourhoods Fund.

This study will provide a baseline and process evaluation, with the intention to consider an impact evaluation at a later date. The project will consist of two parts; part one will provide a baseline of WNF areas and part two will be a process (or formative) evaluation of the development of strategies and approaches to tackle worklessness in WNF areas. A key consideration of the study will be the role of LAAs and LSPs in delivering worklessness projects in these areas.

The study will involve quantitative and qualitative methods and analysis.

**Outputs:** Reports with summaries. Interim findings will need to be made available throughout the project, in the form of briefing papers, presentations, etc.

## 11. IMPACT OF POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES IN DEPRIVED AREAS

**Project Manager:** Demelza Birch

e mail: demelza.birch@communities.gsi.gov.uk

**Description:** The Department's National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal (NSNR) Evaluation will help understand the cumulative impact on deprived areas of a number of neighbourhood renewal programmes, funding streams and initiatives that comprise the Strategy. Without wishing to pre-empt the results of the NSNR Evaluation – due to complete in April 2009 – we may want to do additional work to explore certain issues further or fill any remaining gaps in the evidence base. This may be carried out in-house or through a combination of in-house and externally commissioned activities.

**Outputs:** Report(s) with executive summaries.

## 12. NEW DEAL FOR COMMUNITIES EVALUATION: EMERGING ISSUES

Expressions of interest are NOT required for this project.

**Project Manager:** Demelza Birch

e mail: demelza.birch@communities.gsi.gov.uk

**Description:** The Department has an ongoing evaluation of the New Deal for Communities programme being carried out by a consortium led by Sheffield Hallam University. In addition to the core evaluative aims of this study, there is scope within the contract, to respond to emerging issues and policy interests, for example, around community empowerment.

**Outputs:** Briefing papers or report(s) with executive summaries.

# Theme H: Future Challenges and Cross-Cutting (No Projects)

## Section 2: Guidance for Potential Contractors

### Expressions of Interest

Far more *Expressions of Interest* in projects are received than can be included on the short lists for invitations to tender for any project. The information provided by a contractor to support an *Expression of Interest* is used to select short lists of invitees to tender. It is, therefore, important that potential contractors complete the form outlining their relevant experience and expertise in relation to specific projects and showing how the project would be tackled.

### Invitations to Tender

Normally 3-6 organisations are invited to tender for each project. Formal invitations to tender include:

- the specification of the project outlining the objectives and why it is being commissioned, and the details expected to be provided in the tender;
- the standard contract conditions;
- the time and date for receipt of tenders; and
- the expected timing for the announcement of the award of the contract.

In some cases a pre-tender consultation exercise is carried out in order to ascertain contractor interest in the project and to consult on the specification for the work.

Four weeks is the usual tendering period, although for projects that are required urgently, a shorter tendering period may be sometimes necessary.

Specifications will generally be output based, giving clear guidance on the department's requirements but leaving it to tenderers to suggest the most appropriate methods to achieve the objectives. In order to promote competition and value for money, it is our normal practice not to disclose project budgets.

The letter sent out with the invitation to tender gives the name and number of the department's Project Officer for a project and contractors are encouraged to make contact if they wish to discuss the specification.

## Tender Documents and their Assessment

A tender assessment panel will examine the tenders in terms of how well they meet the requirements, and value for money. The panel will take into account all the requirements listed in the tender document. These usually include:

- understanding of the issues being addressed;
- familiarity with previous relevant research;
- the experience of the research team;
- the proposed costs and value for money.

Interviews may be held to assist with this assessment. Normally these will involve the tenderer making a presentation, responding to the questions of the interviewing panel and having an opportunity to make a final statement.

## Awarding of Contracts

The assessment of tenders normally results in the selection of a preferred tender, although the department is not bound to accept any tender. All of the tenderers are informed of the outcome.

## Section 3: Small-Scale Research projects

To enhance the research programme's responsiveness to emerging policy issues, the department has set up arrangements to allow un-programmed research to be commissioned quickly.

If your organisation wishes to express an interest in undertaking these studies, please do so by responding to the invitation published in this newsletter to complete a *Small-Scale Research Projects Expression of Interest* form and return it to us.

It is expected that each piece of research commissioned will require input of a maximum of 20 person days and usually take 3-4 weeks to complete.

The *Expressions of Interest* forms will be used to streamline competitive procedures and provide key information that would usually be obtained only through formal tendering. The department will maintain commercial confidentiality of this information.

When we wish to let a contract, an organisation will be formally asked to submit a proposal. This invitation will be based on an assessment of the Expression of Interest form and acceptance by the organisation of the department's General Conditions of Contract for Services and conditions of Intellectual Property Rights. If the proposal is satisfactory, the department's acceptance will be confirmed and a formal contract concluded. Payment will normally be made to the contractor as a lump sum upon receipt of satisfactory outputs.

## Section 4: Current and recently completed contracts

Full details of commissioned projects can be found on the department's *Research Database*. This is available to view on our website by following this path, from the Home page:

*Research and Statistics/Research Management Database*