ENGAGING GRADUATE TALENT
Thomas Sutton

Being part of the GEM programme opened my eyes to the possibilities within the social housing sector, gave me an enthusiasm for the intricacies of housing policy, put me on a path to a steep upward career trajectory and has enabled me to travel the world to look at other housing systems.
The GEM programme has given me the ability to progress from an assistant into a managerial role in a short period of time. This is because I was given the opportunity to work across different teams during my placement with Orbit Group.

Priscilla Yeboah
The GEM Programme

Since 2009 we have been recruiting GEMs who can demonstrate the passion and values which align with the housing sector. Our partners provide a minimum of a 12 month work place role within their organisations.

GEMs immerse themselves into an intensive year of learning and development. This prospectus will highlight each element of the GEM Programme.

We are an Accredited Centre and a formal partner with the Chartered Institute of Housing. Our partnership ensures that all GEMs are given CIH membership and access to unique opportunities which will further their development.

How can you get involved?

In order to apply for a place on the GEM Programme you will need to complete an application form which can be found at www.centreforpartnership.co.uk/the-gems

By becoming a GEM you will be expected to show passion and enthusiasm to become a Future Housing Leader.

GEMs are offered a truly unique experience when they join the programme. The programme is designed to challenge and help GEMs develop a career within the sector. Throughout the year GEMs will take on a work place role within a housing organisation; complete a Level 4 CIH qualification, attend all GEMshacks and engage with developmental opportunities such as completing strataGEM research.
GEM Values, Skills & Attributes

The GEM Programme operates with a clearly defined values system and we also ask GEMs to demonstrate particular skills and attributes. It is important that all participants sign up to and demonstrate the following:

- A strong belief in **Social Justice** acknowledging that the world isn’t a level playing field for all
- Both **Societal** and **Interpersonal Empathy**
- **Professionalism** and **Respect** for others at all times recognising that they represent their employer and the GEM Programme
- Use of **Critical Thinking** to analyse and evaluate issues before judging
- **Strong Personal Organisation** skills to counter balance the workload
- Use of **Initiative** both within and outside of the workplace
- Being able to take **Ownership** of work and responsibilities
- The ability to develop **Emotional Intelligence** and **Resilience** to build effective relationships and overcome adversity

"The GEM Programme gave me the opportunity to try my hand at a career in housing, and as it turns out this was the best possible route I could have taken.

It’s given me an insight into the sector I would never normally have had the chance to get, and I’ve loved every second.

Cath Adams"
Lucy Melkowski

The GEM Programme has helped me gain a job in a sector which I have always been ambitious to work within and broadened my knowledge of a sector that is invaluable to creating a just society. Notwithstanding the experience and knowledge that you gain of the housing sector, the GEM programme has been brilliant in excelling me as a person, allowing me to explore my strengths, move out my comfort zone and develop as a future leader.

I have met some excellent people and received excellent opportunities on the GEM programme. I got to travel to Canada to attend the International Housing Partnership Conference, where I met some lifelong role models and made some lifelong friends.
Selection

The GEM Programme team have a wealth of recruitment experience and have been recruiting graduates since 2009 from a wide range of disciplines into the Housing and Built Communities sector. Our personal and professional commitment to equality of opportunity reflects the ethos of the Chartered Institute of Housing.

Values Fit
This element explores the alignment of personal values with the GEM Programme’s values system, ensuring that all participants can sign up to and live the values.

Leadership Potential
The GEM Programme is committed to developing the sector’s future leaders and it is important that participants have the potential to lead others through their thinking and behaviour

Lifelong Professional
The GEM Programme provides a pipeline of committed professionals for the housing and built communities sectors and it is important that participants have the potential to achieve Chartered Status.
GEM Elements

The GEM Programme consists of 6 key elements:

- **Future Housing Leaders**
- **CIH Certificate in Housing**
- **Achieving Chartered status**
- **Mentoring**
- **Workplace Learning**
- **Personal Development**
The development of Future Housing Leaders is a critical element of the GEM Programme and is embedded in all learning events. The focus is on personal and leadership development. Participants will be asked to complete psychometric assessments which will give them an insight to their own strengths and areas of development. GEM participants learn, explore, discuss and debate big picture and personal issues which will impact the sector and their individual development as future housing leaders.

“Vertical learning is about the transformation of how you think, feel, and make sense of the world; it is about increasing the complexity of how you see and relate to the world and to what you know.” (DMC, 2015)

By encouraging GEMs to see the world from a different perspective, they develop the insights to see the challenges facing their sector in a new light, and in turn to imagine new solutions.

The GEM Programme is committed to enabling participants’ vertical learning as well as their horizontal learning. Horizontal learning is delivered through the CIH learning. Vertical learning is developed over a long period of time: but the GEM Programme aims to rapidly advance participants’ vertical learning to aid their career aspirations.
100% of graduates who have completed the programme have passed their qualification.
We have a formal Strategic Partnership with the Chartered Institute of Housing and we are an Accredited Centre for the delivery of CIH qualifications. GEM participants work towards the achievement of the CIH Level 4 Certificate in Housing, which is designed for learners working in the UK and Ireland.

The qualification comprises the following subject areas:
Achieving Chartered Status

GEM participants who successfully complete the GEM Programme (including the Level 4 Certificate) will have the opportunity to progress to become a Chartered Member of the Chartered Institute of Housing through the Experienced Professional Route.

This is achieved through completion of an intensive 14-week programme. Participants will be supported by a team of experienced learning and Chartered housing professionals.

GEMs taking this route will be members of an action learning group facilitated by the team below. In order to achieve Chartered status, GEMs will need to complete a 5000 word portfolio and a professional interview.

Trevor Smith
Director of the GEM Programme

Alison Leech
Incommunities Policy and Performance Manager.
Mentoring

Mentoring is a key element of the GEM Programme. Every GEM has a workplace mentor and a pastoral and career development mentor within the Centre for Partnership team.

Mentoring is a great development opportunity for talented employees already working in your organisation. Each mentor will attend a Mentor Training Day led by Trevor Smith as part of the GEM Programme Welcome. This day explores mentoring in the context of the GEM Programme; some of the hurdles that might crop up based on real case studies; and what will be expected of them as a GEM Mentor. The Mentor Training Day is also an excellent opportunity for mentors to get to know their mentee and to network with mentors from different organisations. We invite all mentors and line managers to join a Yammer group and encourage discussion and collaboration throughout the year.

The role of a GEM Mentor can be varied and is tailored to the individual's needs. Some examples of the topics which will often be covered in the mentor sessions include:

- **Networking:** It can be difficult for people who are new to the sector or maybe lacking in confidence to go out and meet new people. A GEM Mentor can help remove barriers and help make initial introductions to people who may be beneficial to the GEMs workplace or learning experience.

- **Career Development:** The housing sector has so many career opportunities within it that GEMs will often look to mentors for career guidance. The GEM Mentor will help them to explore new options and get experience in areas across the sector.

- **Workplace:** We recommend that the Mentor is someone outside of the core team the GEM works in. This way if issues arise within the team the GEM knows they have a neutral party to talk things through with.

- **Personal:** this may include issues around mental health, relationships, house moving and any other issues that may impact the GEM’s ability to participate in the GEM Programme.
Nicholas Bould

“The GEM programme has given me a brilliant opportunity in the world of work and allowed me to make connections that I will keep for a long time to come.”
Personal Development

During the GEM Programme GEMs will be asked to take on a challenging role within the workplace; complete a professional qualification; carry out research pieces; and attend GEMshacks which will open their mind to new ways of thinking. Through this they will learn a great deal about themselves including: their Worldview, their values and where their skills lie.

It is an intense year but they are well supported throughout the programme from a number of sources including GEM, their manager and mentor and their network of other GEMs.

We also ask GEMs to complete a Personal Development Plan which they can work on throughout the year. From this they can discover where their strengths and interests are within the sector and use their guided learning as a way to build their portfolio, ensuring they have the necessary experiences to further their career.
Work Based Learning

GEMs join the programme from a wide range of degree disciplines.

Each year we see GEMs with little to no work experience take on a challenging role and thrive in the workplace.

During their work based learning GEMs are exposed to many aspects of the housing sector by completing guided learning within in the workplace set by the GEM Programme. This intense learning experience enables your GEM to understand the wider sector and explore how their learning is beneficial to multiple departments.

Guided learning is reviewed yearly to ensure GEMs are being exposed to the most current issues within the sector. As an example, some of the guided learning activities set for the current cohort include:

- Attending a Board meeting
- Shadowing a neighbourhoods team
- Interviewing policy makers within their organisation
- Visit a court and observe a housing case
- Observe a housing options interview
- Visit an organisation which offers supported accommodation
- Interview the Director of Finance in relation to the recent Budget announcement.

GEMs are required to carry out a challenging role in the workplace. In the past GEM roles have reached all parts of the housing sector. Some of the job roles and projects have included:

- Digital and Financial Inclusion
- Welfare Reform and Incomes
- Trainee Neighbourhood Manager
- Organisational Development Officer
- Communications Officer
- Fraud Intelligence Officer
- Anti-Poverty Strategy
- New Build Construction
The GEM Programme is built around GEMshacks, of which there will be 8 across the 12 month duration of the GEM Programme. Each GEMshack will be an amalgamation of CIH and Future Housing Leader content designed to offer each GEM a unique opportunity to develop within the housing sector. These are led by the GEM Team, guest experienced practitioners and CIH Tutors.

GEMshacks offer an opportunity for social learning between GEMs and organisations. We welcome guest speakers from our partner organisations and externally to join us at GEMshacks. GEMS have worked on strataGEM pieces including a comparative report on UK and Dutch housing organisations response to customer involvement; a research piece on housing refugees and asylum seekers in England and a comparative report on allocations between England and Northern Ireland.

Each of the GEMshacks will also be self-directed by mobile learning in order to support the CIH element. The CIH Village is design to ensure GEMs understand all aspects of the CIH qualification and assessment.
GEM Blended Learning Experience

GEMshacks will take place at the University of Bradford Management Centre, Heaton Mount, which has an exceptional conference and accommodation facility and has become the “home” of the GEM Programme. Other GEMshacks will be hosted across the UK to reflect the diversity of the programme.

The themes of the GEMshacks for the 2016/2017 cohort will be:

- Welcome to the GEM Programme
- Homelessness
- Regeneration
- Whitehall and Westminster Visit
- CIH Village
- Personal Development
- 21st Century Communities
- Global Housing Issues
Recognition

Business in the Community
The BITC Responsible Business Awards are the most prestigious and respected awards championing responsible business in the UK and abroad.

In 2014 we were initially awarded the Big Tick by BITC for Inspiring Young Talent and we are especially proud that we achieved reaccreditation in 2015 and 2016.

24 Housing Young Leaders Award
Former GEM; Junior GEM tutor and now GEM Tutor - Thomas Sutton went on to win the 24 Housing Young Leaders Awards 2015.

There were 3 GEMs in the Top 20 list of nominees for 2015.

24 Housing Awards: Best Training Scheme 2015
The GEM Programme was proud to win the Best Training Scheme category in the 24 Housing Awards 2015.

CIH Rising Star Finalists
2 GEMs have gone on to reach the final stage of the CIH Rising Stars Competition in 2013 and 2014.
With GEM I have climbed up the ladder. It has opened up great opportunities for me to excel. The experience and knowledge gained makes me stand out because of the way the GEM programme is structured.
Andy Jones, Orbit
The GEM Programme has been a really effective way for Orbit to provide valuable opportunities and openings to bright new Graduate talent. Often these are individuals who would never have previously considered a career within the housing sector.

As an organisation we have benefited from the energy, ideas and fresh thinking that the GEMs bring to our business and in turn they have developed hands-on experience, knowledge and confidence from their placement with Orbit.

The combination of structured learning (with a CIH qualification), a real job with a real purpose and the superb support provided by the Centre for Partnership has ensured that all parties have enjoyed a really positive experience.

Megan Henderson, Leeds Federated
The GEM programme provides a fantastic opportunity for Leeds Federated to show graduates the diversity of career options available within housing. The Centre for Partnership works directly with each organisation to help recruit the right person and continues to support graduates within their internship to help ensure success.

Dave Dickens, Incommunities
Our GEM graduates are exceptional. They have helped us to develop a very clear focus for helping our customers and supporting the business in an energetic, enterprising and clear way. They bring fresh ideas to old problems to help your business deliver for your customers or clients.

Tom O’Malley, Newlon Housing Trust
If I’d have gone out with an open recruitment process, we wouldn’t have ended up with anyone as good as Lucy, our current GEM student.
Our GEMs say

Kayleigh Hancox, Ongo
The GEM programme has given me the opportunity to earn as I learn, whilst also providing me with lots of opportunities for personal development. The structured nature of the programme has enabled me to balance hands on learning whilst gaining invaluable real life experience.
I’ve really enjoyed the programme and it has definitely been a major contributing factor in me securing my new role.

Muied Shujaeid, Orbit
I came on to the GEM programme expecting a great deal, the description of the programme was the main reason I applied as it was so much different than other standard graduate programmes; needless to say I have not been disappointed. As a recent graduate straight from university and admittedly a bit lost in knowing what kind of job or career suited me, this programme promised a great blend between structured learning and employment; it was for this reason that I was able to comfortably fit into my role from day 1 and get stuck into both work and study.

David Gibson, Keyhouse
The GEM Programme has given me a wide range of knowledge and skills to understand this sector, to transfer these into my work and implement in real life situations. It is extremely rewarding to see the benefit we can make to people’s lives through housing and the GEM Programme has enabled me to do this.

Lauren McAvan, Incommunities
The GEM programme has definitely built my confidence especially when it comes to having confidence in my own abilities and public speaking. It has also helped me gain invaluable skills and knowledge and given me a step on the career ladder in a sector I know I would like to have a long term career in.
Keep in Touch

For more information visit the link below to hear from GEMs and Directors about the GEM Programme. www.youtube.com/watch?v=0zcyuARH4hQ

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