



Chartered
Institute of
Housing
Futures

A Sector in Transformation

CIH Futures Survey results – December 2025

Dean McGlynn – CIH Futures Board Member

Voices of the Futures Report Launch – Today's Webinar

1. Introduction to CIH Futures & the project

- Dean McGlynn, Board member, CIH Futures

2. Survey results, findings and recommendations

- Dr Bekah Ryder, Research & Insights Manager, Altair

3. CIH response

- Sarah Dunkerley, Director of membership and professional development, CIH

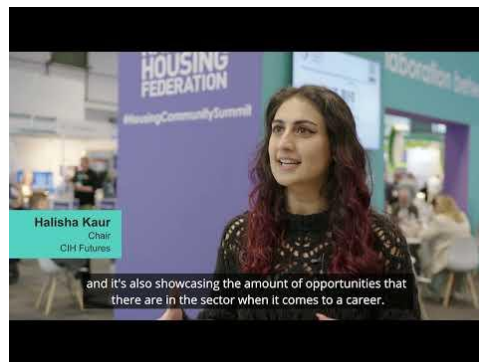
4. Inspiring the Next Generation into Housing Careers

- Tom Arey, Director, PfP Thrive

5. Q&A



Who are CIH Futures?



Who are CIH Futures?

Community of Young Professionals

The CIH Futures board is a vibrant community dedicated to young housing professionals under 35 shaping the sector's future.

Focus on Diversity and Inclusion

The group champions equality, diversity, and inclusion to ensure all voices in housing are heard and valued.

Professional Development and Advocacy


CIH Futures offers networking, advocacy, and development opportunities to promote professionalism and leadership in the housing sector.

Shaping the Sector's Future

The group supports CIH's work through collaborative projects and engagement with the housing sector.



The story so far

- February 2025 – Calls for sponsorship
 - April 2025 – Sponsors confirmed
 - July 2025 – Survey Launched
 - August/September – Focus Groups carried out
 - November 2025 – Analysis complete and recommendations confirmed
 - December 2025 – Report launched
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Why a survey? Why now?

Focus on Young Housing Professionals

The survey targets housing professionals under 35 to understand their unique experiences, challenges and aspirations

Understanding Current Workforce Challenges

Build a wider understanding of the current barriers, frustrations or missed opportunities the sector faces with younger professionals

Insights on Career and Retention

To provide insights on job satisfaction, career progression, and support needed to retain talent and build resilience across the sector's workforce

What Next?

- Take findings and recommendations forward with CIH in 2026
- Support CIH Presidential Campaign 2026 – Rooted in Resilience
- Expand the reach and impact of these findings and recommendations
- Recruit new board members, increase CIH membership, and engage new partners/stakeholders in this work



***Not everyone gets the
opportunity to make a
difference in the world
– this is ours***

CIH Futures board



Voices of the Future: Building Tomorrow's Housing Sector

Dr. Bekah Ryder

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Altair



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December 2025

What did we set out to do?



Find out the experiences, goals, and perspectives of young people (35 and under) working in the housing sector - first research project of its kind



Online survey with 900+ responses



Five focus groups with 16 participants

What did we find?



- Largest study of young housing professionals in UK social housing (900+ surveyed).
- Young professionals are passionate about housing's social purpose and making a difference.
- Most entered housing by chance, not choice.
- Many have found a meaningful, varied and challenging career in housing.
- Frustrations: career progression, pay, voice and influence, wellbeing, and inconsistent support.
- Nearly seven in ten plan long-term careers, but passion without influence and growth risks disengagement.
- Sector must promote itself and its career opportunities, value youth voices, and invest in management and enabling networks.

Thank you

To everyone who supported the research, whether through completing the survey, speaking in a focus group, or sharing the link to participate.

This research would not have been possible without:

The generous support from the following organisations: PfP Thrive (part of the Places for People Group), South East Consortium (SEC), Karbon Homes, Hightown Housing Association, Riverside, English Rural, National Housing Maintenance Forum (NHMF), Hyde Housing, Devonshires, and Mobysoft.

The volunteers on CIH Futures' board, particularly Dean McGlynn who initially proposed the survey, Halisha Kaur, Meghan Rank, Lizzie Skillen, and Lucy Owen.



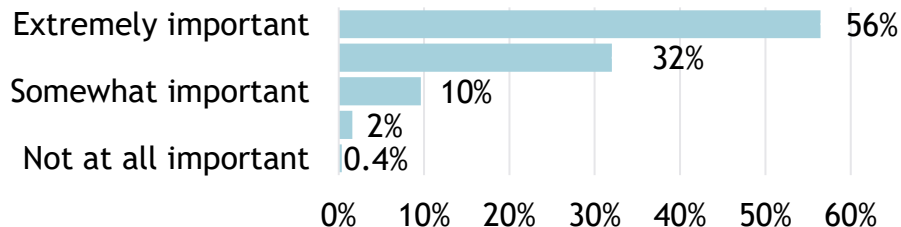
Findings



The hidden housing sector

- Housing as a **'hidden' career**.
- **Different entry routes**, which brings diversity in skills and experience.
- **Reputation vs reality** - often no or negative expectations but find meaningful work.
- Greater visibility of housing as a career and **addressing barriers to entry** - the sector is missing out on talent, and this talent is missing out on a rewarding career.

How important is it to you that your job helps people or makes a positive difference? (822 responses)



“Not everyone gets the opportunity to make a difference in the world - this is ours.”

Young housing professional in focus group

“I always say that as housing professionals we have the potential to make a huge impact on people. You can do more for a family, for a person, in one day than most professionals can achieve in a whole career”



Jim Strang, former
CIH President

*Photo credit Paul Clarke,
Inside Housing*

An inclusive sector

- Young housing professionals generally report a **strong sense of belonging** to the housing sector.
- They **value collaboration and openness**, allowing consideration of their ideas for change.
- **Flexible working is prized**, alongside fairness and consistency in working arrangements.
- While **many praise the sector's inclusivity and diversity**, **barriers remain**, with young people underrepresented at senior levels and occasional reports of discrimination.

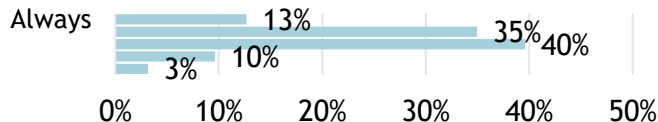
Common responses to ideas put forward by young professionals were: “this is how we’ve always done it” or “ we can’t do this because of x, y and z.”

“As a young housing person trying to make a difference, that’s really, really frustrating.”



Young housing professional in focus group

Do you feel your organisation listens to your feedback and takes meaningful action in response?
(821 responses)



Young housing professional in survey

“For anything to be a success, and for the future of housing, there needs to be collaboration and that is working with a variety of people from different ages and different sort of backgrounds in housing.”

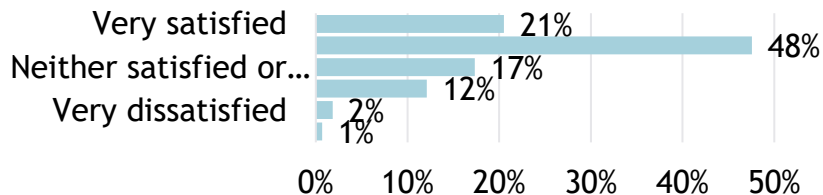


Young housing professional in focus group

Workplace experiences

- Generally, **job satisfaction is high**.
- Pay satisfaction is 46% - slightly below wider workforce research (52% for CIPD).
- **Clear sense of autonomy** - nearly nine in ten say they are fully or mostly trusted to manage their roles and responsibilities.
- **Nearly a third (31%) would like more responsibility**.
- **Roles were fulfilling but burnout is a risk**. More than a third (36%) of 875 young professionals reported feeling extremely tired, stressed, or overwhelmed at work 'very often' or 'often' in the last 12 months.

Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your current role? (877 responses)



"I've loved working in housing, meeting people, being able to problem solve issues people face and working with wider departments."



Young housing professional in survey

"There are certain people [who are in Head of and Director positions] who are still logged on at like 10:00 at night... and on Saturdays and Sundays... That for me is quite off-putting because I already work longer hours than I'm paid to."



Young housing professional in focus group

Career development

- **Different opportunities for learning and professional development**, much internal. Opportunities varied by organisation, role and capacity to accommodate.
- **Concern that managers do not always receive adequate training to manage.**
- **Frustrations and opportunities for advancement.**
- **Nearly seven in ten people see their future career in housing.**

“I love working in housing, I get to make a big difference to residents within my local communities. Housing is full on and challenging but I have always wanted to work in the sector, and I want to continue working in the sector for as long as I can.”



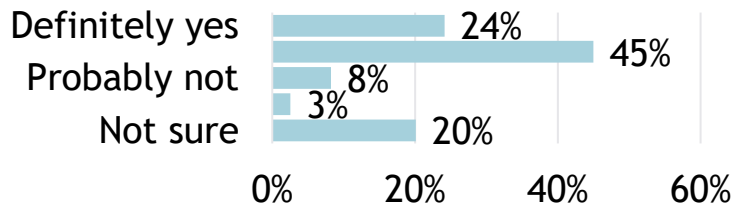
Young housing professional in survey

“I expected more training and development in the two and a half years that I have already been here, there has been no real training or progression, or more opportunities because we are a small organisation. I wanted more hands-on work, more challenges to help me develop and grow.”



Young housing professional in survey

Do you see your future career in the housing sector? (825 responses)



Good work and housing



What does good work mean in housing?

- Our research shows many young professionals are passionate about working in housing. Yet without a framework of good work, this passion may not be enough to retain them in the sector.
- The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) has seven principles of good work.

1. Pay and benefits
2. Contracts
3. Work-life balance
4. Job design and the nature of work
5. Relationships at work
6. Employee voice
7. Health and wellbeing

- Overall, while many features of a ‘good job’ are present in the housing sector, there remain notable gaps that could be addressed to better fulfil the criteria of good work, particularly around career development, employee voice, and managing workloads.

A framework of behaviours

Reflecting on how some young professionals feel stuck in their career and are not clear on how they can progress, the following behaviours may help young people, and managers, as they navigate their careers and workplaces.

- **Show up** - be present in meetings and at any offices to build relationships and build confidence to share ideas.
- **Speak up** - share information and knowledge and encourage transparency, be confident in asking questions and sharing ideas.
- **Look up** - carve time for reflection and wider strategic projects that will address immediate role demands.
- **Team up** - build collaboration within and across teams and organisations.
- **Never give up** - be persistent and resilient in the face of adversity and challenges.
- **Lift others up** - provide feedback, support and training, and access this for yourself.

One focus group participant had the following advice for young professionals who were not getting what they wanted from their work:

“Just be yourself and you will find people who like that, agree with that, respect that, give you space to be that. And if you're not getting that, then, nine times out of 10, it's the place, not



Young housing professional in focus group

Takeaways



Housing employers



What young housing professionals want from work:

- Meaningful work that makes a difference to people's lives.
- Collaboration and a shared sense of purpose.
- Celebration of achievements.
- Greater awareness of careers in housing.
- Opportunities for growth.
- To have their ideas considered.
- Support for wellbeing.

How you can support this:

Read the report and recommendations. Deliver greater consistency in workplace frameworks to ensure equal access to opportunity and enhance performance. This includes:

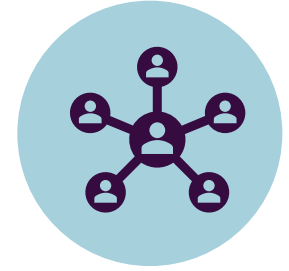
- Investigate and action initiatives targeting youth employment.
- Consistent inductions, training and development, management, pay, policies and structured career development for all roles and entry routes.
- Managers identifying and sharing networking and training events and reassigning work.
- Upskill managers and protect capacity to ensure effective management, mentorship and support for teams.
- Ensure an employee voice strategy is in place.
- Develop a mental health plan, address workplace stressors, and deliver training to support wellbeing.

Young professionals



- If your values and aspirations do not align with your employer, there may be better-suited alternatives within the sector - seek out good employers and let organisations know this is what you want.
- Extend your networks - this might include CIH Futures, CIH, The Housing Forum Futures Network, Generation for Change, Future of London, and/or Future of Greater Manchester.
- Access mentoring and training and development opportunities - feedback on these to make improvements.
- Shape and access wellbeing support and raise concerns with appropriate colleagues.
- Work with your employer to promote housing as a career of choice.
- Feedback on your job description and any job advert to ensure it is clear, jargon-free and lists only essential qualifications and experience requirements.

The sector



- CIH and CIH Futures to establish a task and finish group to oversee, coordinate, and report on the implementation of report recommendations.
- Start a programme of what good work looks like in housing to share learning and practice, including a programme to recognise supportive managers.
- More online opportunities for networking, specifically for young people.
- Provide a platform for CIH Futures at their events.
- CIH Futures to assess how well their network reflects UK housing.
- Collaborate with other networks for young professionals.