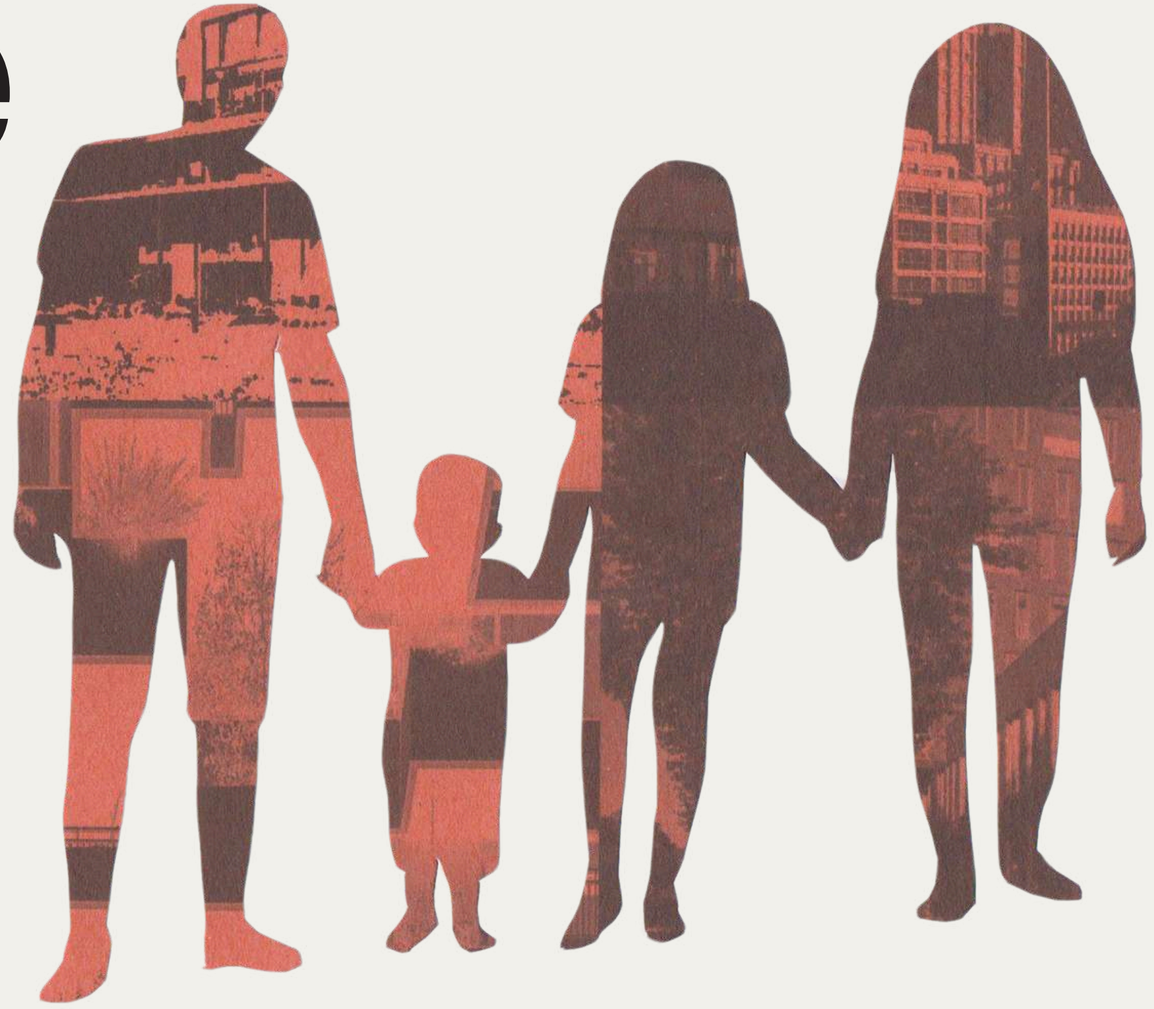
the GEM Programme

the **GEM** programme

an inspiring journey for housing's upcoming talent

2027



The GEM Programme - what will #GEM27 look like

In an uncertain world, the GEM Programme innovates to enable housing organisations and their people to be future ready.

Personal growth and professional development lie at the heart of the GEM Programme starting in January 2027. GEMs will experience a unique immersive journey, combining six GEM Shacks, a Chartered Institute of Housing Level 4 Qualification and mentor support.

The key objective of the GEM Programme is to develop people of influence. This is achieved by:
-learning from experiencing housing’s realities
-moving GEMs beyond their comfort zones
-creating powerful learning networks across countries and organisations
-supporting deep reflective learning
-expanding the knowledge base of housing

Learning in a ‘GEM Shack’ - a unique experience

GEM Shacks are intensive and immersive two-day themed learning experiences which give strategic and practical insight into key aspects of housing. GEM Shacks are demanding events which enable GEMs to find their feet, find their voice and show up as people of influence on the programme, and in their organisations and the wider housing sector.

Six GEM Shacks take place throughout the twelve-month programme. They are designed and delivered in collaboration with GEM partners and their GEMs in the UK, Ireland and Holland. These stimulating cross-organisation learning events incorporate a succession of ‘GEM Challenges’ to ensure every GEM is engaged in learning experiences which stretch and grow them personally as future leaders.

GEMs work in teams to analyse, interpret, and develop creative ideas in relation to the challenges specific to the GEM Shack. All GEM Challenges culminate in GEMs presenting their ideas on key issues to senior leaders, subject experts and stakeholders and receiving feedback; plus subsequent transfer of GEM Shack learning to vested interests in their employing organisations.

GEM Shacks - themes for 2027

Welcome: The Challenge of Homelessness

GEMs take a holistic view of homelessness globally and locally, by interacting with subject experts, leaders from charities, the social housing sector, front-line workers, and people with lived experience of homelessness. This first GEM Shack takes inspiration from the GEM Programme patron David Tovey, who issues a call to action on homelessness. David, who was formerly homeless, is a successful artist, activist and housing campaigner.

Sustaining Homes, Buildings and the Environment

GEMs experience first hand the importance of the physical sustainability of homes. Site visits enable the study of retrofit and new build, plus a comparison between countries. The lived experiences of residents and communities are reviewed along with financial and resourcing considerations. Working in teams, GEMs must rise to the GEM Challenge which engages them in developing and presenting innovative ideas to senior executives and sustainability experts.

GEM Shacks - themes for 2027

Leadership: Focus on the Personal and Professional

GEMs leave this GEM Shack with a deeper understanding of themselves as people of influence. Based on positive and strengths-based psychologies, they develop creative leadership skills to apply to the challenges faced by their organisations. GEMs are introduced to the GEM Reflective Journal and engage in reflective practice throughout the programme with guidance and feedback from the GEM personal performance coach and their workplace mentor.

Strengthening Communities through Inclusion

GEM partners in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland are recognised for the work they have done over the last 50 years in bridging the gaps in a diverse society. GEMs are given the opportunity to explore how Ireland tackles equality, diversity, and inclusion through the lens of sustaining people, communities and place. GEMs engage with residents, community leaders, underrepresented groups and staff. In depth study visits are included and provide the basis for the next GEM challenge.

GEM Shacks - themes for 2027

Customers in Focus

Grounded in the principles of sustaining people and place, this GEM Shack explores housing management and customer service through the lived experiences of residents and housing colleagues. The GEM Challenge engages GEMs with residents and other stakeholders in the co-creation of proposals for transforming housing management and customer service, culminating in GEMs presenting their proposals to stakeholders.

Government: Policy and Impact

GEMs explore how housing policy is designed and delivered, with a focus on people, place and the environment. Hosted in Westminster with the support of politicians from Scotland, England and Northern Ireland, senior housing leaders, senior civil servants from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, and campaign groups, GEMs develop the knowledge, insight and confidence to ask questions about policies affecting the world of housing. A comparative study of associated policies in the countries represented on the GEM Programme provides the basis for this challenge.

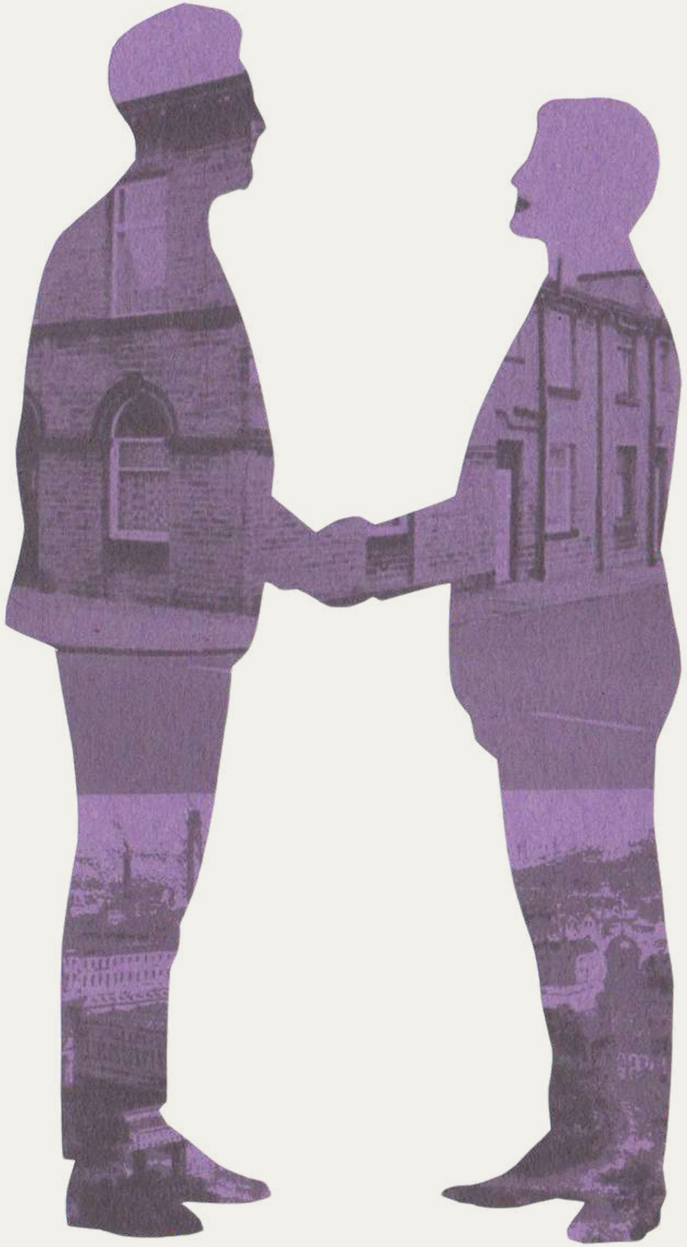
Recognition as a housing professional

The GEM Programme includes an accredited CIH qualification which is delivered from our own CIH Approved Centre. We are proud of our outstanding success rate.

GEMs complete the CIH Level Four Certificate in Housing, which is designed to give a broad overview of the sector and is an extension of the support provided by the programme to help GEMs thrive in their careers as housing professionals.

The modules include:
Professionalism in Housing
Housing Policy
Housing Law and Regulation
Customer Focus in Housing
Sustainability in Housing
Finance in Housing

GEMs can also attend the CIH National Conference as delegates. They are also encouraged to apply for Concessionary Membership of the CIH.

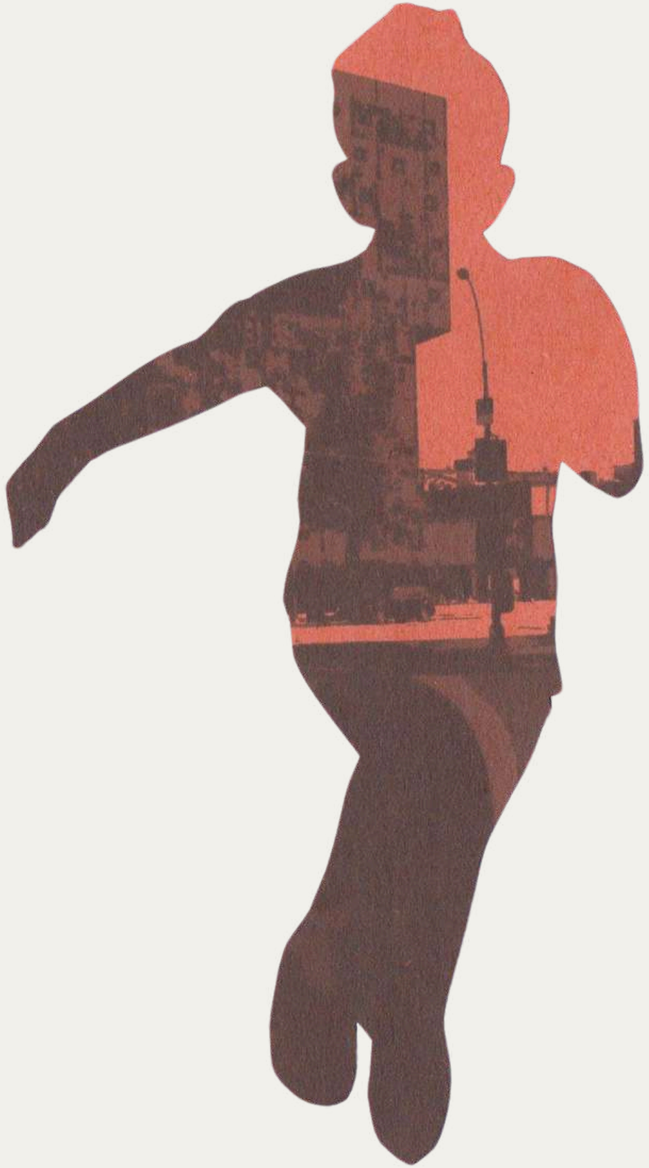


GEM Workplace Learning

Workplace learning is an integral part of the GEM Programme as GEMs take part in the programme whilst fulfilling a full-time role. GEMs are supported by dedicated Workplace Mentors. With mentor support, GEMs develop their knowledge and skills and use their initiative to act in their organisations. Learning from doing accelerates the GEMs personal growth and expands their capabilities. Workplace learning allows GEMs to focus on their development as a housing professional of influence, while contributing to their organisation's objectives.

Supportive workplace learning will provide a GEM with:

- ongoing personal support from a trusted source
- a value-adding relationship, driven by the GEM
- an improved understanding of how the organisation and its stakeholders work in meeting challenges
- guidance on balancing work and life needs
- a sounding board for making sense of their GEM learning experiences
- guidance on strengths and career direction
- access to colleagues in all parts of the business and beyond
- the opportunity for two-way mentoring



GEM Team support - for workplace mentors & managers

The GEM team provides developmental support for GEMs' line managers and Workplace Mentors.

Experience is not essential to become a mentor: what's needed is a genuine interest in people and the motivation to help upcoming professionals learn and develop. Workplace Mentors could be a member of staff with experience as a mentor, or perhaps to provide a great development opportunity for someone new to mentoring.

The GEM Programme provides the GEM Reflective Journal to assure the quality of a GEM's learning journey in the workplace and to support mentors in their new role. This framework is available to GEM Line Managers, GEM Workplace Mentors and GEMs to provide structure to their learning conversations at work. Ongoing reflective conversations take place throughout the duration of the GEM Programme.

GEM Team support - for workplace mentors & managers

The GEM team provides support in the use of the GEM Reflective Journal. There are also opportunities for mentors and line managers to network with colleagues fulfilling the same roles in GEM partner organisations.

Workplace Mentors and managers engage with GEMs by:

- providing valuable feedback and guidance on a GEM’s strengths and development
- helping GEMs understand how the wider organisation works
- supporting GEMs to succeed in their current role
- ensuring good practice and cross organisation learning from GEM Shacks is transferred to the workplace
- enabling GEMs to fully participate in the GEM Programme
- introducing GEMs to internal and external networks
- helping GEMs contextualise CIH assignments

The golden thread - personal leadership development

Personal leadership development is embedded in the GEM Programme as GEMs step outside their comfort zones and commit to fulfilling their potential as people of influence.

The GEM Programme creates opportunities for growth at every stage. This challenges GEMs, individually and in teams, to see the world of housing, and themselves, differently and become people of influence on a spectrum of housing issues. This challenging and inspiring personal leadership development and career-building programme is personalised to individual GEMs.

The programme combines real-life job experience with personal leadership development to give GEMs the confidence to excel in the housing sector. Grounded in the GEM Model of Influence, the GEM Reflective Journal brings reflective practice to life and accelerates personal leadership development for upcoming housing professionals.

GEMs develop confidence, resilience, initiative and creativity throughout the duration of the programme and accelerate their career development.

Future proofing through diversity

The GEM Programme is proud to be inclusive and accessible to all. It has recruited and developed talent from diverse ethnic groups, across age ranges, and genders. Accessibility remains a guiding principle in recruiting the next GEM cohort.

A diverse and inclusive approach to both recruitment and development will enable housing organisations of all sizes and specialisms to engage in creating unique career building opportunities for upcoming professionals across a full range of roles.

The GEM Programme recognises that non-graduate talent can bring the same potential, passion and initiative as graduates. The recruitment process is therefore also open to graduate equivalent talent.

The GEM Programme recruits talent externally – those who do not come from a housing background – as well as being open to talented colleagues already working in housing organisations and at a formative stage of their careers.

The programme has a diverse demographic and aims to continue this by encouraging applications from underrepresented groups.

Learning without boundaries

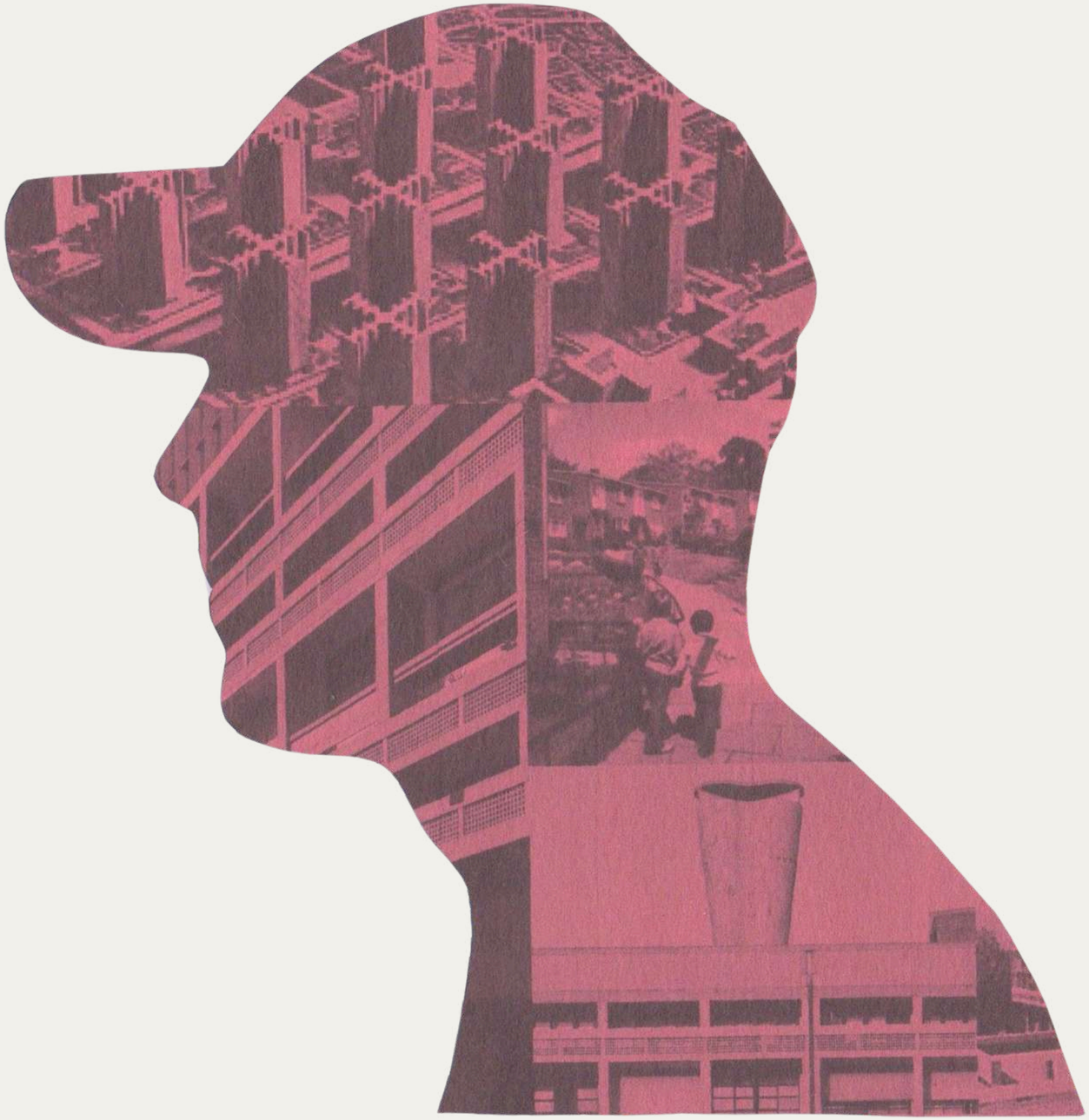
Importantly, the GEM Programme creates access to learning and networking in the housing sectors in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, and Holland.

The reach of the programme goes beyond front-line and traditional housing roles and addresses the importance of developing housing's future professionals across every specialism. The diversity of each GEM cohort stimulates peer learning across functions and organisational boundaries which enhances a GEM's capacity to define business issues in different ways and deliver results.

Learning without boundaries

GEMs are recruited to (and from) a wide range of roles including:

Housing management	Construction	Community involvement
ICT	Service improvement	Public affairs
Data analysis	Development	Property services
Finance	Customer engagement	Digital communications
Sustainability	Policy and strategy	Governance



External recruitment - new graduate talent

The GEM team uses its years of experience of graduate recruitment to customise the design and delivery of an end-to-end recruitment and selection process which matches the needs of GEM partner housing organisations.

External applicants must demonstrate that they:
Live the values and behaviours of the GEM Programme
Meet the essential criteria of the specified role
Have a degree, or relevant qualification or experience

External GEM recruitment and selection process:
Role specification produced by GEM partner
Timeline produced by GEM team and agreed with GEM partner
Advertising campaign initiated by GEM team
Online applications received and sifted by GEM team
First-stage virtual interview with the GEM team
Final interview undertaken by the GEM partner

Our approaches to recruitment and selection are streamlined and agile.

Internal recruitment - GEM Talent in House

To be eligible for the GEM Programme via the ‘GEM Talent in House’ entry point, applicants must be able to evidence the GEM values and behaviours. Applicants may also have a degree or hold appropriate qualifications. Colleagues who do not have a degree or appropriate qualification will be asked to complete a housing-related written piece for evaluation by the GEM team.

Applications are welcome from all parts of the organisation and some GEM partners secure GEM Programme places for underrepresented groups.

The stages of internal GEM Talent in House recruitment are as follows:

- Internal communication and promotion of the GEM Programme to increase awareness among prospective GEMs and line managers
- Expressions of interest received in house from prospective applicants
- Support of line manager agreed
- Submission of applications, based on GEM values and behaviours
- Internal evaluation of applications and validation of decisions by GEM team
- Feedback to all applicants

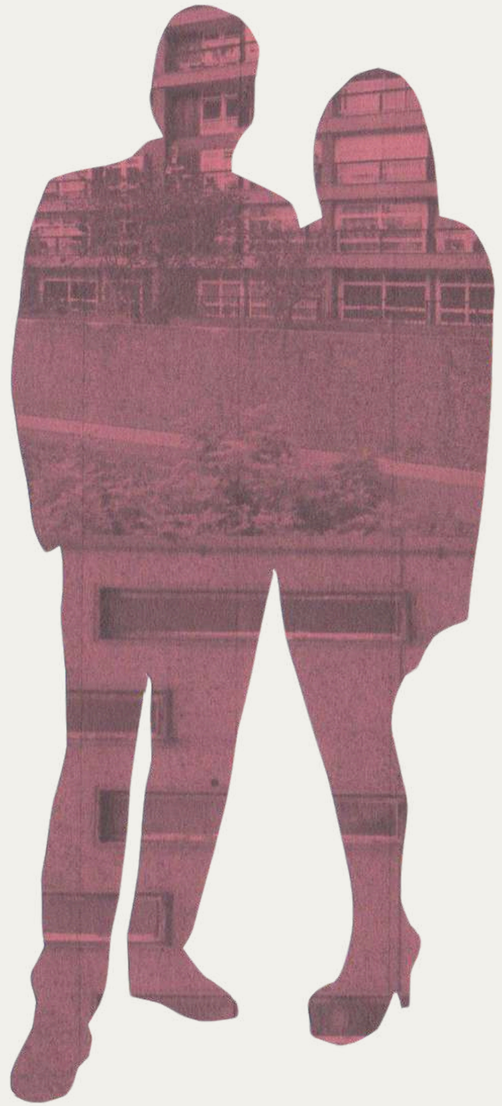
The importance of recruiting for values and behaviours

The first step in recruitment, whether external or through the Talent in House entry point, is to ensure a candidate's values fit with the housing sector. To succeed, candidates need to be able to demonstrate specified shared values and behaviours, including:

Social Justice	Societal and Interpersonal Empathy	Environmental Justice
Professionalism	Initiative	Respect for diversity
Critical thinking	Personal Ownership	Emotional intelligence
Self-discipline & Personal Organisation	Resilience	Innovative

the GEM Programme

Be Future Ready



Let's talk:

Trevor Smith
Director GEM Programme
trevor.smith@centreforpartnership.co.uk

Ross Price
GEM Resources Manager
ross.price@centreforpartnership.co.uk