

# The Housing Finance Excellence Network

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## Additional support

We offer members discounted rates on our consultancy services, tailored to your requirements. Examples include:

- **Business planning and financial modelling:** preparation, validations, critical review, short-, medium- and long-term financial strategy support and calculating achievable efficiency targets
- **Business planning through the BRIXX system:** our partnership approach with Brixx will help you implement the system and empower you to take the lead for the future
- **VfM:** support in all areas of achieving VfM, at both strategic and operational level and calculating real efficiency targets
- **New build:** guidance on delivery vehicles, financial modelling and development benchmarking
- **Stock transfer support:** taking the lead advisor role
- **Strategic reviews:** housing groups and stand-alone associations – considering their future financial arrangements

- **Future options and option appraisal:** post Decent Homes review of your strategy and appraisal of delivery vehicle options
- **HRA and self-financing:** delivering fit-for-purpose business plans for a new world of self-financing and for the reformed world of housing subsidy
- **Finance strategy and financial modelling:** short-, medium- and long-term financial strategy support
- **SLA and service charge reviews:** evaluation of the options for service provision making recommendations for future provision; benchmarking against best practice and cost; assessing the potential for efficiencies; independent validation of services; current rent and service charge evaluations including leaseholder charges recovery and for local authorities assessing whether or not to de-pool
- **Housing finance and VfM training:** national seminars and 'in-house' training from the boardroom to the frontline, on a wide range of subjects
- **Housing finance research:** large scale projects or specialised research.

## Membership

Your paid subscription runs for a full 12 months from the date of joining. Details of the cost of membership are set out on the joining form. Discounts are available for organisations that are already members of other

specialist HQN networks, so you may be entitled to a discounted level of membership subscription. If you would like any more information, please get in touch:

**Telephone: 0845 4747 004**  
**Email: hfexpert@hqnetwork.co.uk**

## Expert intelligence in housing finance

HQN is proud of its record as an established and valued provider of expert financial guidance and support to ALMOs, housing associations and local authorities. Now, through our specialist housing finance and VfM network; hf:expert, this support is available at the click of a mouse on your workplace PC, giving access to our briefings, tracker service and dedicated website.

Our network incorporates all aspects of the housing finance function including:

- Business planning
- Strategic financial decision-making
- Financial modelling
- HRA analysis
- Value for money
- Reviewing investment and development options.

Plus an unrivalled financial information update service helping you keep track of what's happening.

## Special offer!

To mark our fifth birthday, we should like to offer you a unique '14 months for the price of 12' membership deal. This will give you the chance to get a feel for how the network operates before your subscription starts.

Just quote the unique reference number below to receive your discount.

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## Why choose hf:expert?

hf:expert will help you achieve excellence in housing finance and business management. Whether you work in accountancy or are the finance director, whether you're a board member or councillor, housing manager or maintenance manager, hf:expert will prove an indispensable resource, with knowledge and information to help you develop, scrutinise and maintain your organisation's financial management and VfM arrangements.

Whether you are a large or small housing provider, a retaining local authority, ALMO, LSVT or traditional housing association, have a diverse or concentrated stock or service portfolio, are aiming to grow or consolidate, or whether your primary focus is on operational efficiency in challenging times, you face a spectrum of opportunities and challenges. hf:expert resources will help you to ensure that your financial arrangements are fit for purpose and will help you to meet and exceed your objectives, whatever the scenario.

Take a look inside at the wide range of services and benefits that you get as a member of hf:expert.

## Member benefits

**A dedicated website:** your first port of call for up-to-date information on good practice, current issues, and policy development: [www.hfexpert.co.uk](http://www.hfexpert.co.uk)

**Fortnightly tracker:** with current issues, insights, good practice and 'need-to-know' information to help keep you up to date with current practices.

**Expert briefings:** with the accent on the technical, getting behind the headlines from government policy and national finance developments.

**VfM advice:** our new 2009 'value-added' resource that provides expertise on achieving excellence in VfM including problem-solving, our 'challenge' to validate and update your VfM strategy, and benchmarking that adds value.

**Rapid response service:** our finance specialists are only a phone call or email away. We are on hand to resolve your queries and problems and will get back to you with a solution or further support and guidance through this dedicated service to members.

**Knowledge library:** members will be able to access our knowledge library, an essential resource containing guides and reading on all the major areas of housing finance for local authorities, ALMOs, housing associations:

- Good practice guides
- Briefings
- Insights
- 'How to' guides
- Workbooks
- Good practice examples of strategies and policies
- Changes in legislation and government policy.

What's more, if we don't have what you're looking for we will help to locate it for you – just ask.

**Benchmarking:** we can help to facilitate benchmarking or put you in touch with other like-minded organisations for benchmarking and sharing good practice on either a sector or geographical basis, or by size or nature of your business.

**'Ask the members':** if you have a problem or issue and want to find out if other organisations can help, our website enables you to post your question and take responses from other members.

**Events:** you will be able to claim a discount on our events, and benefit from priority booking for members. HQN runs more finance events than anybody else: national technical conferences, business planning, specialist masterclasses, demystifying LA and HA finance, VfM masterclasses, development and new build, options appraisal and HRA subsidy.

**Best practice and financial guidance briefing papers:** our bi-monthly briefing papers will provide you with all you need to know from within the world of social housing finance, including:

- Excellence in business planning – guidance on better business planning: our briefings will help you achieve excellence in business planning
- Brixx – how to use the Brixx business planning system and transform your approach
- Treasury rate benchmarking and analysis of business planning assumptions – we will arm you with the extra knowledge to be able to produce an excellent business plan
- Risk management – making this part of your day-to-day business
- Financial governance – getting the best out of board and member reporting and scrutiny
- VfM – embedding a culture of VfM across your organisation, reporting, performance indicators, and preparing for inspection.

## The hf:expert team

**Robin Tebbutt**, CPFA, leads the network. Robin is the former Director of Finance and Resources at Enfield Homes, where he contributed to a two-star inspection within ten months of going live, he has over 18 years' experience in HRA finance. Robin has extensive experience of working on HRA and ALMO business plans, ALMO new-build projects, self-financing assessments, option appraisals, stock transfers and various housing finance matters, as well as working with CLG (and predecessors).

**Steve Wood** is HQN's Director of Finance Services. A former Finance Director for two housing associations in South Yorkshire and Manchester, he has business planning, VfM, finance strategy, HRA and ALMO finance expertise. Steve has chaired both the NHF Finance Group in the North West and the ALMO Heads of Finance (North) Group.

**Hilary Vaughan** FCMA, CPFA, is an experienced senior accountant with in-depth knowledge of housing finance. After a financial grounding in the private sector, Hilary spent many years in the housing service of Manchester City Council and Salix Homes at Directorate level. Her expertise covers financial management, PFI contracts, stock transfers, ALMO start-up and business planning housing subsidy and VfM.

**Tony Huff** CPFA, is hf:expert's lead finance Associate and local authority housing finance specialist. He has extensive experience of local authority finance and accountancy, business planning, VfM, service charges and finance training for board, staff and tenants. Tony is also a Brixx-accredited consultant.

**Simon Smith** is a CIMA finalist with wide experience within social housing finance, and earlier treasury and risk management from the banking sector. His extensive experience covers financial business plans for housing associations, local authorities and ALMOs using a range of commercially available models (including his own), budget management and capital financing.

**Dylan Chipp**, CPFA, is a former finance director of two housing associations, he provides expertise in business planning, finance strategy, VfM, pre-inspection support, and governance. Dylan is a Brixx-accredited consultant.

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## JOIN NOW!

hf:expert brings together all the essential knowledge and support you need to facilitate excellence in housing finance and business management.

Name	
Job title	
Organisation	
Address	
	Postcode
Telephone no.	
Email address	

How did you hear about the network?

Unique reference number

hf:expert membership – 12 months' subscription is £820 plus VAT and I understand that I will be invoiced for this amount upon receipt of my joining form.

Signature

hf:expert is one of a range of specialist networks run by HQN, a leading provider of consultancy and training, designed to help you to achieve real and lasting improvements in your services.

Discounts may be available for organisations that are already members of other HQN specialist networks. If you would like further details, please email [hfexpert@hqnetwork.co.uk](mailto:hfexpert@hqnetwork.co.uk) or call us on 0845 4747 004.

Please return to: HQN Limited, Rockingham House, St Maurice's Road, York YO31 7JA

Please note that network membership is for individual organisations (or groups) and the staff employed by those organisations (or groups). Tenants and board members/councillors linked to the organisation/group that holds network membership can also access all member benefits, including the website password and published briefings. Members must not share any member benefits with other organisations who are not network members, as this devalues the benefits of membership for paying members. This includes sharing the password and the forwarding of emails, briefing papers or other documents to non-member organisations. HQN reserves the right to terminate network membership in cases of a breach of this code. We are, of course, happy for members to refer to network publications at meetings, etc. If further clarification is required, please contact [hqn@hqnetwork.co.uk](mailto:hqn@hqnetwork.co.uk) and your enquiry will be forwarded to the relevant network manager.

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