

John Houghton

Principal Consultant

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Profile

John has nine years' experience in analysis, evaluation and strategy development in the public and private sectors. He is currently a registered Local Improvement Advisor.

At Si, John has worked with a number of local authorities, LSPs and regeneration bodies to review their performance and strengthen their vision and delivery arrangements for the future.

He has carried out strategic reviews for Communities and Local Government (CLG), the Thurrock Urban Development Corporation and the Margate Renewal Partnership

He is currently working with the HCA Academy on the development of the Place Spotlight, a new tool to help local areas prepare for the Single Conversation.

Before joining Si, John spent over six years at the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit in CLG where he managed the £43m Single Community Programme.

John is a published author on cities, neighbourhoods and deprivation, and has been a Research Associate at the Centre for the Analysis for Social Exclusion and a Fulbright Scholar. He is currently a Trustee of the Urban Forum and a member of his local LSP.

Qualifications

BA (Hons) English Language and Literature, St. Edmund Hall, Oxford University

MA Contemporary British Politics, Goldsmiths College, University of London

UK-UK Fulbright Scholarship

Key skills

- Strategic reviews
- Policy analysis and advice
- Research and evaluation
- Report-writing
- Facilitation

Selected publications

"The housing crisis and the credit crunch", *Local Economy*, August 2008

"The Density Debate" with Sir Peter Hall, *Journal of Town and Country Planning*, April 2008

Jigsaw Cities: Big Spaces, Small Spaces, Policy Press, 2007

"Mind the Gap", *New Start*, November 2007

"Sprawl plugs", *The Guardian*, March 2007

Current and recent experience

South East London Housing Partnership Review (2009)

CLIENT: South East London Housing Partnership

Review of the Partnership's structures and processes in preparation for strategy review and re-launch. The review included workshops and interviews with lead officers, elected members, Housing Associations, and key stakeholders including the GLA and LDA, to inform short report with recommendations for improvement.

HCA Academy Place Spotlight Phase 2 (2009)

Client: HCA Academy (previously Academy for Sustainable Communities)

Development and delivery of an online tool to help local authorities and their partners refine their place-making strategies and prepare for the Single Conversation.

Thurrock Development Corporation Independent Review (2009)

Client: Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporation

Progress review and stakeholder consultation of the Corporation's achievements, priorities and future challenges in preparation for the Quinquennial Review of the organisation.

Newcastle Community Empowerment Framework Implementation Plan – Local Improvement Advisor assignment (2009)

CLIENT: Newcastle Partnership

Research, consultation with partners and design of an implementation plan for the city-wide empowerment framework, including development of performance measures and reporting arrangements.

Home Housing Group Neighbourhood Offer

CLIENT: Home Housing Group

Work with Chief Executive and senior officers to develop the Group's neighbourhood management and engagement proposals, including costings, timetabling and implementation planning, as part of the organisation-wide transformation programme.

Kings Norton 3 Estates NDC Theme Evaluations (2009)

CLIENT: Kings Norton 3 Estates New Deal for Communities

End-of-programme evaluations of the NDC's Learn and Work; Health and Social Care; Safe and Clean; and Involve themes. The evaluation reviewed the effectiveness of thematic interventions and recommended how benefits could be sustained. The project involved analysis of all available local data, interviews with key stakeholders, focus groups with local residents, and sustainability and forward planning workshops.

Places Handbook: Developing Analytical Capability in Government Offices (2008 – 2009)

CLIENT: Government Office Network

Development and delivery of a new online tool to help GO staff drive the "place shaping" agenda in their work with localities: <http://www.gos.gov.uk/placeshandbook/>

LAA PLUS Network (2006 – 2009)

Overall leadership and future development of the LAA PLUS Network and management of the Network team, including programme management of transition from subsidy to financial independence. PLUS provides support to over 50 local authorities and their partners developing and delivering LAAs through networking and action learning.

Margate Renewal Study (2007 – 2008)

CLIENT: Thanet District Council

Research into drivers of deprivation and development of a strategy to renew the Margate Central and Cliftonville West wards, working with local and regional partners to develop proposals to tackle social, economic and physical problems.

Natural England Local Government Toolkit (2007)

CLIENT: Natural England

Production of a toolkit to support Natural England regional and local teams to engage with and influence local authorities and LSPs, to include natural environment and sustainability targets in LAAs and Sustainable Community Strategies.

Evaluation of Third Sector Commissioning Framework (2007)

CLIENT: IDeA

Long-term evaluation of the Commissioning Framework which is designed to increase service delivery through the Third Sector by raising capacity and awareness amongst providers and public sector commissioners.

Driving Regeneration (2007)

CLIENT: Communities and Local Government

Intensive policy review and development of future policies to drive regeneration in England in the context of SNR and CSR07.

Museums, Libraries and Archives Practitioner Improvement Tools Study (2007)

CLIENT: Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA)

Management of four-month study of how museums, libraries and archives practitioners were using improvement tools to deliver better services and influence LAAs – reporting back to the MLA on how the tools might be developed to have a greater impact.

The Bridge New Deal for Communities (NDC) Evaluation (2006 – 2007)

CLIENT: The Bridge NDC

Evaluation of the NDC's impact on housing, crime and the environment in Seven Sisters area of London, including fieldwork, surveys, focus groups, interviews, data analysis and workshops with practitioners, residents, service providers and beneficiaries.

Previous experience

Community Empowerment and Third Sector Team Leader

EMPLOYER: Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (CLG / ODPM)

Led the development and implementation of community empowerment and Third Sector policy for NRU, including management of national consultation on VCS funding and subsequent creation of £43m Single Community Programme.

Researcher to the Birmingham Housing Commission

EMPLOYER: Centre for the Analysis of Social Exclusion (CASE), London School of Economics

Advised Birmingham City Council on options for the future funding, management and allocation of its council housing stock following the no vote in the stock transfer referendum, leading to publication of the Commission's report and implementation of many of its recommendations.

Fulbright Scholar

EMPLOYER: Hubert H. Humphrey Institute, University of Minnesota

Completed four-month qualitative study on the impact of mixed communities projects on the poorest urban neighbourhoods and communities in the US, helping shape the development of the government's mixed communities policy.

Policy Advisor to the Director General

EMPLOYER: Neighbourhood Renewal Unit

Provided policy advice and research on a wide range of issues relating to neighbourhood renewal and social inclusion policies.