

## **Andrew Thomas**

Andrew Thomas, who died in 2014 at the age of 63, studied Architecture at Kingston Polytechnic and Urban Design at Oxford Polytechnic. In 1975 he was appointed as Research Associate and subsequently Research Fellow in the Centre for Urban and Regional Studies at the University of Birmingham. He worked on a succession of research projects funded by the Department of the Environment, especially in the field of older housing which, throughout the 1970s and 1980s was an important focus for national and local housing policies, particularly following the introduction of Housing Action Areas under the Housing Act 1974. The role of housing associations in both new build and housing rehabilitation was another key area of research for Andy and he developed links with many associations including Merseyside Improved Houses in Liverpool, Bournville Village Trust and Coventry Churches Housing Association. Much of his work had a strong community dimension and he was a keen supporter of the community-based and area-based approach to urban renewal. In 1986 he published *Housing and Urban Renewal: residential decay and revitalisation in the private sector* (George Allen & Unwin) which brought together much of his work over the previous decade and which formed the basis for his PhD.

Andy's developing interests in the field of asset management in housing and the issues surrounding low cost home ownership encouraged him to move into the housing association sector and he left CURS in 1988 to join Coventry Churches Housing Association and its successors. In time he moved from there to set up his own busy and successful consultancy.

While at CURS, Andy Thomas was instrumental in setting up and running *Housing Studies* and he was a founder member of its Editorial Board. He was also involved in setting up the Housing Studies Association. He was a founder Committee Member of this and a continuing supporter. He was a Trustee of the Housing Studies Charitable Trust of which he remained Secretary and Treasurer until his death.