



An APSE Northern event

**Neighbourhoods, housing
and public realm**

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Housing the Nation

A new research report by
APSE and TCPA



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Housing: A national crisis



- Local authorities pioneered the planning and delivery of high quality social housing in the 20th Century.
- Post Second World War - consensus on re-building Britain
- A strong alignment of positive planning and public investment
- Regularly achieved the delivery of over 300,000 public and private sector homes each year.

End of the post-war consensus



- The role of the public sector in delivering social and affordable housing is unrecognisable from the post-war period.
- In 2013, councils built only 2,000 homes across the UK and of these less than a thousand were in England.



Mind the gap..

- In 2014 140,880 new homes were completed across the whole of the UK of which 112,400 were in England
- But 240,000 new households are formed each year
- We are building less than half the homes the nation needs
- Central investment in housing across the UK fell by 35% between 2010-2015, with funding for new social housing cut by 44%.



Recommendations:

A new consensus on housing

- Calls on the UK Government to forge a lasting cross-party consensus that local authorities are a key part of the solution to the housing crisis, providing clear leadership to encourage councillors, and their authorities, to think boldly and in the long term and for local councils to ensure that social and affordable housing is included in the Local Plan process.

Recommendations:

Land Assembly



- Councils should play a stronger role in co-ordinating land assembly and planning, acting as lead developer, to drive delivery.
- Where councils own land they should explore creative opportunities to bring it forward and when releasing public sector land, Government should coordinate between
- Government departments and agencies and empower councils to decide how best to facilitate development in their area.

Recommendations: Combined authorities



- The expansion of combined authorities in England is a major opportunity to recreate effective strategic planning for housing.
- Government should play a role in this process by ensuring combined authorities can adopt strategic spatial plans with statutory weight and that the scope, timescales and content of such plans allows them to best support local planning and coordinate cross border relationships with other city regions and combined authorities.

Recommendations:

S.106



- The UK Government should reverse the recent changes which exempt developments of 10 homes or less from section 106 affordable housing contributions and cancel the recently introduced Vacant Building Credit.

Recommendations:-

Be the landlord of choice



- Councils should seize the opportunity to become the 'landlord of choice' ensuring that they 'build, maintain, improve' local housing and coordinate housing services with other council services such as health, education and social care.

Recommendations:-

HRA and housing finance



- The UK Government should lift the HRA borrowing cap which would significantly increase local authorities' ability to deliver new social and affordable homes
- Re-visit the issue as to whether investment in housing should be part of the public sector borrowing requirement (PSBR).
- Association of Retained Council Housing and National Federation of ALMOs highlight “*there is a strong case for reforming public borrowing rules to classify such borrowing separately, as is the practice elsewhere in Europe as well as by the IMF, and exempting it from the deficit reduction strategy.*”

Recommendations:-

Construction skills



- The Government needs to support the expansion of the construction industry, recognising the current capacity constraints on delivery due to factors such as the availability of skilled and unskilled workers, equipment and raw materials.
- Local authorities can also play an important role in expanding the sector through apprenticeships.

Recommendations:- National planning policy



- The UK Government must amend the viability test in the National Planning Policy Framework ensuring it is more balanced and allows for the consideration of economic data on the cost and benefits to the public sector and the wider economy of new social and affordable housing
- Reverse the central deregulation of permitted development.

Recommendations:-

Right to buy



- Government should review the overall Right to Buy policy so that Right to Buy enables councils, ALMOs and Registered Providers/ Housing Associations to genuinely invest in one-for-one replacement of social housing.
- Alongside this measure the UK Government should review the New Homes Bonus scheme



Why should this matter to APSE members in the north?

- Deprived or disadvantaged neighbourhoods
- The holistic approach to housing and the local environment as a positive influence on health, education and well-being
- Impact on public service reform and welfare reform
- Who picks up the pieces and the bill for poor housing?
- How can we shift the dynamics to ensure councils have a positive role in local housing supply

LOCAL SERVICES

LOCAL SOLUTIONS



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