

25 June 2020

The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP
Chancellor of the Exchequer
HM Treasury
1 Horse Guards Road
London SW1A 2HQ

Dear Chancellor

Put homes at the heart of recovery

We are writing to urge you to put good quality, affordable housing at the heart of your plans for social and economic recovery from the coronavirus crisis.

This pandemic has transformed our relationship with our homes. For some, home has been a sanctuary from a dangerous and unpredictable virus. Home has become their office, a classroom, a gym or a place of worship. But for countless others, the place they have spent lockdown has felt like a prison – housing that is far too small, too expensive, of poor quality or isolated from the support that would help them to live well.

The coronavirus crisis is further highlighting the need for secure, high quality, better designed affordable homes and, for many people, support to live in them. Not least for many of the people most affected by this crisis – low-paid key workers living in homes they can't afford, rough sleepers helped off the streets, homeless families in temporary accommodation, older people in unsupported homes, and families stuck in overcrowded conditions.

Without action, we are likely to see many people's housing situations get much worse in the weeks, months and years ahead, as the economic impacts of the crisis are felt across the country.

In times of crisis, the worth of social housing is ever more visible and to so many of the challenges that lie ahead, social housing is the answer. The social housing sector stands ready to play a major role in shoring up the future of the country.

- Public investment in all types of new and existing social housing gives more back to the economy than it takes.
- Building and improving social homes, including delivering on the decarbonisation agenda, creates jobs, kick-starts growth and brings huge environmental benefits.
- Investing in supporting people to live well in their social homes improves health and wellbeing, and drives cost savings for the NHS.
- Social housing is at the centre of thriving communities.

That is why we support the Homes at the Heart campaign.

As you develop and deliver plans to get the country back on track, we are calling on the government to put social homes at the heart of recovery – as a driver of economic and social prosperity, and an anchor for strong communities.

Campaign partners

John Bibby, CEO, ARCH (Association of Retained Council Housing)

Gavin Smart, Chief Executive, Chartered Institute of Housing

Jon Sparkes, Chief Executive, Crisis

Eamon McGoldrick, Managing Director, National Federation of ALMOs

Kate Henderson, Chief Executive, National Housing Federation

Campaign supporters

Paul O'Brien, Chief Executive, Association for Public Service Excellence APSE

Michael Voges, Executive Director, ARCO

Robert Evans, Partner, Argent

Cym D'Souza, Chair, BME National

Melanie Leech, Chief Executive, British Property Federation

Tina Barnard, Chair, Build East

Robin Fieth, Chief Executive, Building Societies Association

James Tickell, Partner, Campbell Tickell

Sue Adams, CEO, Care & Repair England

Helen Walker, Chief Executive, Carers UK

Robert Sugden, Centre for Excellence in Community Investment

Neil McInroy, Chief Executive, Centre for Local Economic Strategies

Matthew Bolton, Executive Director, Citizens UK

Elizabeth Austerberry, Chair, Consortium of Associations in the South East

Lynsey Sweeney, Managing Director, Communities that Work

Neal Lawson, Executive Director, Compass

Crispin Truman OBE, Chief Executive, CPRE The countryside charity

Sue Morgan, Director of Architecture and Built Environment, Design Council

Andrew Cowan, Partner and Head of Social Housing, Devonshires

Brian Berry, Chief Executive, Federation of Master Builders

Nicola Mathers, CEO, Future of London

Helen Evans, Chair, G15

Chris Fletcher, Policy Director, Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce

Jon Lord, Chair, Greater Manchester Housing Providers

Paul Faulkner, CEO, Greater Birmingham Chambers of Commerce
Andrew van Doorn, Chief Executive, HACT
Rick Henderson, Chief Executive, Homeless Link
David Bogle, Chair, Homes for Cathy
Nigel Wilson, Chair, Homes for the North
Victor da Cunha, Chair, Homes for the South West
Jeremy Porteus, Chief Executive, Housing LIN
Chris Ireland, UK CEO, JLL
Helen Barnard, Acting Director, Joseph Rowntree Foundation
Bronwen Rapley, Chair, Liverpool City Region Housing Associations Group
Jonathan Werran, Chief Executive, Localis
Dave Evans, Interim CEO, National Energy Foundation
Stuart Heslop, Managing Director UK Housing Finance, NatWest
The Hon. James Ramsbotham CBE DL, Chief Executive, North East England Chamber of Commerce
Tracy Harrison, Chief Executive, Northern Housing Consortium
Matthew Walker, Chair, Placeshapers
Finn Williams, Chief Executive, Public Practice
Maurice Wren, CEO, Refugee Council
Prof. Alan M Jones, President, Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)
Victoria Hills, Chief Executive, The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)
Ursula Bennion, Chair, Rural Housing Alliance
Dan Paskins, Director of UK Impact, Save the Children UK
Martin Lund, Chair, See the Person
Polly Neate, Chief Executive, Shelter
Paul Hackett, Director, The Smith Institute
Fiona Howie, Chief Executive, Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA)
Jenny Osbourne, Chief Executive, Tpas - The tenant engagement experts
Kevin Rodgers, Chair, West Midlands Housing Association Partnership
Rick Willmott, Group Chief Executive, Willmott Dixon
Nick Gallent, Professor of Housing and Planning, Bartlett School of Planning, UCL (in a personal capacity)
Yvonne Rydin, Professor of Planning, Environment and Public Policy, Bartlett School of Planning, UCL (in a personal capacity)
Dave Prentis, General Secretary, UNISON