



A manifesto for our communities

Continuity

PlaceShapers want consistency in housing policy, funding and ministerial roles. Housing should have a place in the cabinet in its own right. Ideally we would want to see a cross party, evidence based approach to a national housing strategy as the benefits of investment are seen in longer timescales than the Westminster political cycle. We bring patient capital and it is essential our investment nests with an overall national strategy.

Investment

PlaceShapers want to see substantial investment in new social housing. We support Shelter's demand for 3 million new social homes over the next 20 years. We support the NHF request for a £12.8bn per annum social housing fund. We also need access to affordable land to build affordable homes. We recognise that we can't sustainably fund social housing in much of the country through cross subsidy from market housing. The Commission Report from Shelter demonstrates that investment in social housing repays itself through reduced housing benefit costs, increased spending by tenants in the wider economy, council tax and reductions in other public spending.

Regeneration

PlaceShapers believe that we can't just focus on new housing, we need to upgrade and improve many existing homes and neighbourhoods. PlaceShapers participated in the recent Great Places report which calls for £1bn per annum over ten years to renew our existing communities. PlaceShapers doesn't want to see any communities let behind. This investment can also spur the development of the new construction skills our country and economy so badly needs. Development and regeneration acts as a catalyst to help communities prosper, supporting people into work and contributing to the wider economy. This needs to be financially supported across the country as part of a national strategy.

Environment

PlaceShapers has declared a climate emergency. Buildings are the largest contributors to global warming. We need financial support to decarbonise our existing housing as well as building new homes of the highest environmental standards. We need a taskforce established between the housing industry, government and other experts to devise a national strategy to decarbonise our existing housing and to ensure new homes are carbon neutral or better. PlaceShapers believes that incorporating carbon neutrality into regeneration activity, new build and health & safety improvements can produce rapid results and cost efficiency.

Safety

PlaceShapers want all of our residents to be safe. We need clarity and transparency in building regulations and safety standards. Existing homes will need to be assessed and funding required to ensure that they are safe for residents to live in. The country needs to invest in the skills and competencies to deliver safe homes as well as improved standards.

Health

PlaceShapers are often left to deal with the increasing mental health crisis in our country. Housing associations can't be the answer to every question but are often the last organisation left standing in deprived communities. For us to be effective in meeting the needs of our residents we need properly funded mental health and social care services and visible connections across agencies and housing to maximise the support we all offer despite depleting resources.

Safety Net

PlaceShapers want to see that all residents have a living income, whether in work, retired or not working. This requires a benefits safety net which people don't fall through and an income which means that people can feed their families without the need for food banks. Government also needs to join up policy development between welfare and housing. Increased homelessness has been an unintended consequence of poor collaboration between departments and is increasingly visible on our streets. People need to be supported in times of crisis and we have a housing crisis now, which cannot be ignored.

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