



**PlaceShapers**

Together we help communities thrive



**POLLING  
STATION**

# General Election

Sharing the Place-Shaping Message

[placeshapers.org](https://placeshapers.org)

The General Election is a rare opportunity to create and build relationships, locally and nationally, that could help you do more of the work that benefits residents, communities, places, and the country.

This document is designed to support conversations with parliamentary candidates – please use our recent Getting Election Ready guidance on setting up these conversations – and should complement other messages you are being asked to share by focussing on your role as a place-shaper.

## Our key message:

- As a place-based housing association, we build places and support communities. As communities are hit by the housing crisis, cost-of-living crisis, and withdrawal of public services, our role has become even more important. But like other sectors we face challenges and government policy can hamper what we do. With the right support from the new government, we can overcome these challenges and do more to help every part of the country thrive.

## It may be helpful to describe yourself as a place-based housing association:

- We are a not-for-profit, asset-based business. All the money we collect in rent goes into our homes and services. Our homes and investment are centred in specific communities.
- We house some of the most vulnerable people, providing affordable homes which are the foundation for a healthy life.
- We provide services which build resilience and have a major impact on health, well-being, and cohesion, including tackling anti-social behaviour, providing financial support, and helping people into employment.

- We build new homes and invest in upgrading and decarbonising our homes and regenerating our communities.
- Because of our long-standing commitment to places and communities, we invest in projects that can transform an area and develop partnerships that build supply chains and support local businesses.
- We are accountable to residents, councillors, and local MPs. Our residents have formal ways to influence and challenge what we do through scrutiny panels and other arrangements.

## With the right support we can do more to help this place thrive by:

1. Bringing pride and belonging by leading regeneration that improves the quality of homes, the environment, public realm, and the health of local people.
2. Addressing the crisis in homelessness and temporary accommodation, improving provision, and saving taxpayer's money by building homes that meet local need.
3. Enabling solutions to the climate crisis, reducing costs for residents, and helping to meet the country's net zero target by improving energy efficiency and decarbonising our existing homes.
4. Helping ease entrenched poverty and long-term unemployment by providing the support residents need to weather the cost-of-living crisis and access training and employment opportunities.

## We're part of a network of place-based associations. The next government can help us do more by:

1. **Introducing a long-term plan for housing**  
We support the National Housing Federation's call for the next government to commit to a long-term plan for housing, which should include how they will fund a significant increase in new social housing.
2. **Supporting a diverse sector to flourish**  
Place-based housing associations face a range of challenges that mean they will have to make tough decisions about trade-offs, which could have far-reaching consequences for people and communities. For a small number of housing associations, these challenges pose a real risk to their viability. We urge the next government to review what support they offer to strengthen this diverse sector, including a sustainable long-term rent settlement, to ensure we can continue to deliver significant impact nationally and locally.
3. **Taking a place-based approach to housing**  
The housing crisis looks different in different places. Viewing housing through the lens of place will ensure that decisions and funding are focussed on the solutions that will address the unique challenges of each area and help realise the potential of place-based housing associations.

In some places there is a need for significant regeneration – either large scale, for example at town level, or small scale, for example at an estate or neighbourhood level. In other places there is a crisis in temporary accommodation and new homes are urgently required to meet escalating demand. We need a system that responds to these challenges rather than imposes a one-size fits all approach.

In the short term, the new government should extend the flexibility recently introduced into the Affordable Homes Programme to allow money to be spent on regeneration programmes and other solutions to the housing crisis. It should also consider combining funding streams that are focused on new homes and regeneration and streamlining the way funding is administered to make it easier for housing associations and others to join up funding at a local level.

In the long term, the new government should take an ambitious view of housing and place. They should look at mechanisms for encouraging and empowering places to develop strategies to solve the housing crisis within and across local authority boundaries. These mechanisms should include devolving funding for housing to local decision makers, with the support and input of housing associations rooted in that place.



**Any questions or comments?**

Please send them to PlaceShapers  
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