

# Homes at the Heart of a stronger economy

Homes at the Heart is a national campaign and coalition calling for a once-in-a-generation investment in social housing. With our partners the Chartered Institute of Housing, National Federation of ALMOs, Crisis and the Association of Retained Council Housing – and backed by more than 50 supporters from a diverse range of sectors – we’re calling for homes to be at the heart of social and economic recovery.

## Why social housing is vital for a stronger economy

Investment in social housing boosts the economy, drives employment and supports local and national growth. Substantial short-term investment will address acute housing need, sustain construction jobs and businesses, and support a productive and skilled building industry.

In addition, investment in innovation and longer-term housing policy boosts productivity and output, creates new and higher-skilled jobs, and improves sustainability.

[In 2019](#), the construction sector accounted for 6% (£117bn) of the UK economy’s output, and 7% (2.4 million) of jobs. 87% of these jobs are held outside London and the South East. Certainty around investment in social housing could improve productivity in the construction industry by as much as 70%, sustaining confidence, activity and employment, and playing a major role in the country’s recovery.

## What housing associations can do

Housing associations are not-for-profit social landlords that provide homes and support for around six million people across England. They are already playing a key role in supporting a stronger economy:

- Housing associations and local authorities’ day-to-day management of their existing homes adds an estimated £12.7bn to the national economy,



supporting almost 210,000 jobs.

- Housing associations' planned investment in 2020 accounted for around 1% of GDP, and for every £1 of government investment, they add a further £6 of their own and other funding.
- The UK [needs 145,000 affordable homes every year](#) to help prevent homelessness and tackle overcrowding and poverty, with 90,000 of these for social rent. Housing associations are well placed to deliver these homes. Building 90,000 new social rent homes would add almost £5bn to the economy and support an estimated 86,000 jobs.

## What the government can do

With the right government support, housing associations can do even more to support the economy. The extension of the Affordable Housing Programme will help the social housing sector maintain current activity – in addition to this, we're calling on the government to:

- Set aside up to £3bn of the new £12.2bn affordable homes budget to support short-term recovery, with more flexibility on the tenure of new homes and when they are delivered.
- Extend the existing Shared Ownership Affordable Homes Programme for an additional year to 2022, creating more flexibility on the tenure of new homes and making funding available to bulk buy homes from developers at a discount to convert to rent.
- Use this year's Comprehensive Spending Review to invest in a new generation of social and affordable homes to rent and buy. To kick-start this, commit to a ten-year affordable housing fund with an additional £20bn in grant funding for 2022-32.
- Endorse the benefits of delivering affordable housing using modern methods of construction and incentivise these through additional funding.



## What politicians can do

This year's Comprehensive Spending Review presents a brilliant opportunity to invest in social housing as part of building a stronger economy. Ahead of the Spending Review, we are building cross-party support to invest in a generation of social and affordable homes. There are many ways that you can take action:

- Show your support on social media by tweeting with #HomesAtTheHeart.
- Create a short video with a supportive message.
- Write to the Chancellor Rishi Sunak and make the case for social housing to be at the heart of the recovery.
- Table parliamentary questions asking the government to invest in social housing as part of the economic and social recovery in the aftermath of the pandemic.

## Find out more about our campaign

- Follow [#HomesAtTheHeart](#) on social media
- Visit [www.housing.org.uk/HomesAtTheHeart](http://www.housing.org.uk/HomesAtTheHeart)
- Contact [HomesAtTheHeart@housing.org.uk](mailto:HomesAtTheHeart@housing.org.uk)

