



Policy Position

HOUSING

2024

ADEPT

The Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning & Transport

KEY MESSAGES

The government has announced plans to address the chronic shortage of housing, including the reinstatement of housing targets and planning reform. ADEPT is keen to work with the government to tackle the housing crisis.

We need a long term housing plan to build new homes, to improve the existing stock and to meet both current and future environmental challenges. Stability and consistency in housing and planning policies are essential to deliver the transformational outcomes required. There are six key themes in our housing policy position which we believe should be priorities for the new government.

1. Building more new homes

The national housing shortage is one of the most pressing issues we face. We call for stronger measures to ensure homes are built on all sites granted planning permission.

We recognise that labour shortages in construction need to be addressed urgently to meet the new build challenge. Critically, the market alone cannot build all the homes we need. We call for Homes England and the government to significantly increase funding for new social rent housing. We believe public subsidy is best targeted at delivering social rent homes which are genuinely affordable. The financial restrictions on local authorities preventing them from building more local authority homes should be lifted completely and we call for a suspension of Right To Buy for new build local authority housing.

2. A planning system that delivers great places

We share the ambition to create a locally led planning regime that can act at pace to support the delivery of new homes and create great places to live.

A well-resourced planning system is vital for this and we call for the decentralisation of planning fees to ensure local planning authorities are funded appropriately. Urban regeneration and large-scale strategic developments, such as new towns, offer the potential to build many additional homes.

ADEPT supports further devolution and the application of strategic planning at the sub regional level to fully deliver this potential. We support planning policies which meet local needs and which ensures new homes are well designed and fit for the future.

Creating great places to live requires properly resourced local services and infrastructure, alongside the development of new homes. This requires a consistent approach to land value capture and securing the developer contribution for both affordable housing and the necessary infrastructure.

3. Improving the quality and safety of existing homes

Our ageing housing stock requires ongoing investment in maintenance to remain safe and habitable.

We welcome proposals to ensure tenants of social rented accommodation are living in decent homes free from hazards and call for these to be extended to cover the private rented sector as well. We call for long term stability in rent policy to enable the necessary investment to maintain our homes.

4. Delivering homes for health and wellbeing

Poor housing, exacerbated by fuel poverty, has serious long term effects on physical and mental health and comes at great cost to the NHS and social care services.

Demographically, we have an ageing population. Individuals can end up living alone in family sized accommodation because of a lack of suitable alternatives. Disabled people are also poorly served by the current housing market. ADEPT calls for investment in older people's housing and in specialist supported housing to benefit individuals, families and prove cost effective to the public purse.

5. Working towards zero carbon and climate resilient homes

Retrofitting the existing housing stock must be one of our national infrastructure investment priorities.

The pace of retrofitting our homes has to be significantly accelerated and we call for long term consistency and simplification in funding streams to develop the supply chain and labour force needed to achieve this. We support the Future Homes Standard and measures which will deliver homes to net zero energy standards. We believe climate resilience measures should be incorporated into local plans and all new housing developments.

6. Access, affordability and security

The housing crisis is most acute for homeless households and those sleeping rough. The cost of temporary accommodation is draining local authority finances.

We call on the government to provide financial support to cover the costs of temporary accommodation and provide support for those sleeping rough. We believe the use of temporary accommodation needs to be progressively reduced, so that ultimately it is used in emergencies only and then only for short periods of time. We call for an end to 'no fault' evictions in the private rented sector which are a major cause of homelessness.

The welfare system has not kept pace with support for people in mortgage difficulties or those paying private rents. ADEPT supports measures to make home ownership more affordable, notably the delivery of significantly more new homes and appropriate welfare support for private renters on low income.

WHO WE ARE

The Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning & Transport (ADEPT) is the voice of place directors who are responsible for providing day to day services including local highways, recycling, waste and planning, whilst preparing for the longer term.

ADEPT is a membership based, voluntary organisation with members across England. We bring together directors from county, unitary, metropolitan and combined authorities, along with sub-national transport bodies and corporate partners drawn from key service sectors.

ADEPT members develop long term strategies, investment and infrastructure needed to make their places resilient, inclusive and prosperous. They drive clean, sustainable growth, delivering the projects that are fundamental to creating more resilient communities, economies and infrastructure. These services include housing, environmental and regulatory services, planning, economic development, culture and highways and transport.

Background

It is timely to set out how we can work differently with the new government to empower local authorities to deliver more effectively and efficiently on the critical issues of the day - tackling the rising cost of living, reducing the market failures in the housing market, expediting progress towards net zero and environmental resilience, ensuring that 'place' plays a clear part in reducing the burden of worsening health inequalities. Our centralised and departmentalised system of government is not fit for purpose to tackle these issues effectively. By ensuring local authorities are properly empowered and resourced, they will be in a position to take forward the government's key objectives of strong economic areas founded on green growth, sustainable and resilient places, and inclusive, connected communities.

Making the case for place has never been more vital.

In our [Manifesto for Stronger Places](#), we call on the new government to commit to these strategic objectives:

- **Deliver ambitious devolution deals for local authorities in every area.**
- **Move away from short term competitive funding pots to a multi-year, simplified funding framework.**
- **Tackle geographical inequalities to promote prosperity, inclusion, and better health and wellbeing for all.**
- **Pursue sustainable growth that delivers green jobs and skills and protects the environment.**
- **Take a place-based approach to the challenges of net zero, adaptation, nature protection and recovery.**



ADEPT

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ADEPT HOUSING POLICY POSITION

ADEPT believes that England needs a long term housing plan to build well designed new homes which meet local housing needs and create great places to live, to improve the existing stock and to meet the environmental challenges of the future. ADEPT strongly believes that consistency in national housing and planning policies is essential to deliver the outcomes required.

There are six key themes across ADEPT's housing policy position. These issues are interrelated; coordinated, long term actions needs to be taken across the board to address the housing crisis we now face.

1. Building more new homes

The national housing shortage is one of the most pressing issues we face. We are keen to work with Homes England and all partners to deliver significantly more new homes. Local authorities are best placed to understand local housing needs and determine the mix of property types and tenure appropriate for their communities' future prosperity. The scale of the housing crisis and the urgency to build new homes requires the reintroduction of housing targets and we welcome the fact that the proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), announced in July 2024, will reintroduce demanding housing and land supply targets for local planning authorities.

The market alone cannot build anything close to 300,000 homes a year. The last time this country built more than 250,000 homes a year, local authorities built over 40 per cent of them. Today, they are only responsible for a tiny proportion of the total completed. We welcome the removal of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) borrowing cap and subsequent partial relaxation of restrictions in how local authorities can use Right to Buy receipts. However, we believe that these restrictions should be lifted completely (including use of all receipts from sales) and that the level of discounts should be determined locally. **Local authorities must be able to build new homes for social rent at genuinely affordable levels to meet local needs, using their assets and income streams to finance further investment. We call for a suspension of Right To Buy on new local authority housing.** We would support a review of whether HRA borrowing should be counted as public sector debt contrary to international accounting standards.

Housing associations are critical players in affordable housing investment and delivery, whilst Homes England policies will heavily influence what types of homes are built and where. Local authorities support effective partnership working with housing associations, particularly those who are committed to a local area and developing a sense of place.

The most pressing housing needs for genuinely affordable housing is best met by socially rented homes. **ADEPT calls for Homes England and the government to significantly increase the funding available for new social rent housing, both in total and at an individual grant level for local authorities and housing associations.** Further, **ADEPT calls for long term stability in social housing rent policy, enabling local authorities and housing associations to take the long term decision to invest in more social rent homes.**

Homes England has a key role in supporting land assembly, mitigating environmental factors such as flood protection and enabling developments in low value areas. It also has a role to play in supporting the regeneration of poor quality public housing stock which cannot be refurbished economically. Local authorities are keen to work with Homes England to support strategic land assembly and facilitate both new developments and regeneration projects which would otherwise be economically unviable. We support initiatives such as Development Corporations and Local Housing Companies where these have potential to deliver new homes at scale.

Public sector bodies should examine their land holdings and make sites available for housing development where possible. The financial benefit to the public purse of social rent homes should be taken into account when determining the capital receipt of land for such developments.

We support the continued prioritisation of brownfield and urban regeneration. However, it must be recognised that prioritising new build in these locations can face additional challenges e.g. requiring support for remediation and/or gap funding to be viable. Homes England will need to work with County, Unitary and Mayoral authorities, together with local authorities to address regional variances in viability.

The changing retail and office environment provides the need to reimagine our town and city centres. Imaginative consideration of mixed use on a single site should be encouraged e.g. apartments over single storey supermarkets and surface level car parks. Town and city centre regeneration can be supported by 'living over the shop' or offices and the development of live / work buildings. Reuse of existing buildings allows for consideration of embodied carbon. However, we note the concerns about the poor quality homes delivered through some permitted right conversions. We would like to see a review of permitted rights development for conversion into residential, to ensure the new homes meet acceptable standards and which do not diminish the availability of properties which are important to the local economy.

Whilst prioritising brownfield and urban regeneration, we recognise the need for new homes in some rural areas to meet local needs. We support sensitive and high quality housing development of a scale suitable for rural locations where this has local democratic support. We believe in strong protection for land which is valued green space and the release of low quality land for new homes. This should not be a reason to develop on land at significant risk of flooding.

Some developers hold onto land banks or options on major sites, therefore controlling the build-out rate and making it difficult for small and midsize enterprises (SMEs) to compete. ADEPT supports measures to ensure homes are developed on those sites granted planning permission and which encourage more competition and diversity of providers including SMEs.

There is a clear risk to housing delivery without the necessary investment in construction skills. We would support a new, comprehensive construction skills strategy, including a strong emphasis on promoting apprenticeship schemes. Efforts to improve diversity and inclusion in the construction workforce could help alleviate the shortage, as would promoting the diversity of roles and career paths within the industry. We would support the adoption of Modern Methods of Construction (MMC), offering factory built industrialisation of new build to complement traditional onsite methodologies.

Alongside building new homes, we support measures to make best use of the existing stock, including powers for local authorities to tackle empty homes, reduce under occupation and limit the conversion of permanent homes to holiday lets.

2. A planning system that delivers great places

We share the ambition to create a locally led planning regime that can act at pace to support the delivery of new homes and sustainable places. **ADEPT considers that a proactive, well resourced planning system is vital to deliver successful places.**

Planning departments are under resourced, leading to frustration with the speed of development of local plans and with which a proportion of planning applications are determined. Recruitment, training and development, improving morale and developing a positive culture are essential steps to rebuilding capacity. ADEPT calls for the use of bursaries and apprenticeship schemes to encourage people into the planning profession and a campaign to promote the value of place based professionals and routes into the sector.

The adequate funding of local planning authorities is key. **ADEPT believes fees for planning applications should be decentralised and set by individual local authorities to help ensure that planning departments are properly resourced.** Further efficiencies within local planning authorities can be delivered through measures such as standardisation of digitalisation and the progressive adoption of appropriate design codes. Individual local planning authorities may not be able to resource direct employment of all the personnel needed for effective planning policy and delivery, for example, specialist staff such as ecologists. Local authorities should continue to modernise planning services and explore the potential for joint teams or shared personnel to deliver their planning functions efficiently and effectively.

Large scale strategic developments such as new towns, offer opportunities and benefits, but are hampered by short term funding systems for planning and infrastructure. Infrastructure must be planned and delivered strategically rather than on a piecemeal basis. **ADEPT recognises the importance of strategic planning at the sub regional level and calls for long term thinking and cross boundary planning for large scale strategic developments such as new towns, incorporating the provision of local services and infrastructure.**



We note the importance of planning gain in the delivery of affordable homes. The current confusion of S106, Community Infrastructure Levy and the previously proposed new infrastructure levy is a cause for concern, as is the requirement for provision for low cost home ownership, regardless of local needs. **ADEPT calls on the government to clarify planning gain for affordable housing, implementing an approach which supplies both the scale and type of affordable housing, appropriate to meet local housing needs.**

We are acutely aware of the additional demands that more housing brings on local services and infrastructure - these must be properly resourced if development is to be high quality and sustainable. Opposition to new housing development is often founded on fears of more traffic congestion and pressures on local services, as well as the failure to provide a suitable mix of housing to meet local needs. There must be adequate, developer-funded infrastructure provided in a timely manner to deliver the housing needed. There must be transparency about the feasibility of development and land value capture must be properly and fully addressed so that the necessary infrastructure can be funded through capturing the uplift in land value resulting from the granting of planning permission and public investment being made on or near a piece of land.

We support using planning policies and decisions to ensure homes are designed to a high quality which will last the test of time. New homes should be built to the Nationally Designated Spaces Standards and - as a minimum - meet the Future Homes Standard. We believe in the importance of preserving the local character of a neighbourhood. Access to green and open spaces are important for people's health and wellbeing, as well as supporting wildlife and biodiversity and protecting natural capital and heritage. We support the adoption of '[Building For A Healthy Life](#)' providing a framework for designing great places to live.

3. Improving the quality and safety of existing homes

Houses are not just buildings - they should be warm, comfortable, accessible and safe homes where families are raised and people grow old; where individuals are healthy, independent and secure throughout their lives. England's ageing housing stock requires ongoing investment in maintenance to remain habitable.

Building safety is an essential consideration, especially for people living in high rise accommodation. Whilst much has been achieved, the cost of remedial works for landlords and residents remains significant, as does the ongoing implementation of the new building safety measures required. We note that many leaseholders are still facing challenges such as increases in service charges and difficulty selling their homes. We welcome legislation to improve building and fire safety standards and believe the government must take firm action to ensure that remedial costs are borne by those responsible, not current tenants and leaseholders.

The recent focus on remedying damp and mould in our homes has highlighted the poor conditions that too many people are living in. **ADEPT welcomes proposals to ensure tenants of social rented accommodation are living in decent homes, free from hazards and believes these should be extended to cover the private rented sector.** We support updating the Decent Homes Standard, ensuring the quality of homes let to residents in both social and private rented sectors.

Disreputable legal companies are encouraging some social housing tenants to make legal claims against their landlord, rather than resolving any outstanding repairs. The 'claims farmers' are doing this to profit for themselves, effectively taking resources away from investment in social housing. The introduction of fixed recoverable costs would end this practice.

¹ *Building for a Healthy Life | Other Manuals and Briefings | Urban Design Group (udg.org.uk)*

We note the number of asylum seekers housed through Home Office contracts, sometimes in poor quality homes and often initiated without engagement with the local authority. We are concerned of the impact this has on local authorities when asylum seekers are given notice and present as homeless. We welcome the National Audit Office's findings that the Home Office should "work in a coordinated way with ...local government, particularly given the wider pressures on available housing to ensure housing for asylum seekers is both appropriate and well managed".

4. Delivering homes for health and wellbeing

Poor housing can have serious long term effects on both physical and mental health, and wellbeing. We need to make homes and neighbourhoods places where people can live healthier, happier lives.

Housing is also inextricably linked with care. We believe that as far as possible, people should be supported to remain living independently and engaged in their communities. Local authorities sit at the heart of places and are well suited to coordinate care and support.

It is right that local authorities develop strategic supported housing plans, quantifying existing supply and determining local need for future provision.

Supported living and extra care housing provide cost effective alternatives to hospital, residential or institutional facilities. Supported housing provides a vital bridge between housing, support, health and care. It helps people to live fulfilled and independent lives. It reduces cost pressures on public services by keeping people out of more costly alternatives. Initiatives such as Housing First have provided a proven pathway to reduce rough sleeping in those with complex needs. Supported housing, extra care housing and high quality homes designed specifically for older people will free up larger homes for families who need them. **ADEPT calls for investment in supported housing to benefit individuals, families and make savings within NHS and social care budgets.**

We note the high numbers of people requiring adaptations to their homes now and in future years. We call upon the government to ensure new homes are built to the M4(2) lifetime homes standard, together with the delivery of new wheelchair accessible housing, commensurate with local needs.

A healthy environment should be at the core of the design process. Planning policies and decisions should facilitate physical activity and general wellbeing, including the provision of quality recreational space and encouraging walking and cycling in safety. Access to green space such as parks and the countryside, is associated with better physical and mental health whilst also benefiting natural capital and heritage.



5. Working towards zero carbon and climate resilient homes

Retrofitting of the existing housing stock must be one of our national infrastructure investment priorities.

All homes should be up to a good standard (at least EPC 'C') by 2030 and zero carbon by 2050. The pace of retrofitting our homes must be significantly accelerated if we are to meet our climate change targets. Short term bidding and delivery timescales undermine efforts to build a supply chain where the market is confident to invest in the technology and skills required.

ADEPT calls for long term consistency and streamlining of funding streams to develop the supply chain and labour force needed to retrofit our homes.

The government needs to encourage investment in improving the energy efficiency of homes across all tenures. There should be incentives for developers, landlords and homeowners to install solar PV panels, insulation and green heating systems. These could include green mortgages, low cost finance for home energy retrofitting, tax incentives such as variable Stamp Duty and reduced VAT rates on domestic energy efficiency measures and low carbon heating. We support continued technical innovation and the development of solutions to treat hard to retrofit homes.

ADEPT supports the Future Homes Standard and measures which will deliver homes to net zero energy standards. Local authorities should have the planning and building control powers to enforce this. The role of utility providers in delivering housing must be addressed. Housebuilding is held back by delays in infrastructure and the cost of utility connections. Increasingly we are also concerned about water supply in some parts of the country inhibiting housing development. Urgent, coordinated action is needed to ensure utility and water supply infrastructure facilitates housing developments where they are planned. We would also support growth in on-site renewable energy generation and microgeneration initiatives in both new build and the refurbishment existing stock.

To tackle the significant issue of embodied carbon, we would support a consistent approach to the consideration of the reuse, repurposing and renovation of existing buildings as a priority over demolition and rebuild. VAT is not levied on new builds but is levied on most refurbishments. We believe this should be reviewed to encourage the re-use of existing buildings.

We also support incorporating climate resilience measures in local plans and all new housing developments, including flood risk management and mitigation, overheating and water conservation. We welcome the fact that the government's consultation on the NPPF is seeking views on ways in which planning policy can do more to ensure that local plans best address climate change mitigation and adaptation at the local level.



6. Access, affordability and security.

Many households have been priced out of home ownership and, as the social rented sector has shrunk over the years, the only alternative has been the private rented sector. Investment in social rent has been restricted, with Homes England funding and planning gain instead being directed at homes ownership and so called ‘affordable rent’ homes set at 80 per cent of market rents. **ADEPT believes public subsidy and planning gain is best targeted at delivering social rent homes which are genuinely affordable and calls on the government to phase out so-called ‘affordable rents’.**

The welfare system has not kept pace with support for people in mortgage difficulties or those paying private rents. **ADEPT supports measures to make home ownership more affordable, notably the delivery of significantly more new homes and welfare support for private renters on low income.**

We do, however, believe the private rented sector should be reformed to provide greater security of tenure (e.g. an end to S21 ‘no fault’ evictions), improved standards (e.g. the extension of Awaab’s Law² to the private rented sector) and the powers to tackle rogue landlords, such as freedom to implement licensing schemes and robust enforcement action in those areas where it is needed. We welcome institutional investment into Build to Rent where these homes are built to a high quality and professionally managed. **ADEPT calls on the government to immediately halt S.21 evictions and supports reforms in the private rented sector to improve living standards, security of tenure and affordability.**

ADEPT notes the many difficulties faced by shared owners and leaseholders, including increasing service charges and complexity of their tenures. We would welcome a comprehensive review of both shared ownership and leaseholder tenures to ensure these tenures are both accessible and affordable in the longer term.

The housing crisis is most acute for homeless households and those sleeping rough. The cost of temporary accommodation is draining local authority finances. The mental health and educational attainment impact on the record number of children living in temporary accommodation will be felt for many years. **ADEPT calls on the government to provide necessary financial support to cover the costs of temporary accommodation and provide support for those sleeping rough. ADEPT believes the use of temporary accommodation needs to be progressively reduced, so that, ultimately, it is used in emergencies only - and then only for short periods of time.**

Delivering against these six key themes will help meet the housing challenges faced across all regions of England. There would be demonstrable benefits for local communities and the national economy with significant savings for the NHS and social care. But most importantly, it would prove beneficial for people in acute housing need, it would lift households out of homelessness and temporary accommodation, out of overcrowded, poor quality homes and offer homes across all tenures which people could afford. It would deliver homes fit for the future in sustainable communities where people want to live.

² Awaab’s Law, which was introduced in the landmark Social Housing Regulation Act 2023, requires landlords to investigate and fix reported health hazards within specified timeframes.

CONTEXT

Housing affordability, supply and demand

Local authorities are at the sharp end of the housing crisis with 1.3 million households on waiting lists and a record number of households in temporary accommodation at a cost of over £1.7 billion per annum, putting a huge strain on local authority budgets. And rough sleeping is again rising across the country.

A lack of new housing supply and affordable homes is driving the crisis. Population growth, smaller household sizes and an ageing population are increasing housing demand, while the aim of building 300,000 homes annually has not been met. Mortgage costs and private rents have risen dramatically, whilst welfare support for housing has not kept pace with costs. Section 21 'no fault' evictions have also contributed to tenure insecurity and homelessness.

Construction skills shortages are a major constraint for new home development. Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) offer some potential to address skills shortages and meet energy efficiency standards through greater industrialisation of housebuilding.



Social housing

There is an estimated need for 90,000 social rented homes annually, the delivery of which would significantly boost the economy. Housing associations are the primary providers of new affordable housing with grants provided from Homes England. They are, however, reducing the number of new homes they plan to build, due to uncertainty over future rent policy, the considerable investment needs in existing properties and increasing costs.

Many local authorities would like to build more local authority homes to replace homes sold under Right to Buy (RTB), but face similar problems to Housing Associations, together with additional restrictions on their finances. Over two million local authority homes have been sold since the introduction of RTB, with 40 per cent now owned by private landlords. Some regional mayors have announced significant local authority housing development ambitions. Initiatives such as Development Corporations and Local Housing Companies have the potential to deliver thousands of mixed tenure homes in their communities.



Until the late 1970s, public subsidy was focussed on grants to build new homes. This has now largely transferred to personal subsidies (e.g. housing benefit) which does not directly influence significant new development. Adjusting accounting conventions would also help, as the UK's wide definition of 'public sector' debt includes borrowing for local authority housing, unlike international standard definitions.

The planning framework

Many planning departments have seen reductions in staffing and some have been criticised for having outdated local plans and lengthy planning application processes. There are calls to reinstate a strategic planning tier, with potential for mayoral authorities to enhance sub-regional planning.

The previous government removed local housing targets, while supporting brownfield and urban development. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (2023) aims to speed up planning and includes provisions for devolution deals by 2030 for areas that want them, and new local authority powers, such as reforms to compulsory purchase and measures to prevent land-banking. The Act proposes replacing current developer contributions with a new Infrastructure Levy, which has raised concerns about the potential reduction in affordable housing. Planning changes also include more flexible permitted development rights for converting commercial buildings to homes and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements.

Existing homes

Most of England's 25.2 million homes are owner occupied. The housing stock includes many older homes which are often poorly insulated and expensive to retrofit. 15 per cent of homes fail to meet the Decent Homes Standard and 1.1 million homes stand empty.

There are an estimated 1 million overcrowded households, with over 310,000 children in England forced to share a bed with family members. Ethnic minority groups are more likely to live in poor quality housing and experience higher levels of overcrowding and homelessness.

Building safety has become a national priority, supported by new legislation. The focus on improving existing homes has diverted considerable funding from new housing development.

England is unusual in continuing to use the leasehold system. The previous government-proposed reforms are aimed at making it easier and cheaper for leaseholders to extend leases and challenge unreasonable costs.

There are concerns about the quality of some of the housing commissioned by the Home Office for asylum seekers and local leaders are frustrated with the lack of engagement. A significant issue arises when asylum seekers are made homeless, often at short notice and present to the local authority for rehousing.

Climate change, energy efficiency and fuel poverty

More than three million households are in fuel poverty. The NHS spends £1.4 billion annually on treating illnesses associated with cold or damp housing. The housing retrofit challenge in England remains substantial, with a target to retrofit a million homes every year to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. This will require concerted efforts to improve the supply chain of materials and upskill a new green workforce.

The Future Homes Standard (FHS) aims to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions in new builds from 2025. However, utility supplies need significant upgrades to support both this and the scale of retrofitting required.

Climate change is leading to increased frequency of extreme weather events, rising sea levels and record breaking temperatures. Local plans and housing developments need to consider climate resilience matters including flood risk and mitigation, overheating and water conservation. There is a growing focus on reducing embodied carbon, leading to a renewed emphasis on refurbishment and reuse of existing buildings.



Housing and health

Disabled people are poorly served by the current housing market, with 1.8 million people in the UK needing an accessible home and over 400,000 wheelchair users living in homes that are neither adapted nor accessible. This demand will grow as the population ages.

There is a shortage of supported housing, particularly for older people, with an estimated need for at least 167,000 more supported homes by 2040. Supported housing demonstrates considerable savings for the NHS and social care. Housing First programmes have proven to be effective at reducing homelessness in those with complex needs. New legislation will require local authorities to adopt a more strategic approach to the provision of supported accommodation.

Housing, the economy and sense of place

The development of Local Housing Strategies and place shaping are closely interlinked. Building for a Healthy Life (BHL) is England’s most widely used design tool for creating quality places and many local authorities have referenced this in their Local Plan.

England’s social rented homes contribute £77.7bn a year to the national economy in savings for the NHS, local authorities and welfare spending. Importantly, this also includes the economic opportunities created for residents.

Past housing policies are giving rise to intergenerational disparity. Young adults are half as likely to own a home as their parents were at their age. Up to one third of millennials will face living in private rented accommodation all their life. The concentration of housing equity held by property owners over renters is stark, widening divisions within society. There is a debate over whether the current tax system is fair in this regard and whether capital gains tax should be reformed, alongside other tax measures around second homes, empty homes and homes owned by people from abroad.

“Unaffordable and inadequate housing is holding back our economy... businesses and workers are struggling as the high cost and poor quality of housing is making it harder to attract and keep workers, run a successful company or build a fulfilling career. With a long term plan (for housing) we can match ambitions for the UK economy, integrate transportation networks with housing requirements, ensuring that every region can grow and that there are places people can afford and want to live and work.”

National Housing Federation





- ADEPT members are the place making strategists and policy shapers across top tier local authority areas
- ADEPT members are specialists, delivering services and sharing best practice across key sectors including environment, planning, housing, transport and economy
- ADEPT members design strategies for the future, taking communities beyond 2035
- ADEPT members operate in networks, cutting through boundaries to work with partners across the political, public, private and community sectors
- ADEPT members provide opportunities to develop new talent, supporting the place directors of tomorrow

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