The Nationwide Foundation calls on the new government to show bold action and commit to a long-term plan to reform the UK's housing system

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The Nationwide Foundation calls on the new government to show bold action and commit to a long-term plan to reform the UK's housing system

With a new government in Westminster, the Nationwide Foundation is calling for bold action to tackle the nation's housing crisis, with five clear recommendations for change.

The charitable foundation – dedicated to funding groundbreaking research, innovation and campaigning in housing - is challenging the new Government to end decades of piecemeal housing policies. Instead, it should create a long-term strategy to increase the supply of genuinely affordable homes, transform the private rented sector, support community-led housing and ensure health promotion is central to housing policy.

A decent and affordable home is the foundation for life, work and wellbeing. But housing data consistently reveals the devastating realities faced by millions of people across the UK. More than 130,000 children live in temporary accommodation[1], one in five privately rented homes in the UK fall short of basic safety and decency standards[2] and one in 182 people are now homeless[3].

The Foundation's *Decent and affordable homes for all: five proposals for a fairer housing system (*

), outlines five proposals for the new government, that have the collective potential to overhaul the current failing system:

1. Reimagine our housing system: agree a long-term vision to achieve Homes for All
2. Increase the supply of genuinely affordable homes
3. Transform the private rented sector to better protect tenants
4. Support the growth of community-led housing to diversify the housing market and deliver more homes at prices people can afford, in places where they are needed and wanted.
5. Place tackling health inequalities at the heart of housing policy

Each of the proposals have been developed through decades of research and experience, grounded in evidence and collaboration with pioneers in the housing system, as well as through the funding of innovative projects to redesign the current housing system – some of which are highlighted within the proposal document.

The recommendations also contain further tactical solutions for the government to consider, to help achieve the five main proposals. These include: support the conversion of private rented sector properties to social or genuinely affordable rented homes and replace 'affordable rent' with income-linked 'living rent'.

The central ask for the new government, and all political parties - to collaborate in establishing a long-term strategy for our housing - is also the vision at the core of the 'Homes for All' campaign. Launched by the Nationwide Foundation in April this year, alongside the Church of England, Homes for All is supported by over 30 housing organisations (including the National Housing Federation, the Chartered Institute for Housing and Crisis).

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Kate Markey, the Nationwide Foundation's CEO, said: *"Millions of people are living in unsafe, insecure, unaffordable homes – or in some cases without a home at all. This impacts childhoods and family life, our communities and the wider economy.*

"Successive UK governments have failed to address issues within housing systemically, leaving the UK housing sector in crisis. It's now time for bold, systemic action and urgent change, there is no time to waste.

"As new policymakers begin to set priorities for the next five years, housing must be top of the agenda. We need to see stability, ambition and urgency from those in power, delivering the change people across the housing sector and beyond are demanding. We believe through our recommendations, developed through decades of research and experience, change is possible. Anything less would be a disaster for people across the UK."

ENDS

Notes to Editor

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About the Nationwide Foundation

Established in 1997 and funded by Nationwide Building Society, the Nationwide Foundation is an independent charity that aims to improve the lives of those most in need in the UK through grant-making and influencing work.

The Foundation takes a systemic approach and focuses on tackling the root causes of social issues, seeking not only to benefit people now, but leave a lasting legacy that supports people far into the future. The Foundation's strategy has evolved and changed significantly in the decades since it was founded, but the current focus is on housing and making the housing system work for all through its Decent Affordable Homes strategy.

This document covers all three of the Foundation's programme areas:

- Backing community-led housing: strengthen, support and champion the growth of community-led housing, so that more people who are in need will benefit.
- Nurturing ideas to change the housing system: nurture new and innovative ideas to change the housing system.
- Transforming the private rented sector: transform the private rented sector so that it provides homes for people in need that are more affordable, secure, accessible and are better quality.

More can be found on the Nationwide Foundation website: https://nationwidefoundation.org.uk/

About Homes for All

Homes for All: A Vision for England's Housing System was developed by a coalition of the Church of England and the Nationwide Foundation and a number of leading housing experts, with a new vision for England's homes, in which everyone has a safe, secure, affordable, quality place to live. The coalition believe this vision is possible through cross-party commitment to a long-term strategy for policymaking, which reflects how different areas of society, economy and politics impact on our homes, and a Housing Strategy Committee to guide and assess government action and ensure policy decisions meet the needs of England's households.

The Homes for All vision was launched at a parliamentary event in April 2024 with the support of over 30 housing organisations (including the National Housing Federation, the Chartered Institute for Housing and Crisis).

More information can be found on the Homes for All website: https://homesforall.org.uk/

[1] Reach Alliance (2023) 'A Place to Play'. Available at:

https://reachalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/UK-PlaceToPlay-Final56.pdf

[2] Department for Housing, Levelling Up and Communities (2023) 'English Housing Survey 2021 to 2022'. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2021-to-2022-housing-quality-and-condition/english-housing-survey-2021-to-2022-housing-quality-and-condition

[3] Shelter (2023) 'At least 309,000 people homeless in England today'. Available at: https://england.shelter.org.uk/media/press_release/at_least_309000_people_homeless_in_england_today

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