



## **Addressing the Crises in Housing and Health - Summary of a Manifesto to Make Existing Homes and Communities the Priority**

Gross failures have recently highlighted that bad housing kills and undermines the health of millions. In England overcrowding has increased and in 2021 there remained 2.3 million households living in homes with Category 1 hazards, 3.6 million in Non-Decent Homes and almost 1 million in homes with damp; and in Scotland, in 2017, 40% of occupied dwellings failed to meet the Housing Quality Standard. New policies are urgently needed to invest in existing housing and through this reduce costs falling on health and social care. Government must give priority to improving existing homes and communities.

### **Investing In Health through Housing improvements will:**

- Reduce avoidable illness and pressure on the NHS
- Increase life expectancy and reduce the health inequality gap.
- Create jobs, support a healthy workforce and enable people to return to work
- Improve educational attainment
- Improve energy efficiency and prepare homes for climate change
- Improve the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods
- Give people a better quality of life.

### **Our Proposals for Action to Improve Health and Housing are:**

- Appointing a Minister of Housing and a Minister for Disabled and Older People.
- Supporting local authority and housing association leadership
- Extending licensing powers
- Enabling local authorities and housing associations to improve unhealthy homes
- Rigorously inspecting supported accommodation
- Providing sufficient supported accommodation
- Targeting enforcement of health and safety standards and energy efficiency
- Radically rethinking Housing Benefit to make better use of existing spending
- Introducing new repair grants and Renewing Disabled Facilities Grants
- Extending and enforcing housing standards
- Enabling action to reduce overcrowding
- Taking effective action to prevent no fault evictions
- Providing Good Home Hubs
- Investing in the workforce to address shortages that affect enforcement action
- Requiring the Regulator to take action against non-compliant Providers

### **Measurable successes over a ten-year period include:**

- Reducing the numbers of unhealthy dwellings
- Improving energy efficiency in older properties
- Moderating factors damaging health, educational performance and employability.
- Changing patterns of demand for health and social care.
- Shifting patterns of expenditure and treatment by NHS.
- Reducing expenditure on exempt accommodation and housing benefit funding.

**The full Manifesto is available at: <https://www.healthierhousing.co.uk/>  
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