

PRESS RELEASE

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A COUNCIL HOUSING RENAISSANCE TO HELP SOLVE BRITAIN'S HOUSING NEEDS

Councils should be given the freedom to build more homes to help kick start a council housing renaissance.

That's the message from the National Federation of ALMOs and the Association of Retained Council Housing who together manage four fifths of the council homes in England.

Ahead of the election, the two organisations have for the first time united the council housing sector to produce a manifesto that sets out a series of practical policies which would see councils and ALMOs play a key role in meeting the country's housing needs.

Key recommendations in the manifesto include:

- The ability to re-invest rental income to build new council homes, which would provide the financial capacity to build 20,000 homes a year. It would also increase councils' ability to improve and maintain their existing stock.
- Reforms to the bureaucratic arrangements that hinder local authorities replacing homes sold under Right to Buy with extra help to ensure a one for one replacement.
- A review of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to enable councils to get a fairer division of 'planning gain' between landowners and local communities.

ARCH Chair, Cllr Paul Ellis said:

"In 2014 councils and ALMOs began the construction of more than 2,000 new homes, which is more than in any year since 1992. While this is a good start, the measures that we are calling for today will not only facilitate a renaissance in the building of council homes, but also help the country to address some of the fundamental issues that are stifling the supply of new homes."

NFA Chair, Sue Roberts MBE said:

"This is the first time that the NFA and ARCH have come together to unite the council housing sector. We call on all political parties to listen to the practical and implementable solutions in our manifesto which aims to ensure that the welfare of our tenants and the building of new homes are at the forefront of the next government's plans."

The Local Government Minister, Kris Hopkins MP, and the Shadow Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Hilary Benn MP, will both address a parliamentary reception in Westminster to mark the launch of the manifesto. They will be joined by leading politicians, tenants from both retained council housing and ALMOs, as well as housing managers and councillors.

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Notes:

- The Association of Retained Council Housing represents 61 local authorities managing over 600,000 homes.
- The NFA represents 47 Arm's Length Management Organisation in 48 local authorities managing 647,500 Homes.
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