



tcpa

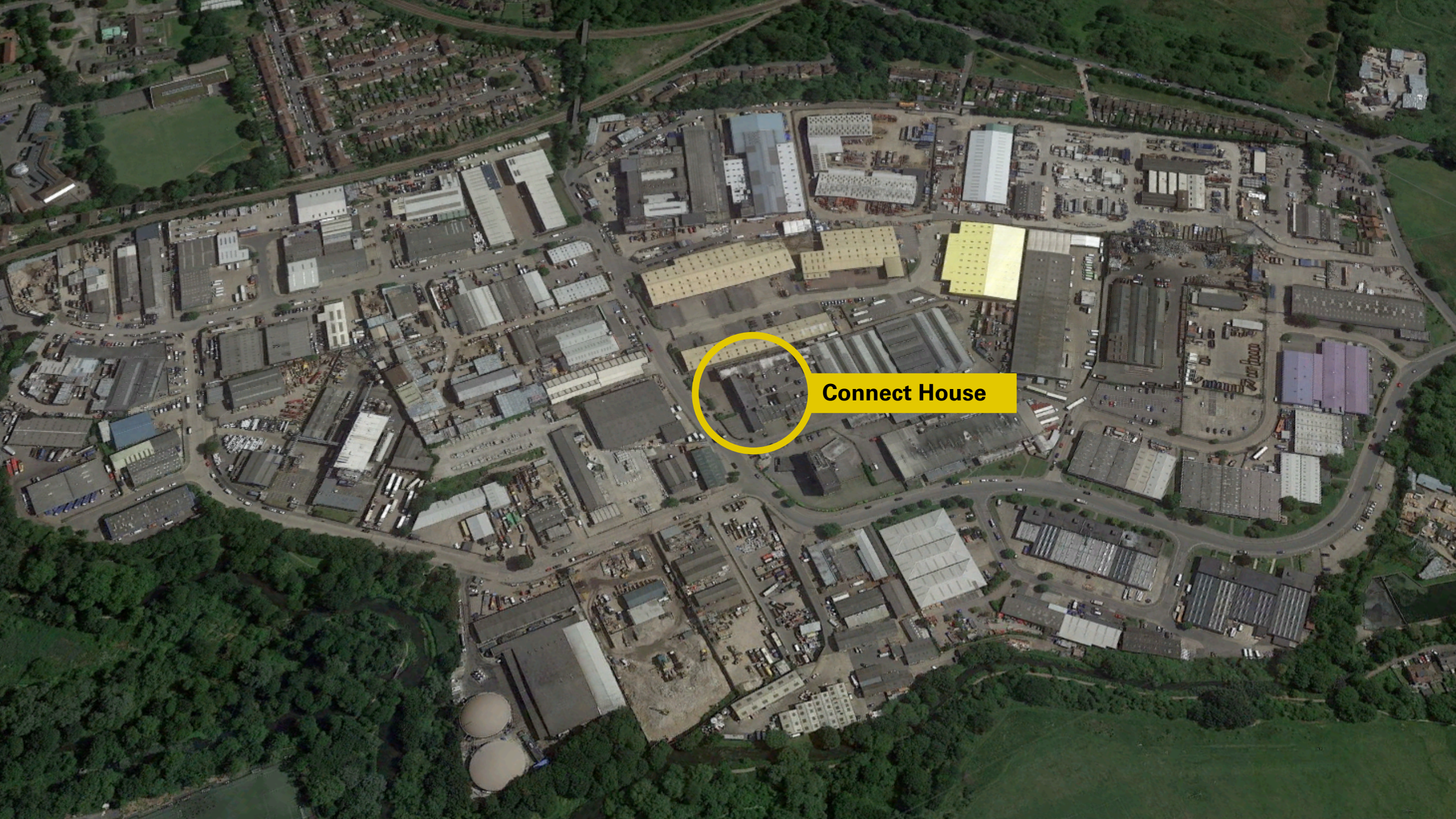


Healthy Homes Act Campaign Summary & Update

14th October 2020







Connect House



tcpa

Connect House, Morden





tcpa

The extent of the problem

Government-commissioned research on PDR found that of the 639 office-residential conversions examined:

- Only 22.1% met nationally described space standards
- 72% had only a single aspect window (ten had no windows at all)
- Only 3.5% had access to private amenity space. This matches the picture painted by other research into PDR, including our own.

MHCLG has made important concessions on space standards and natural light, but this won't stop homes being built in industrial estates.

...And most poor quality housing still comes through the planning system:

- The National Housing Audit, a study of 142 development schemes by major housebuilders, found that one in five should have been denied planning permission on the grounds of poor design quality.





The impact of unhealthy homes and neighbourhoods

Marmot Review: Poor housing increases the likelihood of respiratory, cardiovascular and communicable diseases, and mortality.

Public Health England: Neighbourhoods with poor walkability and cycling infrastructure negatively impact mental wellbeing and increase the risk of type 2 diabetes, CVD, musculoskeletal conditions.

Shelter: It leads to **25% higher risk of severe ill-health** and disability during childhood, lower educational attainment, and greater likelihood of unemployment and poverty.

BRE: It cost the NHS £1.4bn a year.

It also decreases the population's resilience to major shocks, like covid-19 (see recent Place Alliance research on lockdown)...





tcpa

Why we need a Health Homes Act

The case for legal change

- The system is clearly deeply dysfunctional - we need to fundamentally change the way we regulate the built environment
- Responsibility for quality in the built environment is fragmented between housing, planning and other regimes.
- There are no legally enforceable minimum standards on key aspects of building/neighbourhood quality, such as natural light.

We seem to have gone backwards – we once built homes for heroes.





Healthy Homes Bill

CONTENTS

PART 1

DUTY TO SECURE HEALTHY HOMES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

- 1 Duty on the secretary of state

PRINCIPLES OF A HEALTHY HOME

- 2 Policy statement on healthy homes principles
- 3 Meaning of 'healthy homes principles'
- 4 Policy statement on healthy homes principles: process
- 5 Policy statement on healthy homes principles: effect
- 6 Annual monitoring

ESTABLISHING A HEALTHY HOMES COMMISSIONER

- 7 Establishment
- 8 Primary function: securing healthy homes

PART 2

PLANNING FOR HEALTHY AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- 9 Duty on local planning authorities to plan for affordable housing needs

PART 1

DUTY TO SECURE HEALTHY HOMES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

1 Duty on the Secretary of State

(1) It is the duty of the Secretary of State to secure the health, safety, wellbeing and convenience of persons in or about buildings and of others who may be affected by buildings or matters connected with buildings.

PART 2

PLANNING FOR HEALTHY AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

9 Duty on local planning authorities to plan for affordable housing needs

(1) In section 19 (Preparation of local development documents) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 after paragraph 19(1E) insert -

“(1F) Development plan documents must (taken as a whole) include policies designed to meet the housing needs of the local planning authority’s area in such a way as to secure the long-term health, safety and wellbeing of residents. In meeting such needs planning authorities must have particular regard to ensuring that housing is affordable to those on average and below-average household incomes.”

PRINCIPLES OF A HEALTHY HOME

2 Policy statement on healthy homes principles

- (1) The Secretary of State must prepare a statement in accordance with this Act (the “policy statement on healthy homes principles”).
- (2) The statement must explain how the healthy homes principles are to be interpreted and applied by Ministers of the Crown in making, developing and revising their policies.
- (3) The statement may explain how the principles will be implemented and adhered to in a way that takes account of the development’s urban, suburban or rural location.

3 Meaning of ‘healthy homes principles’

- (1) In this Act “healthy homes principles” means the principles -



ALL NEW HOMES...



must be safe in relation to the risk of fire



must have, as a minimum, the liveable space required to meet the needs of people over their whole life time, including adequate internal and external storage space



must have access to natural light in all main living areas and bedrooms



and their surroundings must be designed to be inclusive, accessible, and adaptable to suit the needs of all



should be built within places that prioritise and provide access to sustainable transport and walkable services, including green infrastructure and play space





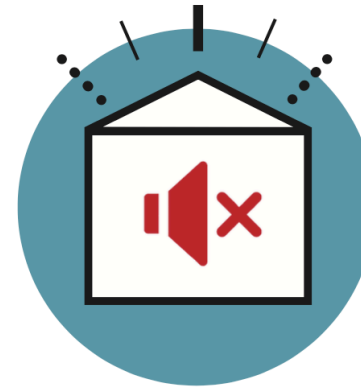
must secure radical reductions in carbon emissions in line with the provisions of the Climate Change Act 2008



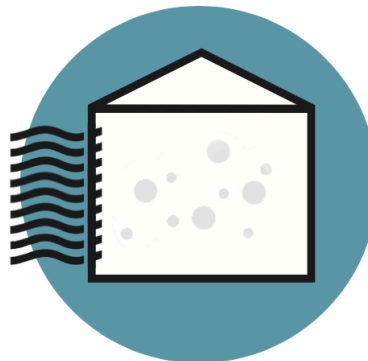
must demonstrate how they will be resilient to a changing climate over their full life time



must be built to design out crime and be secure



must be free from unacceptable and intrusive noise and light pollution



must not contribute to unsafe or illegal levels of indoor or ambient air pollution and must be built to minimise, and where possible eliminate, the harmful impacts of air pollution on human health and the environment



must be designed to provide year-round thermal comfort for inhabitants



HEALTHY HOMES COMMISSIONER

7 Establishment

(1) There is to be an office of the Healthy Homes Commissioner.

8 Primary function: securing healthy homes

(1) The Healthy Homes Commissioner's primary function is ensuring the promotion and implementation of the Healthy Homes principles.

(2) The primary function includes promoting awareness of the Healthy Homes principles in England.

(3) In the discharge of the primary function the Healthy Homes Commissioner may, in particular—

(a) advise persons exercising functions or engaged in activities affecting the delivery of homes on how to act compatibly with the Healthy Homes principles;

(b) advise the Secretary of State on the effective implementation of Healthy Homes principles;

(d) consider the potential effect on the healthy homes principles of government policy proposals and government proposals for legislation;

(e) bring any matter to the attention of either House of Parliament;

(f) investigate the availability and effectiveness of complaints procedures so far as relating to the healthy Homes principles;

(g) investigate any other matter relating to the implementation of the Healthy Homes principles;

(h) publish a report on any matter considered or investigated under this section.



tcpa

Five arguments for passing a Healthy Homes Act

1. **The ethical argument:** Poor-quality housing and neighbourhoods undermine thousands of residents' healthy, wellbeing, and life chances.
2. **The regulatory argument:** The Principles bring clarity to, and consistency between, regulatory systems and local authorities, along with a defined purpose for planning.
3. **The governance argument:** The delivery of the Principles and the discharge of the SoS' responsibilities require the joining-up of decision-making in central government.
4. **The preventative public health and financial argument:** Substandard housing costs the exchequer billion of pounds every year.
5. **The political argument:** The Bill provides a way for government to allay growing concern about the standard of housing and their planning reform proposals, and a means of delivering on key policy objectives. These range from accessibility, to climate change, and resilience to future shocks.





tcpa

Securing change

The Bill is...

- Robust, though far from perfect
- The product of a small charity, but supported by a wide range of influential organisations
- An end in itself, but also a means of raising awareness

Two possible routes into law

- Amendments to government legislation, particularly the Building Safety Bill
- Private members bill, ideally in the Commons

Growing awareness in parliament

- PDR debate last month
- Planning reform debate this month
- Strong support in Lords, led by Lord Nigel Crisp (our lead advocate) and Baroness Usha Prashar, and has growing support in the Commons





tcpa

What's next?

Forthcoming events

- Nationwide Building Society hosted events with supportive parliamentarians
- 3rd November 3.30pm-5pm – 'What next?' with Prof Matthew Carmona, Dr Ben Clifford, Dr Nancy Holman.

Forthcoming work

- A version of the bill for Wales
- Two reports which focus on younger people and older people's housing preferences
- Expanding our local and city-regional campaign

We've made good progress but need your help and feedback!



Acknowledgements

The TCPA would like to acknowledge the support and contributions of all the groups, organisations and individuals who helped to develop this bill:

The All Party Parliamentary Group for Healthy Homes and Buildings: Officers - Jim Shannon MP, Derek Thomas MP, Marco Longhi MP, Mary Glendon MP, Paul Girvan MP, and Earl John Lytton; Sponsors - Beama, Spink Health, Saint-Gobain, Matildas Planet, VELUX, and Healthy Property Group; Secretariat - DevoConnect.

The HoME Coalition: Centre for Ageing Better, Habinteg, Age UK, Care & Repair England, Disability Rights UK, Housing LIN, National Housing Federation, and Chartered Institute of Housing.

Supporters of the healthy homes principles: Association of Directors of Public Health, APSE, Arun District Council, Aspire, Civic Voice, CPRE: The countryside charity, Design Council, Good Homes Alliance, Hertfordshire LEP, Levitt Bernstein, London Borough of Hounslow, Places for People, UK Green Building Council, Borough of Scarborough, Rockwool, Royal College of Occupational Therapists, Client Earth and The Ramblers.

Legal advice: Liz Loughran of Line Planning and Stephen Cottle QC of Garden Court Chambers.

Project funder: The Nationwide Foundation.

... And the many others who contributed their time and expertise to this project, but who we cannot thank here, including members of our policy working groups.



Daniel.Slade@tcpa.org.uk

