

**14th March 2017**

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **The Housing Forum offers 10-point plan to solve housing supply crisis**

A pan-industry group of housing professionals is calling on the Government to take bolder steps to secure increased housing supply over the longer-term.

The Housing Forum says politics should be taken out of housing and suggests that all planning applications with fewer than 250 homes should be determined by the officers, not the elected officials, and for a greater cross-party political and industry consensus going forward.

Its report *Future proofing housing supply* offers 10 solutions which it says would help ensure – in conjunction with proposals set out in the recent Government Housing White Paper – that over 250,000 homes per annum are built every year.

Stephen Teagle, Chief Executive, Partnerships and Regeneration, Galliford Try and Deputy Chairman, The Housing Forum said: “The Government’s focus on supply through a broad range of measures is welcome and will contribute to lifting the supply of new homes we need. This report takes that ambition a stage further- calling for renewed leadership at a local level, greater investment and a strengthened platform for collaboration to future-proof delivery over the next decade.”

“We have to recognise as an industry that the Government’s renewed focus on housing supply presents an opportunity for the sector to push for the kind of change that can make a real difference. The fact that the scale of the problem has been recognised by Whitehall means we now have a unique chance to open up the debate and put forward novel and bold ideas, like the ones within this report, that we genuinely believe can translate into more homes for communities around the country.”

Shelagh Grant, Chief Executive of The Housing Forum added: “If the housing supply is truly to be turned on to full, then still more needs to be done to overcome the challenges that exist in the market and create a benign and sustainable environment for housebuilding. We appreciate that some of our solutions are radical departures from the status quo. But we have been tinkering at the edges for too long.”

“We need to lift housing output to levels not seen since the late 1970s. That needs bold actions and brave decisions.”

The Housing Forum has set out 10 solutions it would like to see implemented from strengthening leadership and financial mechanisms in local authorities, more to boost capacity in the sector and direct commissioning and investment.

10 Solutions for boosting housing supply:

1. Housing should be depoliticised. Take party politics out of housing strategy and delivery by creating cross-party housing groups and removing elected members from decision making on some planning applications.

2. Government to appoint a Housing Minister to the Cabinet and directly commission new homes on public sector land.
3. All local authorities must become more pro-active leaders of housing supply. The housing sector needs all local members and council officers to capitalise on this position and drive housing supply.
4. Create a single voice for the housing industry. A single message delivered by a new housing industry body would enable clear, powerful and effective communication with Government.
5. Government and industry to implement the Farmer Review's call for modernisation of housebuilding skills and technology to address the looming skills crisis.
6. Local authorities should be encouraged to sell land by judging potential buyers against 'best value' factors including the speed of delivery of new homes.
7. Central and local government to revise the planning system so it favours increased supply including PRS / Build for rent and encourages the allocation of sites of different sizes so as to attract interest from a range of builders.
8. Government to agree a long-term, large-scale capital investment plan for housing for the next 10 years.
9. Give local authorities the financial mechanisms to directly commission new housing and greater freedom for risk sharing with the private sector.
10. Create a centre of excellence for procurement expertise for use across the sector.

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**Notes to Editors:**

The Housing Forum is an industry-wide organisation that represents the entire housing supply chain as the voice of the industry.

We have over 150 member organisations, from both public and private sectors, collaborating to inform, network and influence with the shared objective of more homes and better homes for the nation.

The cross-sector representation of our membership equips us specially to investigate issues that require collaboration to achieve successful outcomes. **[www.housingforum.org.uk](http://www.housingforum.org.uk)**