



**Healthy Homes and Buildings**

# Healthy Homes Manifesto

**We spend up to 90% of our time indoors**

**1 in 10 people are living in poor quality housing**

**In 2021 poor housing cost the NHS £1.4bn each year  
and wider society £18.5bn**

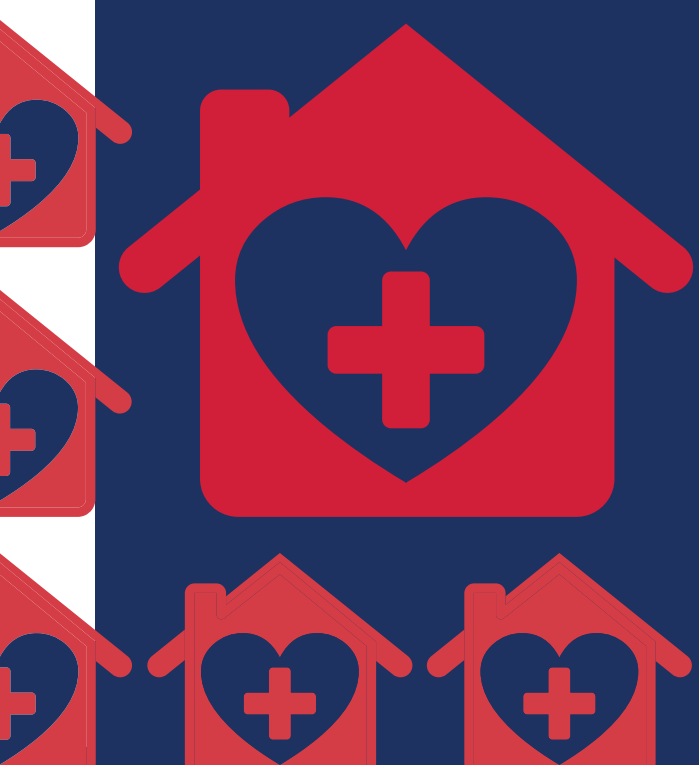
## **The Healthy Homes Healthy Britain campaign is about the right to live in a healthy home**

There is an inextricable link between our homes and our health and wellbeing in Britain

Our homes should not cause or exacerbate poor health and wellbeing and...

Everyone should expect to live in a home where their physical and mental health and wellbeing is maximised and not diminished

It is time to make long lasting positive change which embeds health and wellbeing principles in future policy for future generations





## A mission for healthy homes

The Healthy Homes Healthy Britain campaign's mission is to effect positive policy change which embeds health and wellbeing principles in future legislation for future generations.

### Unhealthy housing is a serious problem in Britain

There are a plethora of health and wellbeing problems caused and exacerbated by poor quality, damp, noisy, poorly ventilated, light deficient and energy inefficient homes and buildings which need to be addressed by any future Government.

We are calling on all parties, future legislators and policy makers to recognise that serious, and sometimes, fatal health problems are being generated by the UK's unhealthy homes and buildings.

The status quo is not sustainable. We need to act NOW to increase the standard, quality, energy efficiency and health and wellbeing benefits in new and existing homes across the UK.

### Putting Health and Wellbeing FIRST makes economic sense

There are huge economic, social and health benefits to be gained from retrofitting and building homes which are healthy and to a high standard including:

- **lower costs to the health service**
- **better educational attainment**
- **reduced carbon footprint**
- **improved wellbeing**
- **increased productivity**
- **greater life chances, independent living and care**

# Healthy Homes Manifesto

## Everyone deserves to live in a healthy home

The Healthy Homes Healthy Britain campaign is calling on politicians and policy makers of all parties to commit to positive policy change and put health and wellbeing first.

### We want to see:

**Long lasting positive change** which embeds health and wellbeing principles in future policy for future generations.

**Health and wellbeing principles put first** - and adhered to by landlords, housing providers, builders, planners and local authorities - when retrofitting existing housing and in future house building, design and planning.

**A reduction of health inequalities** caused or exacerbated by the homes we live in and ensure our homes are accessible, inclusive and positively create health.

**The quality, sustainability and standard of Britain's homes improved** to ensure the occupants physical and mental health and wellbeing is maximised and not diminished and the principle that everyone has the right to live in a healthy home adhered to.

**Healthy Homes legislation** to provide for greater accountability and responsibility for Health and Wellbeing in all homes and buildings.

**A Healthy Homes and Buildings Government department and a Minister** wholly responsible for taking forward the Healthy Homes manifesto; increasing future health and wellbeing and reducing health inequalities.

**The appointment of an independent Commissioner for Healthy Homes and Buildings** to define and embed healthy homes principles, reduce health inequalities and hold Government and those responsible for housing provision to account.

**England's devolved nations and regions with the powers they need** to make positive change to deliver healthy housing in their areas for future generations.

**“Improving indoor environments in schools and homes in the UK indicates a total economic benefit of over £55bn up to 2060 in terms of health costs and productivity.”**

**“Poor housing costs the NHS in England up to £1.4bn per year. Nearly £1bn of that related to indoor comfort aspects.”**

**More than 1.3m people in UK have Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), 13% could be due to poor housing with impacts of damp and mould due to poor thermal comfort and lack of adequate ventilation.**

## Everyone deserves to live in a home which is healthy

There are too many unhealthy homes and buildings in the UK. There is an urgent need to build and retrofit our homes to a higher standard and quality. It is not acceptable in 2023 that so many people are living in homes with damp and mould, homes which are cold and noisy, have poor ventilation, indoor air quality and light. These problems are not specific to tenure. Whether you are an owner occupier or live in social or private rented accommodation your home could be causing or exacerbating poor health and wellbeing.

**The English House Condition Survey (2022) stated that 14% (3.4m) occupied dwellings failed to meet the Decent Homes Standard and 4% of occupied dwellings had problems with damp, most prevalent in the private rented sector.**

**The private rented sector had the highest proportion of non-decent homes (23%), social housing the lowest (10%) and a concerning amount among owner occupiers (13%).**

# It's time for positive change

Health and housing are inextricably linked.  
It's time to join up policy thinking.

The Healthy Homes and Buildings APPG (HHB APPG) believes it is time for Government to adopt a holistic and innovative approach to tackle the serious problem of unhealthy homes and buildings.

Its White Paper, [Building Our Future: Laying the Foundations for Healthy Homes and Buildings \(2018\)](#) made clear recommendations to Government on what needs to change and set out how to deliver healthy homes and buildings in the UK.

**It's time** for the Government to adopt a more holistic approach if it is to tackle the serious problem of unhealthy homes in Britain today and for future generations. Focussing on energy efficiency measures alone and/or decarbonising homes is simply not enough to drive the fundamental policy change needed.

**It's time** to put health and wellbeing first in future policy making and focus on improving indoor air quality, thermal and acoustic comfort, and lighting – in addition to energy efficiency and building safety.

When it comes to who is responsible for driving the health and wellbeing agenda and creating sustainable and healthy living environments it is not clear. There are currently too many key Government departments involved, including Health, Energy Security & Net Zero, Levelling Up, Housing & Communities, Treasury, the Department for Work & Pensions and the Health & Safety Executive. There is no one department or Minister accountable or responsible who has clear oversight and who can join the policy dots.

## The HHB APPG believes in the principle that:

**everyone should expect to live in a home where their physical and mental health and wellbeing is maximised and not diminished**

This principle should be embedded in future legislation for future generations. The HHB APPG wholeheartedly support the TCPA Healthy Homes principles and wants these principles and the recommendations in our White Paper to be adopted in legislation to protect and create health and wellbeing in Britain's homes and buildings.

**To get involved and show your support please contact:**

**[hhbappg@devoconnect.co.uk](mailto:hhbappg@devoconnect.co.uk)**

<sup>1</sup> Gehrt et al 2019 (RAND Europe) -

<https://www.rand.org/randeurope/research/projects/indoor-environment-impacts-on-child-health.html> & [UK URL Ref.]

<sup>2</sup> Garret et al 2021 (BRE)

[https://files.bregroup.com/research/BRE\\_Report\\_the\\_cost\\_of\\_poor\\_housing\\_2021.pdf](https://files.bregroup.com/research/BRE_Report_the_cost_of_poor_housing_2021.pdf)

