



all party parliamentary group
for healthy homes and buildings

HEALTHY HOMES FOR HEALTHY BRITAIN:

Why it's time to tackle Britain's unhealthy homes and buildings

17:00-18:30, 18th October 2022

HYBRID

Minutes:

Introduction

Gill Morris:

- Gill welcomed everyone and thanked people for coming. She noted that the Parliamentary presence was slightly delayed due to votes going on during the APPG meeting.
- She introduced the speakers
- She highlighted how cities do so much to drive economies and could do so much more, and therefore introduced Dr Juliet Carpenter, the first speaker.

WHY IT'S TIME TO TACKLE BRITAIN'S UNHEALTHY HOMES?

PERSPECTIVES ON THE BENEFITS OF HEALTHY HOMES AND BUILDINGS:

Dr Juliet Carpenter, Global Centre on Healthcare and Urbanisation, University of Oxford

- Outlined she will be highlighting the findings of [The Commission on Creating Healthy Cities Report](#)
- She gave context regarding the report. It was produced over 18 months with the aim of providing evidence-based findings, it was made up of a main commission, many sub committees and joined by an international advisory board led by Lord Crisp.
- The themes the report was interested in included: the built environment, transport and mobility, health and wellbeing issues, and good governance. In the context of this APPG meeting she was to focus on findings relating to health and housing.
- Key messages: housing is key to health, as place feeds into health.
- Recommendations:
 - o Need for more affordable and better-quality housing
 - o Need for greater energy efficiency relating to cold and damp housing
 - Calls for national retrofit strategy and extending 0% VAT rate to retrofit
 - o Issues relating to health-related housing policies
 - o Need for proactive planning incorporate health creation
 - o Issue of funding and prioritisation
 - o Healthy new towns programme demonstrated how you can build healthy lifestyles and net zero initiatives (e.g. solar panels) into development.
 - o Links to the growth agenda and how healthy homes and people can feed into this



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- A nexus of housing, health, and climate change
- Healthy housing can feed into the growth agenda: a healthy workforce is more productive (fewer days off, better mental health)
- Why is it time to tackle Britain's unhealthy homes? Healthy homes will be better outcomes for physical and mental health which will have enormous benefits for reducing the costs of the NHS, will support efforts to tackle climate change, growth (productivity)

Jim Shannon MP – apologises for the 4 votes and inconvenience they caused

- Highlighted the debate on Thursday at Westminster Hall and how we can a government response to the issue

Helen Garrett, BRE

- BRE as a research organisation have an important role in providing data to inform public policy
- Aware of the longstanding links between poor housing and poor health - but not imbedded in the policy psyche and practice
- Have not recognise that health and wellbeing and social inclusion are housing related issues
- Requires a joined up thinking especially when there are currently issues surrounding the public purse
- Cost of poor housing research: tried to promote joined up thinking and make the economic case for housing investments – which has been going on for 10 years
 - Latest research: poor housing is costing the NHS £1.4 billion in the first year that continues thereafter
 - If you include other substandard housing, that cost goes up to £2 billion a year
 - The costs of poor housing on the NHS only represents around 8% of the wider societal costs of poor housing
 - £18.5 billion per year cost for unhealthy homes – can we afford not to act?
- Looking into research into 30-year cost benefit analysis to inform policy
- Cold homes – excess winter death link
 - Particularly effects older people, people with long term health issues, vulnerable and children.
 - Cold homes also present a risk to children's educational attainment, their emotional wellbeing and their resilience
 - Only feasible long-term solutions are to reduce exposure to these cold temperatures and to improve energy efficiency of that stock
 - Have called for a national retrofit strategy to enable that – the retrofit strategy being the only long-term solution to mitigating fuel poverty
 - However this is a huge challenge given the skills shortage



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- There also needs to be better quality assurance with retrofits and housing developments
- Living in a cold home represents the bulk of societal costs – estimated to be £15/18 billion
 - If mitigated, this could save the NHS £800m a year
- Existing and new housing should be part of our core infrastructure to strengthen economic development, improve health and education, which will increase productivity

Louise Hutchins, UKGBC (UK Green Building Council)

- UKGBC – established in response to the climate and nature emergency with wellbeing and social value at the core of what they do, hoping to drive a transformational change of the whole built environment
- Over 700 members of the organisation across a broad range of industries and specialisations (property, construction, financial, energy etc.)
- Healthy homes and buildings sits at middle of Venn diagram of what is important to the UKGBC
- Focus Key design principles about what makes healthy buildings
 - Looks at physical implications of built environment but also other implications – mental health, well-being, opportunities etc
 - Designing and developing high quality neighbourhoods includes ensuring houses are warm enough, cool enough, have sufficient space, daylight, ventilation, air quality, and aren't too noisy – all of which are important in the overall approach to improving wellbeing and health
- HHB agenda sits right at the core of many of the key issues affecting our society – climate change
- Why now? The breakdown of the climate and nature makes it urgent, fuel poverty and the current stresses on the NHS and care sector.
- The problems don't just affect homes but also public buildings like hospitals and schools, are having to make difficult decisions about how to spend their money
 - E.g. schools, hospitals – has a wider societal knock on impact
- The recent heatwave in England saw a reported 2,800 over 65 year old excess deaths – something that will continue unless we take action
- The Pandemic highlighted the issues around ventilation and air quality
- UKGBC working on national retrofit strategy – very important to improve the quality of our homes as well as commercial buildings
- The governments energy strategy only focuses on supply, as opposed to energy saving



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- Jeremy Hunt announced a review of the energy bill support post April and mentioned energy saving for the first time.
- The government needs to make sure that healthy homes and buildings are part of the response to the current crises, and that it is a part of the governments thinking – something that will be a really important intervention
- Jacob Rees-Mogg and BEIS recommended to PM Truss that there should be a significant public education campaign surrounding energy saving and the way that people use buildings during this period to protect themselves
- We hope that with Jeremy Hunt that there will be a new approach and that the energy saving public campaign will be revisited
- Problems surrounding NEW BUILDINGS:
 - o Issue of overcrowding.
 - o Lack of affordable housing
 - Both of which contribute to health issues
 - o By 2025 there will be a new housing standard
 - o The Levelling Up bill was looking to reform the planning system
 - o The UKGBC hopes that the planning system will be overhauled in line with the climate change act and the environment act to ensure consistency and clarity
 - o Need to get the future homes and buildings strategy right
 - o DHLUC working on this right now
- PLANNING REFORM – linked:
 - o Called for system to be hauled in line with the climate change act
 - o It needs to be easier to get new housing developments agreed
 - o Having constituency in planning and net zero systems and reform
 - o Hugely concerned re the new investment zones, ripping up planning and environmental protections we already have – will be a regression on the climate agenda, and will have a knock on effect on health and wellbeing in those new developments.

Paul Dennett, Mayor of Salford

- NHS numbers have only worsened since 2010 - £2.5 billion
- Highlights the influence of the [HHB White Paper](#) in 2018 on GMCAs approach to establishing what a Healthy Home and Building is and how to implement these standards
- Support in GMCA for a inter departmental committee to highlight this
- GMCA supports evidence and research based policy to make the best case to the Government and Treasury
- Needs resources, campaigning and lobbying to bring it forward



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- Retrofitting is something the GMCA has been working on -
<https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/media/6018/retrofitgm.pdf>
- The GMCA have a taskforce looking at how we are going to finance the challenge ahead of us
- How do we scale this up across the country in delivering the retrofit agenda?
- Challenges in labour market in this retrofit agenda – a lack of skills
 - o Elder workforce, Brexit has effect on it – requires a significant effort to change this, to train that workforce up to the level of skills and requirements needed to facilitate the retrofit agenda
- Calls for a holistic approach bringing together local government, educational providers and Industry itself – values the idea of systems thinking, combined thinking in responsibility to issues
- GMCA growing evidence about relationship between health and housing – commissioned research from Parity Projects: 53% GMCA homes could have a Category 1 Excess Hazard, 34% could have hazard of falling services,
- Renovation of housing stock is GMCA strategy, between health and social care, housing partners and combined authority
- Developed consortium bid to the social housing decarbonisation fund, from a combined 18 housing providers putting in a bid for £91.4m to hopefully retrofit 5874 units within the city region
- GMCA need to retrofit 61,000 homes every year to meet carbon neutrality targets for 2048
 - o Agrees with the White Paper highlighting the need for long term finance schemes to fund this
- If we are to deliver green economic revolution, we need government to step up before what we have seen to date to deliver.
- Currently reviewing healthy homes service across 10 local authorities to aim to let people live in their homes safely. Trying to raise standards, have a baseline of data, what the benefits are, and scale it up to the whole of the city region around healthy homes and buildings.
- The cuts over the past 12 years have created a lot of uncertainty and resulted in a postcode lottery to those sorts of services
- Currently looking at how to retrofit for an ageing population and adaptations to homes that need to be made in order to meet their needs and bring about the desired positive impacts surrounding health, mental health, and wellbeing
- BUILD BACK FAIRER post covid highlighted we need to quickly get into the space of a preventative model – looking to deliver healthy people in healthy homes in healthy places



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- Looking beyond the home – poor quality housing contributes to a number of illnesses and diseases: respiratory, nervous system, cardio-vascular diseases, cancer, heart attacks, stroke, flu, falls and injuries, hypothermia and poor mental health
- Poor housing estimated to be costing the NHS at least £600m a year
- Across the North around 24% of owner-occupied properties failed to reach the decent homes standards – private rented sector in the North = 27%
- Over 60% of non-decent homes are in the owner occupier sector
- How do we finance the improvements and retrofitting needed – especially given a lot of people are asset rich but cash poor
- Evidence shows that making houses more suitable can enable people to stay in their own homes for longer – thus reducing the burden on the NHS and social care
 - o 916 days delayed – adaption of people’s homes
 - o Minor adaptations and repairs to trip hazards can prevent fall injuries - 1 in 3 over 65, 50% of over 50s fall at least once per year due to the standard of their home
 - Costing the NHS £2 billion a year
- GMCA story is one of partnership – tripartite agreement, welcomes the relationship between health and homes
 - o Retrofitting the homes, we already have is the biggest challenge (61,000 a year in GMCA to meet carbon neutrality targets)
 - o Especially tough in the current political and social climate of the burdens on the NHS, cost of living crisis and net zero
- Mentioned Sir Michael Marmot and the influence of his work on GMCA thinking
- Liberalisation of planning is not the way forward and won’t deliver on this agenda – many planning permissions have been given but not delivered by construction and development industry
- Problems with sorting housing in GMCA – differences in the price of land, price of houses, and people’s earnings
- Capacity will continue to be an issue given the 12 years of austerity
 - o £232 million has been taken out of the City of Salford revenue budget since 2010
 - o 53% of central government grants have been taken out of Salford, the 18th poorest local authority in the country – according to the government’s own index of multiple deprivations
- Pleas: the institutional role of local government in delivering this, a properly funded local government
- If the government does not fully fund councils and housing associations, then there is little chance this agenda will be delivered



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- If we don't fully fund the CPI + 1% increase, then it's a real-time cut for councils and housing associations at a time when they need that capacity the most
- We're trying to influence the government through devolution in the GMCA trailblazer – with housing, homelessness, and the link between health and housing being a key priority, in addition to tackling some of the poor practices within the private rented sector
- GMCA are trying to deliver truly affordable homes – social rent, council housing
- However delivering all of these things is a challenge in the current financial climate
- GMCA are doing it in partnership and in an evidence based way – but we need to continue to lobby and influence the government to get them onboard with helping to deliver this agenda

Derek Thomas MP

- Reason for interest in the HHB APPG: Elected around the time of the Paris Climate agreement, and the government had started a £2 billion fund for these improvements – and a report had come out finding his constituents homes were the leakiest and most fuel poorest built homes as they are off the grid in st lves and silly isles – in addition to them being built out of granite which isn't very good at heating or being healthy
- As an MP he has been raising it as an issue to improve our homes for a number of reasons: health attainment for younger people and supporting the NHS by helping older people remain healthy in their homes
- Background: was in the building trade, having converted a number of homes in an energy effective way
- It is possible to insulate the trickiest of homes
- Campaigning for HHB is not a new argument: opportunity lying before us today is that the government is very keen to reduce the demand of energy given the cost of energy and living at the moment
 - HHB can effectively meet the calls for energy demand reductions through retrofitting and improving the new the quality of new buildings
 - Aiming to deliver cheaper and healthier homes to live in which will deliver long-term benefits
 - The best way for the HHB campaign to gain traction is to emphasise the energy reduction space
 - We don't need to win the argument as the argument is won – it's about getting the government to find a way to fund it



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- The reality is that the quality of our housing is poor
- Reality is that our homes are usually done up by owners and people with the money to buy them and renovate them, not by long-term renters
 - Those who don't have the money for this live in fuel impoverished homes
 - The homes that see the investment and the improvements that are needed are often second homes or holiday homes
 - This is a sad reality given the need for good homes for local people
- Need to hold government to account in their determination for energy reduction, but also give them tools on how to do it
 - There is agreement that one of the ways to do this is giving cash to local authorities to work with local developers and builders
 - Previous schemes in Cornwall haven't worked because local builders haven't been engaged and the companies that have come in have been driven by money and have done pretty shoddy work on properties
 - This undermined the confidence in the ability to retrofit homes
- Retrofitting is vital and needs to be sped up in order to reduce energy demand and alleviate some of the increasing costs households are facing

Jade Lewis, SEA:

- Discussion today has highlighted the research being done in the realm of healthy homes and buildings but need that is still here – we've been talking about this for 5 years
 - Discussing how the costs add up, the savings to the NHS
- We are still not there although it is great to hear the work being done by the GMCA to try and tackle this but it is a huge thing to overcome
 - We don't have enough money, the skills or knowledge across the whole industry to deliver all of these things
- Conclusion of the last meeting was that we need to do more, especially given costs are going up, people are dying in poor quality housing: we have to do more, we need to do a campaign
- What more can this group do to actually get things on the agenda?

Gill Morris:

The last meeting showed the passion and support for the HHB campaign is there

- What we need to do is public and media support to say this is a campaign that needs parliamentary notoriety with a change of government.
- We have the evidence and research; current context people are living in homes that are making them ill especially with the energy crisis



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- Want to see a parliamentary and lobbying campaign – cross party, to highlight the inextricable link between the homes we live in and our health: everybody should have the desire to live in a better and healthier home and community
- We need a fundamental shift in terms of policy thinking – we need to know more about our homes, how they are built, and what needs to be done to retrofit them to HHB standard and for the future
- We need to promote the bigger piece – showing how it helps with energy reduction, the wider benefits to society, reducing the pressure on the NHS and social care service
 - o We need to educate and equip people with the skills needed to retrofit
 - o We need to build homes that are fit for the future - we need to be more ambitious and forward looking
 - We need to stop making temporary half-measures plastering over the cracks
- We need to get people thinking ‘I want to live in a healthy home’
- We need to pump up the volume of the campaign – raise its notoriety to gain more traction
 - o Who can we get to support it?
 - o How can we raise public awareness and support for the HHB campaign?
 - o How to make this a key issue for MPs and their constituents at the next general election?
- Highlighted what a campaign would look like regarding launch, parliamentary events etc: making this an issue that we can say that we’ve changed mindsets

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

Peter Rogers, Sustainable Acoustics:

- Campaign - so much of the need to reduce the demand for energy hangs on how that can be done.
- Noise pollution is one of the top things to tackle as recommended by the UN
- Noise poverty needs to be considered in terms of exposure
- Permitted development is a serious problem that is threatening a lot of healthy homes in the future – once you start allowing residents to creep into commercial, you start killing off the vibrancy in places in licensed premises
- There are so many angles the HHB campaign can take, it’s just about identifying which are the key ones
 - o Acoustics is here to help in this regard



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Keith Ritchie, BEAMA:

- Sponsor of the APPG, pushing the HH agenda for all that time focused on indoor air quality.
- The government's strategy in regard to insulation does require focus on indoor air quality – ensuring that properties are properly ventilated
- I think we are about to see a real health crisis in our public housing, particularly in this coming winter – with the increasing number of people living in fuel poverty we will see a horrendous number of excess deaths over the next 6 months
 - o This is the message we should be making to everybody that can listen, especially central
 - o We won't know the true toll of fuel poverty and poor housing this winter until after the event as was the case with the summer heatwave
 - However, this will be too late
 - We need to be making the point now that people are going to be seriously affected by the cold weather

Michelle Akintoye:

- The issue of children around this issue. The health issues effecting children, can be developed into campaign
- Children are coming to school without being washed or well fed
- Mould and asthma are issues that needs addressing

Alex Baines, BSI Retrofit Standards Task Group:

- We have developed standards over a number of years
- Funding has focused on energy efficiency improvements, currently no funding for ventilation, despite this being the key first point in retrofit following assessment and design in most retrofits
- What can be done about this?

Jim Shannon MP:

- Asked the panellists their opinions on what should the campaign look like?

Juliet

- It's a critical campaign that hits so many policy areas – we need a multipronged approach using many leavers, emphasising the urgency of this agenda
 - o We need to raise awareness of the reality that people will die this winter as a result of unhealthy homes



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- We need to push this on all fronts to the relevant governmental departments and also utilise the media/social media
- It's too urgent not to be addressed

Louise:

- Lots of work around energy efficiency – large public campaign warm this winter on the NGO sector.
- If we could bring together an alliance of health campaigns, local authorities, and industry – it would be really powerful
- UKGBC bring together over 35 local authorities on a regular basis to build campaigns around retrofit – helping local authorities with this can be part of the answer
- Public facing: decision-making points, focusing on the future in terms of policy intervention
- We need to push for answers surrounding what the government is going to do regarding retrofit, what will happen after April once the energy price cap guarantee has expired
 - How can we insert the HHB agenda into the Future Homes Standards that are being drawn up right now by DLUHC
 - How does it fit in with planning reform and investment zones

Helen:

- Multipronged approach – we need to consult not only those in the housing field but also in the health field - need a broad coalition of people who are like-minded and committed to this agenda – establishing a consolidated and consistent argument to be made by all these different organisations

Paul:

- Complex area of public policy – presenting it as Public Health crisis in addition to the cost of living and climate crises
- The campaign needs to be evidence based – tangible for the treasury in investing in this agenda, what are the benefits for the public purse
- Highlight case studies, taking into account co-production and lived experiences to get the authentic voices for this campaign
 - The last thing people want to hear is politicians talking about this agenda
 - We need to hear from people affected by the HHB agenda
- Alignment with this towards a green economic revolution: jobs, skills, innovation, net zero and R&D, linking it to the export agenda of UK PLC



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- Focus on reducing energy demand and increasing energy security in the UK

Derek Thomas MP:

- MPs are presented with every kind of imaginable crises via their email inbox
- There is only so much the government can think laterally though
- Solution focused campaign rather than a crisis focused campaign which would only add to their problems
- To get government to solve this issue we need to present the solution to this crisis, not just the crisis itself

Jim Shannon MP

- Apologises for the yo-yoing of MPs between the meeting and the voting lobby
- Thanks attendees and speakers
- Re highlighted the backbench debate on Thursday will reignite government response
- Can integrate into current government policy

Attendees:

Michelle	Akintoye
Luke	Archer
John	Armstrong
Rob	Baines
Alex	Baines
Alex	Baines
Hayden	Banks
Milo	Barnett
Milo	Barnett
Chris	Beedel
Mark	Beirne
Mark	Beirne
karin	bennett
Joe	Bews
Duncan	Botting
Lois	Bowser
Claire	Brown
Daniel	Brown



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Philip	Brown
Will	Burkitt
Gary	Cass
derek	clements-croome
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Derek	Clements-Croome
Jessica	Cook
Bill	Copeland
Rosemary	Coyne
Rosemary	Coyne
eva	crossan jory
Derrick	Crump
Charlotte	Cuenot
Pauline	Davies
Jo	Davis
Sean	Deans
Alexandra	Depledge
Paul	Dipino
Julie	Ellis
James	F
Laura	Fatah
Laura	Fatah
Martin	Fletcher
Martin	Fletcher
Andy	Flook
Robert	Frew
Helen	Garrett
Helen	Garrett
Mary	Gogarty
Mary	Gogarty
Manik	Gopinath
Thurza	graham
Joanthan	Grigg
Elisabeth	Gulliksen
Simon	Hall
Felicity	Handley
Justin	Harris
Jack	Harvie-Clark
rob	henderson
Rob	Henderson
Claude	Hendrickson
Kevin	Herron
Andrew	Hobbs



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Martin	Hodges
Stephen	Hodgson
Stephen	Hodgson
Robert	Horne
Ruth	Hudson
Steve	Jackson
Pari	Joban
Halisha	Kaur
Nicholas Jonathan	Kelly
Rachael	Kershaw
Francesca	Kirtley-Paine
Caglar	Koksal
Sarah	Kostense- Winterton
Samuel	Leuty-Milner
Matthew	Lickes
Joanna	Lindon
Roger	Littlewood
marissa	looby
Marion	MacFarlane
Sheila	Mackintosh
Andy	Makin
Andy	Makin
Valentina	Marincioni
Valentina	Marincioni
Ashley	Martin
katie	mcgowan
Isabella	Myers
Patrick	Nolan
Lee	Nurse
Steph	Okey
riette	oosthuizen
Derek	Owen
Derek	Owen
Ian	Palmer
Michael	Parsons
Sheila	Peace
Tim	Pye
Tim	Pye
Satty	Rai
Kristine	Reilly-Blake
Kristine	Reilly-Blake
John	Renwick



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Jane	Rimmer
Keith	Ritchie
Tristan	Robinson
Tristan	Robinson
Peter	Rogers
Mahera	Ruby
Poonam	Sakarsudha
Poonam	Sakarsudha
Marc	Sansom
Marc	Sansom
Noel	Sharpe
frank	sheppard
Louise	Shooter
Louise	Shooter
Rita	Singh
tatiana	sklyanina
Aaron	Smith
Alistair	Somerville
Alistair	Somerville
Geoffrey	Southern
Karen	Sussex
Larry	Tate
eve	tatham
Andrew	Thompson
Andrew	Thompson
Andrew	Thompson
Andrew	Thompson
Colin	Timmins
Lynn	Tracey
Lee	Tuffnell
Stephen	Turner
Martin	Twamley
Michelle	Vosper
Megan	Waller
David	Ward
Nina	Warrington
Roger	Webb
ROGER	WEBB
Kevin	Wellman
Kevin	Wellman
Ben	Westerman
Sue	Westwood
Clare	Whitney



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CLARE	WHITNEY
Justin	Wilkes
Mark	Winn
Tom	Woolley
Tom	Woolley
Wei	Yang
Nic	Yeeles
CHUCK	YU