



Our last chance to secure clear standards for healthy new homes

Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill: a briefing for the House of Lords

The Government has removed the provisions agreed by the House of Lords at report stage which placed a duty on the Secretary of State to promote the healthy homes principles. The measure was widely acknowledged as the first step in a new journey for housing quality with benefits to people's health and well-being, and real cost savings to the NHS.

The Government's justification for removing these measures is that existing policy is adequate. However, as [Peter Aldous MP \(Waveney, Conservative\)](#) pointed out in the House of Commons debate, existing policy is not working well – 'it is complex and focused only on risk reduction. We should bear it in mind that from a high-quality home a host of benefits ensue and cascade down: better health and less pressure on the NHS; and an enhanced environment for learning, doing homework and passing the exams and getting the qualifications that enable people to realise their life ambitions,'. [Shadow Minister Matthew Pennycook MP \(Greenwich and Woolwich, Labour\)](#) stated, 'we fully support the principles of that campaign. We disagree with the government that the issue is already addressed...'

The evidence about the relationship between people's life chances and the quality of their homes and neighbourhoods is overwhelming. The consequences of failing to address the problem are stark. That is why we are asking you to support Lord Nigel Crisp's revised amendment on Healthy Homes. This revision simplifies the provisions to secure a duty on the Secretary of State to consider health and well-being whilst removing the detailed list of Healthy Home principles. This reflects the concerns of some that the principles were too prescriptive and retains the obligation to put health and wellbeing at heart of how we regulate the built environment. We do not believe the revised amendment breaches the Commons financial privilege because it does not require specific expenditure in relation to any fixed timescale.

The compromise amendment is the last chance to get any reference to the positive promotion of health and wellbeing in the Bill. Given the original objectives of the Bill it seems extraordinary that it will ignore one of the most critical and basic challenges currently facing our society. A failure to invest in decent healthy homes is the definitive false economy.

Recognising the significant support that the Healthy Homes campaign has received from across the house and from a [wide coalition of organisations](#), we invite peers to support the following revised Healthy Homes amendment.

After Clause 87, Clause 219, and Before Schedule 7

After Clause 87, insert the following new Clause—

"Secretary of State's duty to promote healthy homes and neighbourhoods

- (1) The Secretary of State must promote a comprehensive regulatory framework for planning and the built environment designed to secure the physical, mental and social health and well-being of the people of England by ensuring the creation of healthy homes and neighbourhoods.
- (2) The Secretary of State may by regulations make provision for a system of standards that promotes and secures healthy homes and neighbourhoods on condition that certain requirements prescribed in the regulations are met."

_ Clause 219, page 249, line 3, at end insert—

"(ba) under section (Secretary of State's duty to promote healthy homes and neighbourhoods);"