
Reuniting health and housing

A briefing for the House of Lords regarding the Planning and Infrastructure Bill

September 2025

The TCPA are profoundly worried about the affect of the Planning and Infrastructure Bill, as it currently stands, on people's health, on nature and on democracy. This briefing outlines proposed amendments to promote thriving healthy new communities.

1 Housing and health disconnect

Our homes and neighbourhoods define our life chances and economic productivity. To solve the housing crises, we must build more homes, but for the sake of future generations those **new homes must also be healthy homes**. Homes that are connected to amenities, nature and work, that are genuinely affordable, that meet diverse needs, that will be resilient over the long term. We know it is possible to deliver more **good quality and genuinely affordable homes in the right places**. However, the rules that seek to shape the quality of new homes are weak, fragmented and poorly enforced. **The current housing system is failing people**, especially for those in the most deprived areas. The Planning and Infrastructure Bill is a real opportunity to put this right but despite the overwhelming health evidence the bill contains nothing to enable health improvement through new development.

A comprehensive approach to housing standards is required to create clarity, so all new homes and communities are built with **health creation** as a central aim. The amendments tabled by Lord Crisp will help to ensure future homes are built to meet everyone's needs, benefit people's health and reduce costs on health and social care budgets, both now and for the long term.

2 New homes are failing people

Across the country, too many homes are being built that are poor quality, poorly located and unaffordable. **A third of consumers (32%) describe their new build homes as 'poor quality'. Another recent report presents the 'new build nightmare'** - with rushed construction, mounting defects, and weak buyer protections leaving many with poorly constructed properties, undermining public trust in new homes and damaging people's health. The cause of these failures is partly due to weak planning policy and building regulations but at its worst is linked to the continued deregulation of the planning system.

The extension of Permitted Development Rights (PDR) since 2013 has allowed the conversion of over 111,000 buildings to residential use without a full planning application, undermining local authority and regulators' ability to properly scrutinise and apply policies that promote healthy place-making. PDR has produced the worst temporary accommodation conditions used to house vulnerable people to be witnessed in this country. Such as former light industrial blocks like **Kendal Court in New Haven where ten people died between 2016-2021**. PDR has also **reduced developer contributions towards affordable housing** and essential local amenities, such as schools and GP surgeries. If the government will not revoke PDR rules, it must at least adopt primary legislation to apply consistent housing standards in all new homes, including under PDR.

3 Why has the Government rejected the call for Healthy Homes?

In the commons stage of the bill, the Minister dismissed the need for a new duty to promote health because he said existing policy was adequate. However, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) contains no policy which requires decision makers to positively promote people's health and well-being, or to prevent harm to people through plan-making and development decisions. The acid test of whether national policy is adequate, is that the government continues to allow the kind of slum housing being produced through PDR and illustrated in the TCPA publication [A Home to Die for](#).

The Decent Homes Standard (DHS) currently only refers to housing hazards in socially rented homes once they are *in-use*. It does not address the planning, design or construction quality of new homes, where they are located, nor does it address measures that will positively promote good health (e.g. climate resilience to overheating, storm and flood risks; access to amenities, nature and public transport; outdoor air quality). Even if the government proceeds with [proposed DHS reforms](#) to the private rental sector and temporary accommodation it will still not address the standards and location of new construction.

Neither the NPPF, DHS, nor this Bill contain any requirements for new development to **promote health creation**. Part 2 of the Bill currently states development plans and Sustainable Development Strategies should '**have regard**' to consider health inequalities. The Bill therefore does not require any action to address those inequalities or to positively promote health.

4 Proposed amendments

The health-related amendments to the Planning and Infrastructure Bill, tabled by Lord Nigel Crisp, and supported by peers from across the political parties, including Lord Young, Baroness Bennett and Lord Carlile, will place requirements on the Secretary of State and planning authorities to positively promote health creation. These amendments will therefore reunite health and planning, and most importantly guarantee a new generation of Healthy Homes.

We invite your support for these important amendments (**numbers: 106, 123, 185SF, 189, 191, 193, 226, 351**).

In particular, the [amendment number 226](#):

“After Clause 106, insert the following new Clause—

Secretary of State’s duty to promote healthy homes and neighbourhoods”,

Also [amendment number 185SF](#):

“After Clause 52, insert the following new Clause—

Planning authorities: duty to promote health improvement and reduce health inequalities”

We also invite your support for the amendment tabled by Baroness Thornhill (**number 134**, after Clause 51) regarding the **Removal of Permitted Development Rights for Conversion to Dwellinghouses**.

More information

- [Campaign for Healthy Homes](#)
- You can find a copy of the [marshalled list of amendments \(2 September\) here](#).
- Contact: Dr Rosalie Callway, Rosalie.Callway@tcpa.org.uk